

## “ 20-Minute Target Market Profiles ”

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Understanding your target markets is crucial to success. It's important to analyze them in terms of their demographics and psychographics (see box). The more you know about your current and potential clients, the easier it is to design an effective marketing campaign. While there are numerous ways to increase your visibility and reach clients, very few methods work with all target markets. You need to discover what is important to a particular market what would motivate them to want to receive massage and how they prefer to be made aware of your business. Without this knowledge, your promotion and advertising endeavors are hit-or-miss.

The number of target markets you have depends on the size of your practice and the scope of your knowledge. Typically, massage therapists have at least two major target markets. Some classic massage therapy target markets are: athletes (in general or a specific niche); seniors; people with disabilities; pregnant women; animals (and their owners); patients of primary care providers; people in addiction recovery programs; computer operators; attorneys; restauranteurs; people in self-improvement programs; teachers; dancers; musicians; actors; artists; small business owners; other health care providers; corporations (for on-site contracts); and people with specific health care issues such as a long-term illness or injury rehabilitation.

Target market profiles are statements that define your markets in the following terms: their objective description (demographics); the clients' beliefs, needs, concerns and goals (psychographics); how your services address those needs; who else provides them with services and products; and where they can be found (e.g., where they shop, what social activities they attend and the publications they read). I realize this sounds like a time-consuming activity, yet the basic profile can be done in approximately 20 minutes.

The time it takes to do research and verify your profile depends on your current knowledge of your target markets. You can do these basic profiles before ever working with any clients in a specific target market. If you are just beginning your practice or branching out into new markets, you may need to do some initial research: read books and articles about the target markets; interview allied health care providers and other business owners who service those markets; contact national and local organizations that deal with the target markets (e.g., fibromyalgia support groups); and talk with people who are members of the target markets.

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### Psychographics and Demographics

Demographics tell you who your clients are. They are comprised of statistics such as:

- \*Age
- \*Gender
- \*Income
- \*Geographic Location
- \*Occupation
- \*Education

Psychographics (also referred to as lifestyle factors) are the major determinants in whether someone becomes a client. They include:

- \*Special Interest Activities
- \*Philosophical Beliefs
- \*Social Factors
- \*Cultural Involvements
- \* Health Care Needs
- \* Wellness Goals

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## **Prenatal Clients**

### **Needs, Concerns and Goals**

Pregnancy is a time of great change: physically, hormonally and emotionally. Some of these changes are eagerly embraced while others are anticipated with fear or dread. In addition to being concerned about the health of her child, the mother also contends with a changing body image, fluctuating emotions, a possible reduction of activity level, back pain and edema. Most pregnant women want to be alleviate their discomfort and be healthy using as many natural methods as possible.

### **How Massage Addresses Those Issues**

Massage offers numerous, drug-free benefits to pregnant women: it relieves muscle and joint pain and stiffness due to the extra weight; increases flexibility, ease and efficiency of movement; enhances skin tone and elasticity, thus possibly reducing stretch marks; reduces edema; increases circulation; improves sleep quality; assists in reducing anxiety; eases constipation, gas and heartburn; relieves headaches; slows the progress of varicose veins; lessens mood swings; is soothing and nurturing; speeds recovery; and provides an enhanced feeling of well-being.

### **Who Also Services This Market**

Many other health care practitioners service this market, including obstetricians, midwives, nutritionists, hypnotherapists and childbirth educators. Also businesses such as diaper companies, retail stores and catalog companies cater to this market.

### **Where They Can Be Found**

Pregnant women can be found at Lamaze classes, the La Leche League, Planned Parenthood, childbirth centers, health care clinics, fitness centers, health food stores, bookstores, maternity shops, baby clothing stores, furniture emporia, toy stores, parenting support groups, child education stores, PTA meetings, business networking groups such as Entrepreneurial Mothers and offices of other allied health care professionals.

### **Publications They Are Likely to Read**

Prenatal clients tend to be very interested in their own health as well as the development of the fetus. They probably read books and magazines on pregnancy, child development and general health. These can include national magazines such as Parents Magazine, local health publications, school bulletins and baby product catalogs.

## Client Analysis

Keep in mind that your specific client analysis might not match the statistics compiled by allied health care providers. For instance, almost every pregnant woman is under the care of an obstetrician, yet not every one (at least for now) receives massage.

Your demographic analysis of prenatal clients who receive massage might look something like this:

- \* 30 percent are referred by childbirth educators, midwives and health centers.
- \* 20 percent are referred by friends.
- \* 20 percent were clients before they got pregnant.
- \* 30 percent are referred from direct promotional endeavors.
- \* The average age range is between 27-to-38 years.
- \* 60 percent are professionals or teachers.
- \* The combined family income is between \$25,000 and \$65,000.
- \* 70 percent receive massage once per month.
- \* 10 percent receive massage once per week.
- \* 20 percent receive massage twice per month.
- \* The majority are more motivated to receive regular massage treatments in their last trimester.

By assembling all the information in the above categories, you could create this summary:

"My typical prenatal client is 32 years old. She has been married at least three years and has one child. She is under the care of an obstetrician, keeps a healthy diet, goes to Lamaze classes, exercises regularly and gets a massage once per month. She attends cultural events such as theater or concerts at least two times per year and dines out at least once per week. She shops at The Happy Baby Boutique, buys books on child care at The Basic Book Store, frequents Nature's Haven Health Food Store, reads the local weekly Entertainment Guide and subscribes to Parents Magazine. Her combined family income is greater than \$40,000. She holds an administrative position and works through her eighth month of pregnancy. Her major reasons for getting massage are to have an easy, healthy pregnancy and to feel better about herself. It relieves her lower back pain, increases her stamina, decreases edema, improves her body image, reduces stress and enhances the overall well-being of herself and her baby."

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**This article was brought to you by Cherie Sohnen-Moe**

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