

# Q&A: Talking Latin American Investment, Partnership, and Opportunity with RXN Principal Gastón Massari Copes

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*Gastón Massari Copes leads the RXN Latin American efforts. He is a bridge between continents, fostering relationships across Latin America for pharmaceutical, technology, and other companies. A former Novartis executive and twice-elected public official, Gastón has deep expertise in navigating the public sector landscape, influencing regulatory stakeholders, and driving profitable commercial agreements.*

**Data Catalyst Institute: Gastón, you just joined RXN a few months ago... What are your priorities for your first year at RXN, and how are you already leveraging your experience in your work?**

Gastón Massari Copes: This first year, my main priority is to help our clients, both new and existing, to genuinely understand the nuances of Latin America. In the U.S., there's a tendency to view Latin America as a monolithic region when, in reality, it's a mosaic of nations with individual histories, ideologies, and cultural identities. Each country—and often each province within a country—operates with distinct social, political, and economic dynamics. One of my key tasks is to convey that complexity to our clients, helping them navigate national and subnational landscapes whose governing dynamics can influence business strategies.



In Latin America, stability and growth are abundant, with remarkable opportunities in technology, energy, and resource extraction. This region is home to a vibrant tech sector

with impressive growth across the digital economy and some of the world's most significant energy reserves. My role is to bridge that gap for our clients, demystifying the layers within each market to unlock these potential opportunities and foster meaningful, long-term partnerships.

**DCI: DCI and RXN primarily work in the digital economy and innovation space and have done some work in Latin America in the past. Which digital and innovation developments in LATAM don't get enough attention in the US?**

GMC: First and foremost, the region's human capital is a tremendous asset. Latin America, particularly countries like Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile, is producing exceptionally talented tech professionals and entrepreneurs. There's a thriving startup culture here, with unicorns like Mercado Libre and Globant reshaping Latin American—and global—markets. Despite humble beginnings, Mercado Libre is now a leading e-commerce platform in Latin America and even competes directly with Amazon. Meanwhile, Globant is one of the largest software factories globally, partnering with major international players.

Beyond talent, Latin American countries have critical resources for powering the digital and green economy. Energy reserves support industries like mining and data centers and offer government digitalization opportunities. Many governments here are eager to modernize their processes, creating substantial opportunities for firms with digital solutions. By focusing on this untapped potential, American companies can gain a significant edge in Latin America's tech landscape.

**DCI: What are some common misconceptions that Americans have about Latin America's tech and business landscape, and how do these misunderstandings impact the potential for collaboration and innovation with the U.S.?**

GMC: As someone with firsthand government and political experience in Argentina, I've seen how cultural gaps often hinder productive partnerships. Building close personal relationships in Latin America isn't just a formality; it's necessary. U.S. companies must invest time in face-to-face interactions and immerse themselves in local dynamics to establish meaningful connections. Time is perceived differently here, and patience is vital. It's not a matter of incompatibility but of understanding these unique business rhythms and respecting the culture.

Another misconception is about the sophistication of Latin American companies. Many U.S. businesses might be surprised to discover how advanced some regional firms are in tech, innovation, and operational standards. Latin America has the talent, innovation, and companies primed for partnerships. For U.S. companies, the opportunity lies in identifying and nurturing these connections, as they can lead to high-impact, mutually beneficial collaborations.

**DCI: When it comes to consumers specifically, how do shoppers rely on tech in the retail sector (i.e., any different habits from Americans, do they use AI recommendations, or shopping online more/less)?**

GMC: Latin American consumers share many behaviors with their U.S. counterparts but prefer certain “old-fashioned” practices. While online shopping grows, many still favor the in-store experience—particularly in larger markets like Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Colombia. There’s an emphasis on seeing, touching, and trying products before buying, which speaks to a cultural preference for face-to-face interaction.

In the food sector, for example, online ordering and delivery haven’t reached the popularity they enjoy in the U.S. Many consumers here value preparing meals or dining out rather than ordering in. Also, personal networks carry more weight than digital reviews or AI suggestions regarding recommendations. Often, a friend or family member’s opinion holds far more influence over purchasing decisions than any online endorsement. This personal, community-oriented approach reflects a deep-rooted cultural trait and is critical to understanding Latin American consumer behavior.

**DCI: How should American policymakers and business leaders react to Chinese investment in infrastructure and technology in Argentina and surrounding countries? What opportunities are there to advance American partnerships in the region?**

GMC: I’ve led programs for the U.S. State Department to counter Chinese companies’ influence in Latin America, especially in digital and physical infrastructure. One of the main challenges I observed was the speed and approach of Chinese companies, which often operate with less regard for compliance and long-term community impact. Their rapid moves initially appealed to some local administrations eager for investment, but over time, these quick deals can lack the trust and cultural alignment that Latin American partners value.

The opportunity for American companies lies in stepping in as reliable, long-term partners who bring more than just capital. U.S. businesses should prioritize ESG principles, which resonate strongly with Latin American governments and communities concerned about sustainability and social impact. By focusing on these values, American companies can build relationships based on shared goals, fostering a more balanced and transparent partnership. American businesses will find a warm reception if they are willing to engage deeply with these governments and address long-term community needs.

**DCI: In September, Elon Musk announced that his companies are looking at investment opportunities in Argentina. In your view, what strategies should American companies adopt when approaching potential government and corporate partners in the region?**

GMC: Elon Musk's interest signals something critical—Latin America's potential has never been more apparent. American companies have long recognized the region's resources but have sometimes overlooked the importance of sustained, local engagement. The significant presence of Chinese investment underscores the need to rethink our approach and build from the ground up—fostering connections at both regional and federal levels.

One essential shift for American companies would be to engage more directly with provincial and state governments. These subnational entities play crucial roles in investment decisions, and their familiarity with American businesses can strengthen partnerships that benefit communities and foreign investors alike. Companies should prioritize transparency and sustainability, demonstrating a willingness to foster long-term growth and alignment with local goals. By taking a localized, bottom-up approach, American businesses can redefine their relationships with Latin America to support regional development and long-term U.S. interests.