

# Seeds of Growth

*To Build and Grow  
A Touch-Therapy Business*

Issue 3

## External Marketing

by Jay Van Schelt and Michael Gaeta

As a practitioner you are dedicated to helping others through the use of your chosen therapeutic approach. You are there to help anyone who comes to you and are dedicated to working with each person so that they can achieve a level of wellness that they cannot achieve alone. There is only one problem; letting people know that you are there to help. This is one of the most overlooked and least-liked parts of running a business.

The act of attracting clients and letting them know that you are there is called your marketing campaign. There are really two aspects to marketing that any business owner should be interested in: internal marketing and external marketing. In this article we will be talking about external marketing efforts. These consist of newspaper advertising, flyers and direct mail pieces.

Let's look at how the process works. The client starts with an unmet need. They begin to look around to satisfy this need and they become aware of your business through some form of marketing that they see. This has to first catch their attention by being interesting or eye-catching in some other way. The marketing then has to generate hope in the potential client that what you do will be able to help. At the same time, the marketing must generate a certain beginning level of trust that they can be helped by this modality. At this stage they are at the point of being able to take action by picking up the phone and calling you.

The problem is that most ads typically are small and there is very little room to use words to convey what is need to be said to accomplish this process. Further more most marketing efforts are based on the concept that there is a need to let people know what services are

offered by the business. This causes ads and flyers to have a certain look. If the business is massage then there is a picture of someone getting a massage. If the business is yoga classes then there is a picture of someone in a strong Yogic pose. These work to let people see what you do but do little to generate a feeling of hope to your potential clients.

As a matter of fact, they may even see the ad and say, "I could never do that pose," or, "I tried that already and it didn't work for me." So they pass your ad by, still looking for the ad that generates hope and trust in them so they can take action. Remember that people have many different unmet needs, which may respond to your modality, so your marketing approach must be broad in its appeal and should target many people's needs at the same time.

So how do we solve this problem of little room and needing a broad appeal to people's needs while still conveying what we do? Let's examine an approach that has had great success in the wellness and fitness industry for the past few years and is proving to be an effective strategy to marketing.

Rather than try to tell the client what services are offered through pictures, marketing efforts convey a feeling of how you will feel after working with this modality of healing. By using pictures of happy healthy people of all ages in various stages and activities of living a well life, we capture the awareness and imagination of people who are looking for hope. By tailoring the marketing approach to speak to the modality that is being offered and connecting the therapy to the expected outcome, we begin to allow the potential client to trust that we can help them. Then the decision process naturally can culminate with them taking action by picking up the phone and calling you.

Most of us have heard the saying, "A picture says a

thousand words." This is especially true in marketing; the right picture can convey many things. The pictures chosen by the growth-manager team convey a sense of joy and active living, which anyone can achieve. The design of the marketing pieces is done to stop the consumer's eye and thus capture their awareness. The copy of the marketing piece then connects a specific condition with the picture. This will allow people to identify both with the condition and the wanted outcome as a potential for them, which generates hope. The look of the marketing is clean and straightforward which gives a nice professional look to your business, which begins to create trust. When the above three things combine with a client's unmet need, then and only then does the possibility of taking action appear.

As with all efforts of marketing, consistency and effort to get the word out to the community is the key to success. What need to be consistent? The look of your mar-

keting is important, the ads should change but have the same look and feel so that clients identify them with the same business each time they see them. Also, the frequency and duration of marketing efforts should be consistent. If you run an ad one time, then it is seen but not acted upon. People need to see things two to three times to notice them. Consistent marketing efforts are an investment in the future business that you will have. For instance some people may not have noticed that they have an unmet need. Through consistent marketing efforts, when an unmet need appears then potential clients will already have seen your marketing—and may in fact already have you in mind and be looking for your next ad so they can call you, or they will remember your name and just pick up the phone. In other words, you have already generated the awareness, hope and trust necessary so that they arrive at action quickly when an unmet need is identified.

# The Legal Structure of Your Business

by Jay Van Schelt and Michael Gaeta

For someone in the massage business, there are three types of business structures: sole proprietor; partnership; or corporation. There are different types of structures for partnerships that can be used, such as general and limited partnerships. There are also many different types of corporations that can be formed. Some states have different types of corporations, such as limited liability corporations, also known as an LLC, S corporations and C corporations. Each of these has certain advantages and disadvantages and requirements to go through to create them. When you are going through the thought process of the vision and plan for your business this is a good time to consider which of these types of structures might fit your business. (You should consult a legal representative during this process to find out the options in your state.)

Let us look at the basics of each of these.

## The Sole Proprietorship

This is the simplest form of business and is the easiest to set up. You will need to have a name for your business. This is known as creating a DBA ("doing business as")

name. This will be the name that you open your account at the bank with and should be mentioned on your all of your business agreements as well. You then simply go to the town hall of the town where you wish to do business and file a fictitious name form. In this type of setup you own the business and are entirely responsible for both the liabilities and the rewards of doing business. One disadvantage of this type of structure is that all of your personal assets are at risk for any liabilities you may incur from your business. You should have business insurance, but that may not cover you completely. You will pay taxes on your regular personal IRS forms.

## Partnerships

This type of structure is widely used when there is more than one person involved. Most partnerships have an agreement which spells out the rights and responsibilities of all of the partners. This agreement will discuss capital contributions, percentages of ownership and how partners will share in the profits. There will be a section about resolving disputes and what happens if the partnership is dissolved. Partnership agreements can be drawn

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up by either yourself or an attorney and reviewed by both parties before signing. Partnerships must file tax returns on form 1065 each year in addition to personal tax-return forms.

Some of the advantages to this structure are that you are not alone in business; you share the risk and the work with one or more people.

One disadvantage is that you also share the decision-making with other people. You can also be held responsible for the business actions of your partners. This could leave you with unwanted liabilities and responsibilities. Check with both an attorney and an accountant in your state to determine your needs.

## Corporations

This structure is usually used when there are many different partners, or you are looking for capital investments or the limitation of liability to the partners. Corporations are formed by filing papers of incorporation with the state that you are doing business in, (usually with the secretary of state's office, although this may be different in some states). You must also apply for and receive a Federal Tax ID number called an EIN. This number will be the number that you will use for all of your corporate tax and employee paperwork.

After incorporation, stock is usually issued to the

## 10 Spa Touches to Add to a Session

1. **Body-wraps.** These can soften and hydrate the skin, help remove toxins, and soothe away aches and pains. A body-wrap is less messy than it sounds: Some products can simply be toweled off, without a sink or wet room in sight.
2. **Water.** "Taking the waters" was the first incarnation of spa-going, 2,000 years ago. Today, water add-ons can include a hot tub, steam canopy or steam room, a hand-held mister, a warm or cold compress applied to the client's forehead or back, steamy towels infused with essential oils, and whole-table water pads.
3. **Back-facial massage.** The same products and processes applied to the face can be applied to the back, leaving your client feeling pampered. Cleansing, exfoliation, massage and moisture combine to leave this large area of skin feeling energized, and smooth.
4. **Hot-oil scalp treatment and head wrap.** Start at the client's head, massaging in heated oil. Wrap the client's head in a warm towel, and leave it on while massaging the rest of her anterior side.
5. **Thallosotherapy.** Mineral-rich seaweed and algae can be used for body-wraps and back-facials (see above); all-over exfoliations can be done with Dead Sea salts, algae or a Thalassotherapy body scrubs; and seaweed extracts can be added to massage oil or lotion.
6. **Gems and crystals.** Believed for millennia to heal through energetic vibrations, gems and crystals are making inroads at spas. Choose high-quality stones, keep them clean, and take a class to learn how these ancient jewels can help clients—and yourself—get even more from a session.
7. **Hot and cool stones.** Smooth rocks can be heated in crock pots or cooled in the refrigerator. When placed on the body—between the toes and on the palms are two key areas—the result is a profound feeling of connection to the Earth.
8. **Color therapy.** Used for centuries, color therapy works on the energetic, or vibrational, level. The hue your room is painted can have a physical effect on clients, as can the color of your sheets. You can take color therapy a step further by incorporating color-energy cards and colored scarves into a session.
9. **Ceremonial foot treatments.** Putting extra attention on the feet can smooth and hydrate skin, while addressing muscular issues as well. Combine exfoliation and extra hydration with aromatic oils or lotions.
10. **Mud.** Some options for a private practice: foot masques; paraffin mixed with fango; back-facials (see above) made of mud and wiped off with warm, moist towels; mud-moistened towels applied to muscle groups.

members of the corporation, the amount of which is usually based either on the cash or expertise that the member brings to the venture. The amount of decision-making power any member can have is usually set forth in the articles of incorporation and the paperwork of the corporate structure. There are many ways to set up a corporate structure; working with an attorney will allow you to create the right set-up for your company.

One advantage of this type of structure is that your personal assets are not at risk with the company. Another advantage is that the business continues if one of the members dies or decides to leave for any reason. This structure can also be more attractive to financial institutions (for loan and financial support for growing your business).

Some of the disadvantages to a corporation are that it is a complicated business structure and there is a certain amount of tax disadvantages. Corporations pay taxes on income and in some states a yearly fee just for being incorporated. Then the members pay tax on any monies dispersed to them as well. This for some is considered a double tax.