

Asian-American Markets in the U.S.



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The term *Asian-American* refers to any person of Asian descent living in the U.S. However, the U.S. Asian market is highly **heterogeneous** and is comprised of many different ethnic groups: Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Asian Indian, Korean, Vietnamese among others, which are all ethnically, culturally and linguistically distinct groups.

A Brief History of Asian-Americans

Historians believe the first Asians to reach mainland America were Filipinos who helped sail Spanish galleons in the mid-1700s. They landed in Acapulco, Mexico and migrated north to the bayous of Louisiana.

The first wave of Asian immigrants were the Chinese in 1848. They came in search of wealth and adventure during the California gold rush. A Chinatown was established in San Francisco in the early 1850s.

Since the restrictions on Asian Immigration were lifted in 1965, many Asian groups have come to the U.S. as refugees to escape war and destruction.

Demographics

•Today, Asian-Americans exceed **eleven million** people, and represent 4.2% of the country's population. Other groups such as Laotians, Hmong, Cambodians and Thai have been added to the already diverse mix.

Because of continued immigration, the Asian population is expected to continue to grow faster than the total population in the years ahead.

Like other immigrant groups, Asians have created their own communities in many major U.S. cities. The largest concentrations of Asian-Americans can be found in ten metropolitan areas.

•The largest Asian-American population is in **Los Angeles**, followed by **San Francisco**, **New York**, **Honolulu**, **Chicago**, **Washington D.C.**, **Seattle**, **Philadelphia** and **Houston**. Two-thirds of all Asian-Americans live in these metropolitan areas.

•There are about 130,000 Asian-Americans in **Minnesota**. In Ramsey County, Asians make up 8% of the total population.

Economic Strength

•With an estimated buying power of \$253 billion as of 2001, Asian-Americans are a powerful force in the U.S. consumer market.

•37% of Asian-American adults have a college degree, compared to only 20% of the total U.S. population; 31% of Asian-Americans hold management/ professional positions compared to 26% of the total U.S. More Asian-Americans earn over \$50,000 than any other demographic group.

•Entrepreneurship among this group is twice that of other minority groups.

Targeting Asian-Americans

Overall, the U.S. Asian market is affluent, well educated, young, professional, and receptive to advertising. However, English language proficiency and usage varies among groups.

•67% of Asian-Americans speak their native languages at home. Percentages vary by group: 93% of Vietnamese speak exclusively their native language at home, while only 52% of Japanese do.

The best media vehicles for reaching Asian consumers are Asian-language TV, radio and newspapers. Therefore, adapting marketing materials into the native languages of Asian-American consumers is imperative for an effective reach.

In addition to country of origin, other factors to consider are recency of immigration and retention of Asian cultural values.

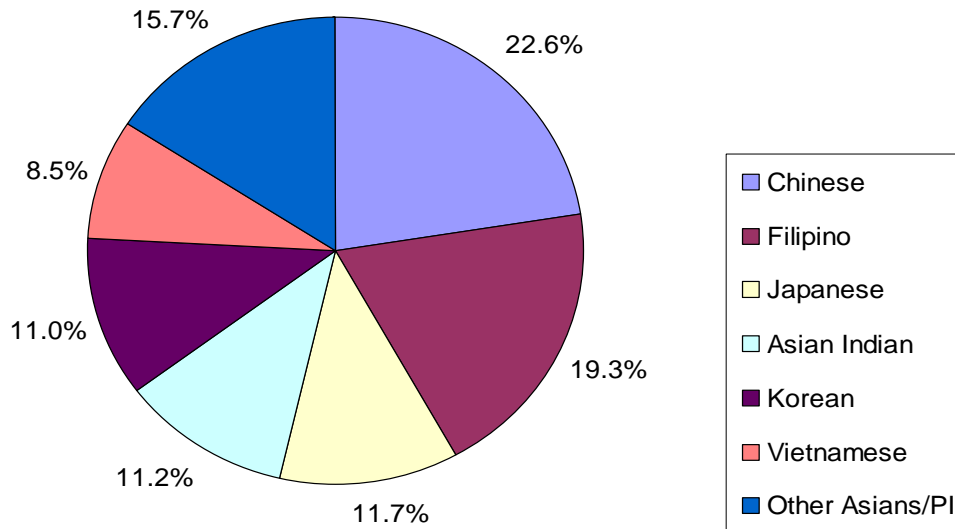
Due to the groups' great diversity, companies may find the need to employ **niche marketing** techniques, rather than using an umbrella approach to target this population. Promotional opportunities include the New Year for Chinese, Parent's Day for Koreans and Nisei Week for Japanese.

The growth and affluence of this group demonstrate the increasing importance of Asian-American consumers and creates great opportunities for business that pay attention to their needs and are respectful of their values.

? Did you know that fortune cookies were first produced in San Francisco in the 1930s to satisfy Chinatown tourists demand for a Chinese dessert?

Statistics

Major Asian Groups in the U.S.



Upcoming Conferences

**3rd Annual Asian American
Marketing Midwest Conference**
August 2001
RiverCentre Convention Center
St. Paul, MN
contact: Aguilar Productions
(651) 665-0633
www.aguilarproductions.com

Asian Holidays

January-February

Chinese New Year

January 24, 2001

The Year of the Snake

The celebration begins on the first day of the first month of the lunar calendar, and is the most important holiday of the year. It is celebrated in China, Singapore, Korea and Vietnam.



In our next issue of CLUE: Hispanics and the Internet: E-Marketing and other issues.

CLUE Newsletter

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Sources: Cao, Lan and Himilce Novas, *Everything you need to know about Asian-American History*, Penguin Group, New York 1996. Georgia Business and Economic Conditions, "Asian-American Buying Power," August 2000. U.S. Census Bureau.