



Ebony Marketing Systems

Multicultural Insights

Quick Guide: Marketing to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders





On Authentically Connecting with the AAPI Community

Dear Marketer,

Welcome to the AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islanders) marketplace. In our multicultural research work at Ebony Marketing Systems, we find that the AAPI market is the most overlooked, despite being the fastest-growing market in this millennium--wielding over \$1 trillion in spending power.

The power of AAPI culture goes beyond spending. The AAPI market is also a worldwide pop culture influence – K-Pop Demon Hunters is just one example. Rooted in Korean culture, the movie, the soundtrack, even the Halloween costumes, set new sales’ records including Netflix’s most watched English-language movie of all time as of 2025.

EMS offers this guide as a foundation in understanding the AAPI market. It includes intriguing statistics and many surprising insights to share with your marketing teams. This is a mosaic market-- incredible when viewed as whole, and each ethnicity within this market has unique needs, dreams and lived experiences.

Americans almost exclusively see the AAPI population as East Asian, almost ignoring the significant Indian (South Asian) and Filipino (Southeast Asian) populations in the United States.

	U.S. Population - Country of Origin	Ethnicities that Come to Mind for Term Asian American
Chinese	22%	46%
Indian	21%	6%
Filipino	19%	6%
Vietnamese	9%	8%
Korean	8%	15%
Japanese	7%	22%

Read, learn and enjoy this guide with our compliments. If you have any further questions or see ways that EMS can help you in your marketing strategies, reach out to me kfuentes@ebonysystems.com. I look forward to a conversation with you.

Kai Fuentes, President and CEO of Ebony Marketing Systems



LivingScapes™





The AAPI Community - Diverse, Growing and Achieving

The AAPI community is made up of a diverse group of people, consisting of East Asian Americans (coming from China, Japan, Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea and Taiwan, plus two special administrative regions of China, Hong Kong and Macau); Southeast Asian Americans (coming from Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam); South Asian Americans (coming from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Maldives) and Pacific Islanders (coming from Hawaii, Polynesia, Micronesia, Samoa, Tahiti, and Fiji).

Asian Americans are the fastest-growing ethnic group in the US – their population increased 81% from 2000 to 2019 according to Pew Research Data. This growth is eclipsed by their buying power--up 127% from 2010 to 2020; reaching a new height of \$1.9 trillion during the past 6 years per the Selig Center for Economic Growth.

The median household income for Asian American households was nearly 30% higher than the US median of approximately \$74,000 in the 2022 Census. Almost all AAPI ethnic groups exceed the US median income, underscoring the Pew Research finding that 45% of Asian Americans believe they are on their way to achieving the American Dream compared to 37% of all US adults.

The AAPI population is roughly half immigrant and half U.S. born; two-thirds of Asian Americans born in the U.S. are 1st generation, born to immigrant parents. The AAPI population is shifting to U.S. born, as AAPI immigration was 54% in 2023 down from 63% in 2000.



The AAPI American Dream: Having a successful career and making a valuable contribution to their community is as important as home ownership



CultureScapes™





Connected by Culture, Family and Tech

With over 50 ethnic groups that speak over 100 languages, the AAPI community features varied and rich cultures, cuisines, and customs.

The term Asian American doesn't do justice to the AAPI population, lumping them into a monolithic identity. About half of Asian Americans either identify themselves by their ethnic origin alone (e.g., Vietnamese) or in combination with American (e.g., Vietnamese American). Overall, half include American as part of their identity (e.g., Vietnamese American, 25%; Asian American, 16%; or American, 10%). Broad regional labels such as South Asian are by far the least used self-descriptor.

A shared trait across AAPI cultures is family-based households with 71% of households made up of families – instead of people living alone or with unrelated people – 64% of all households. With an average of 3.3 people per family, Asian American families are also larger than the average of all US families at 3.1. Almost 1 in 4 of Asian Americans live in multi-generational households compared to roughly 1 in 10 White, non-Hispanic Americans.

Asian Americans are more likely to be married, leading all racial groups with over 60% married per the U.S. Census Bureau. They are the only group that does not have significant marriage rate declines since 1990. The American Psychological Association research shows Asian American women have the strongest marital stability with a divorce rate of just 18% - less than half the national average.

The AAPI market is digitally connected – Nielsen data reports they spend 9 hours and 6 minutes a week logged on to their computers, almost an hour more than all U.S. adults at 8 hours and 14 minutes.

56% have smart devices compared to 41% of white, non-Hispanic counterparts. 44% said they have clicked on a link from a social media ad (vs. 38% of total). 21% have engaged with an ad on a streaming service (vs. 17% of total). 96% of AAPI millennials are more likely to recommend a product from a social media ad.

37.1% Asian consumers turn to social media for health information, compared to just 26.4% of the general population.

**"2 out of 3
Asian
Americans say
that activities
and events
that create
family
memories are
important."**



MindScapes™





Higher Education and Income Is Not Universal

The average Asian American individual income is consistently higher than the U.S. average, 24% higher in 2025 per the Annual Social and Economic Supplement survey.

Pacific Islander individual incomes are slightly lower compounded by higher costs of living due their concentration in California, Hawaii and Washington. The poverty rate of Tongan Americans is more than double of the U.S. overall rate and over 10% of Pacific Islanders live in poverty. The unhoused rate among Pacific Islanders is 5.5 times higher than the U.S. average.

Married Asian American households report the highest median income at approximately \$115,000, a significant rate of 121% higher than single Asian American at \$52,000 (still the highest median income for singles). This bump is correlated with higher educational credentials and marrying at higher rates.

Almost half of Asian Americans over age 25 have a graduate or professional degree, compared to 14% of the total population. Degree attainment varies widely by ethnicity with more than 75% of Indian Americans and Taiwanese Americans having a bachelor's, but only 25% of Pacific Islanders are college graduates.

How do these traits impact consumer shopping? Costco, Trader Joe's and Whole Foods greatly over-index for Asian shoppers over all other racial/ethnic demographics. Asian shoppers are 126% more likely to shop at Whole Foods, 115% more likely to shop at Trader Joe's and 76% more likely to shop at Costco than all other race/ethnicities. In contrast, they are the least likely to shop some of the more deeply discounted retailers – 76% less likely to shop at Dollar General, 32% less likely to shop at Aldi, and 28% less like to shop at Family Dollar.

"Asian American households are projected to spend over \$1 million more than the average U.S. household over their remaining lifetimes."





Know Your Market





Emergent Demographics: Younger, U.S. Born, Multiracial

Asian Americans are young with a median age of 34.7 years compared to 38 years for Americans overall. The median age dramatically drops to 19 years for U.S. born Asians – a group growing faster than immigrant Asian Americans.

Almost 1 in 4 Asian Americans under age 18 identify as multiracial compared to almost 1 in 10 Asian Americans age 35+ who identify as a single race per the 2023 American Community Survey

Digging deeper reveals a wide disparity based on ethnicity and regionality. Over half of East Asian youths identify as two or more races while the majority of South Asian youths identify as a single race. Regionality also plays a role with 60% Asian Americans in Hawaii and Utah identifying as multiracial compared to 30% or less in New York, New Jersey, and, surprisingly, California – the state with the largest population of Asian American youth.

Capturing these market nuances is a challenge. While having AAPI employees on your team is a good start, recognize that those employees cannot be expected to speak for the diversity of Asian Americans across ethnicities, generations, birthplace and U.S. regions.

"1 in 4 Asian Americans under 18 identify as multiracial vs. 1 in 10 age 35+."





Payback for Marketplace Support and Recognition

AAPI consumers expect market support and reward it:

- 6 in 10 expect brands to support causes they care about
- 6 in 10 pay more attention to ads in media that reflect their culture/ethnicity
- 5 in 10 have a higher appreciation for brands that advertise in media that reflect their culture/ethnicity
- 7 in 10 Millennial AAPI shoppers will stop buying from a brand that devalues their community
- 8 in 10 Asian American CTV viewers prefer ads that are relevant to their interests, and 5 in 10 pay closer attention to ads in another language than English.

This desire to be supported is accentuated by AAPI communities who continue to struggle with discrimination, harassment and assault. While almost half of all Americans believe Asian Americans are treated fairly (a five year high), half of Asian Americans report they were insulted or called a bad name in 2024, with 36% harassed or threatened and 15% physically attacked or assaulted.

63% of Asian American respondents believe it is at least somewhat likely they will be victims of discrimination based on their race or ethnicity in the next five years, compared to 33% of white Americans.

Despite strong tech adoption, 43% of Asian Americans feel they do not belong on online spaces/social media compared to 38% of White/Caucasian Americans, 34% of Black Americans and 31% of Hispanic Americans.

AAPI sponsorships may serve your total market – 9 out of 10 Americans indicate an openness to visiting Asian American enclaves more often, with the most interest in events, festivals or promotion of local AAPI businesses.






Ready to Authentically Deepen Your Asian American Market?

As you can see in this Quick Guide, the AAPI population should be a target for your marketing strategies. To be effective, you have to ask the right questions, of the right people, so you can make key decisions. Ebony Marketing Systems can help. Our commitment includes a team of culturally connected and fluent researchers who use proven multicultural, multilingual market research practices that lead to profitable outcomes.

Ebony Marketing Systems offers unique approaches such as in-culture secret shoppers and a dedicated AAPI telephone interviewing team. We've been working with the State of California for 5 years, researching AAPI residents to improve healthcare outcomes. The Asian diaspora is diverse in language, social context, familial connection and personal identity. EMS embraces this diversity with AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) communities and can bring these insights to your company.

Contact Kai Fuentes, CEO, kfuentes@ebonysystems.com to discuss collaboration more fully.

Connect with Experts

Connect with us at info@ebonysystems.com

Visit us online at www.ebonymarketingsystems.com

Sign up for our quarterly newsletter at www.ebonysystems.com/contact/

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