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ADVERTISING

New 'Dora' Plug: Mi Casa Es Su Casa

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Advertisers targeting the burgeoning Hispanic market are making themselves at home in La Casa de Dora.

Nickelodeon's "Dora the Explorer," a cartoon series starring a bilingual, 7-year-old adventurer, has become one of the most sought-after properties for promotional sponsorships. Now, companies looking to attract Hispanic parents of preschoolers are sponsoring a national mall tour of a more than 1,000-square-foot modular house designed to look like Dora's cartoon home. The tour begins tomorrow in Denver and will travel to 10 U.S. shopping malls in heavily Hispanic cities through May.

The interactive play space, with a red terra-cotta roof and bright yellow facade, will showcase an array of big-company sponsors. A Grand Caravan minivan from **DaimlerChrysler's** Dodge will be parked in the driveway, a booth for **Procter & Gamble's** Bounty paper towels will offer a photo opportunity with Dora's cousin Diego, and **General Mills** will feature Dora on its Kix cereal boxes. Burger King is another tour sponsor.

NEW EXPLORATION

Nickelodeon's La Casa de Dora mall installation, shown in a [preliminary diagram](#)⁰, will feature an array of sponsors.

Nickelodeon's new concept is the latest example of the nontraditional marketing methods being employed to reach the fast-growing group of Hispanic consumers. Robert Passikoff, president of Brand Keys, a New York-based brand consulting firm, says Hispanics are more likely to respond to brands that they feel understand them. That means going beyond television


and print ads to interact with the community.

Brand Keys surveyed 32,000 consumers ages 21 to 59 about which brands they consistently buy and which attributes, values and images motivate this loyalty. The 6,700 Hispanic survey respondents proved to be 21% more loyal to brands that they relate to family, nostalgia and the home than non-Hispanics. "Hispanic consumers don't just see it, like it and buy it," Mr. Passikoff says. "They want some kind of deeper connection."

Launched in 2000 on **Viacom's** Nick Jr., "Dora the Explorer" is watched by 22.6 million people each month. The cartoon attracts 1.9 million Hispanic households and is the top-ranking preschool show on commercial television. Dora-related products generated just over \$1 billion in retail sales last year.

According to Viacom, marketers have dedicated an estimated \$40 million in support of La Casa de Dora

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and the traveling stage performance "Dora the Explorer Live." "A mall installation will give our partners a chance to really get into the community," says Pam Kaufman, executive vice president of marketing at Viacom's Nickelodeon.

Nickelodeon is quick to point out that Dora's appeal isn't limited to Hispanics. In November, 80% of the show's viewers were non-Hispanics. Dodge, which has advertised on "Dora" in both Spanish and English, appreciates the show's cross-cultural reach. "Appealing to two different markets at the same time is money well spent," says Suraya Dasante, a Dodge spokeswoman.



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