

Marketing Exploration

Part 1: My Business Identity

A. My Brand

A brand is a collection of perceptions in the client's mind. These perceptions are triggered by your symbols (name and logo). A client's perception of your brand is influenced every time he or she calls to book an appointment or comes in for sessions. Use these questions to consider your brand.

- What is it about my services that make them different?
- What qualities and characteristics make me distinctive?
- Every feature of a service yields an identifiable benefit for clients. What is the "feature-benefit" of my business?
- What is the feature-benefit of each individual service I provide (i.e., my Swedish massage, my sports massage)?
- What adds distinctive, distinguished, measurable, and remarkable value to my business?
- In massage, what do I want to be famous (yes, famous!) for?
- What do I do to make clients want to belong to my club?

B. My Business Name

Choosing the right business name is an important part of your brand. Sometimes therapists make the mistake of naming their business using words from a foreign language or based on a technique clients don't recognize. Sometimes they create a name perceived by the general public as "new-agey" or one that is too focused and excludes too many client types. Use these questions to assess your business name.

- Is my business name distinctive and memorable?
- Is my business name easy to pronounce and spell?
- Does my business name reflect my mission, values, and vision?
- Does my business name suggest the services I offer?
- Is my business name being used by anyone else within a 100-mile radius?
- Is my business named after a technique clients don't recognize as massage? (For example, many clients don't know what neuromuscular therapy is and won't associate it with massage.)
- Is my business name too "new-agey" for the general population?
- Is my business name too narrow? For example, if your business name is Massage for Pregnancy and Children, you are likely to appeal to pregnant women and people who want massage for their children, but the businessman in search of a massage might avoid your business. If you only want to work on pregnant women and children, this is a great name. If you want to work on lots of other types of clients, then this name is too narrow.
- Will I attract more clients if I change my business name? If yes, is the cost to change everything with my name on it worth it? How many additional clients would I need to attract per week to cover this cost?



C. My Logo

Having a strong logo is an important part of your brand. Explore the value and strength of your logo with these questions.

- Is my logo attractive and fresh?
- Does my logo reflect my mission, values, and vision?
- Is my logo easy to associate with the types of services I provide?
- Would I communicate my brand to clients more effectively and attract more clients if I changed my logo? If yes, is the cost to change everything with my logo on it worth it? How many additional clients would I need to attract per week to cover this cost?

D. My Sign

You want to have a highly visible sign with your business name, logo, and phone number, and website on it. Explore the strength of your sign with these questions.

- Does my sign support my brand?
- Can drive-by traffic read my sign?
- Can pedestrian traffic read my sign?
- Will people know that I offer massage therapy when they view my sign?
- Can I use additional words on doorways or windows to clarify my services?

E. My Printed Materials

Your printed materials should be designed so that they reinforce your mission, values, and vision, feature your logo, use a consistent color scheme and font style, and clarify your services. Ask yourself these questions about your printed materials.

- Do I have all the printed materials I need to promote my business (i.e., business cards, brochures, flyers, gift certificates, menu of services, newsletters, referral cards, rewards cards)?
- Is the color scheme of my printed materials consistent?
- Is the font style of my printed materials consistent?
- Is my logo on everything?
- Do my printed materials describe my services in a way that will appeal to clients?

F. My Website

It is important to have a web presence so that potential clients can find you easily; most people have abandoned their Yellow Pages and head straight for the Internet when they want information. Ask yourself these questions about your website.

- Is my website attractive and easy to navigate?
- Does it support my brand (consistent color scheme, font style, use of logo, etc.)?
- Does it provide information that clients will find useful?
- If I were to upgrade my website, what would I do?

Part 2: Target Markets

A. The Clients I Want

Target market is a term that refers to the specific group of customers that a business aims to attract. Target markets are identified as the people with needs/wants that can be met with the services of your business. Make a list of the target markets you are trying to reach in your massage practice. Are you reaching those clients now?

B. My Current Clients

Think about your current clients and find out how much you know about them. See if you know their demographic indicators and lifestyle indicators. The table below provides an example of how you might determine how much you know about each of your current clients. Complete this exercise for all of your clients who visit you on a regular basis (up to 30 total clients). How well are you meeting the needs/wants of these clients? Why do they visit you regularly? If you were to put them into a target market group, how would you name them (i.e., pregnant moms-to-be, businesspeople, athletes, elderly clients)?

Client Name *Bill Busy*

Demographic Indicators		Life-Style Indicators	
Age <i>47</i>	Income Level <i>Not sure— above 100k?</i>	Philosophical Beliefs <i>Atheist</i>	Social Customs <i>Structured— comes every week at the same time</i>
Occupation <i>Lawyer</i>	Gender <i>M</i>	Health Care Needs <i>Relieve muscle ten- sion from working out</i>	Specialty Activities <i>Running/ cycling</i>
Geographic Location <i>About 20 minutes away</i>	Education Level <i>Law degree</i>	Personal priorities <i>Fitness and health balanced with work</i>	Other <i>Staying on sched- ule. He is never late and he can't stand it when others are late</i>

Part 3: Competition Analysis

Use ABMP's Massage Practice Competitive Analysis Form to compare and contrast your business with your competitors. What did you learn about your strengths and weaknesses? How will you capitalize on your strengths and minimize your weaknesses in marketing materials and promotional efforts?