



amta
american **massage therapy** association®

2011

massage profession

research report

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Introduction

Looking towards a new decade

The 2011 Massage Profession Research Report

Welcome to the 4th annual *Massage Profession Research Report*, AMTA's collection and analysis of current market data and trends that impact the massage therapy profession.

Whether you are currently working as a massage therapist or are looking towards professional practice, it makes sense to base your practice on research. To effectively build your practice and attract new clientele, you need **a way to scan the current climate of the profession**—including consumers, therapists, health care, schools and the growing impact of technology.

Three Annual Research Studies

In the pages that follow, you'll find results of three benchmark surveys that track the state of the profession through 2010:

- The **AMTA Consumer Survey** (14th annual) was commissioned by AMTA to poll men and women on their use of massage therapy. (Confidence level of plus or minus three percent.)
- The **AMTA Industry Survey** (6th annual) gained feedback from massage therapists on everything from compensation, to hours, to longevity in the industry. (Confidence level of plus or minus three percent.)
- The **AMTA Massage School Survey** (4th annual) secured feedback from schools with 500-plus hour programs. (Confidence level of plus or minus 7.8 percent.)

This report provides timely and relevant data on the state of the massage profession, compiled from the results of these surveys and supplemented by U.S. government statistics and information found in industry and/or business publications. (For methodology, see the appendix.)

Now, even more practical!

In our fourth year of providing this report, we're excited about the addition of a section on Massage Therapists Use of Technology.

You can use these resources to:

Prepare for long-time practice—Statistics garnered from practicing therapists and consumers of massage therapy will help you set the stage for a long and fruitful practice.

Increase your business know-how—In these pages, you'll find concrete data that that can help you confidently build and market a successful practice.

We'd love to hear from you.

Let's work together to take the massage therapy profession towards a bright future. If you have questions, suggestions, or identify additional information you need, please contact us anytime at research@amtamassage.org.

Executive Summary

Overall, the massage therapy marketplace has been affected by the economy. Consumers are getting fewer massages and massage therapists are working fewer hours and making less money per hour. When the economy improves, it is likely that consumer use will increase.

Below is a summary of key findings for each section of this report.

Consumers of Massage Therapy

The percentage of adult American consumers who received a massage in 2010 went down by four percentage points, from 22 percent to 18 percent, compared to the previous year. Consumers continue to strongly believe in the efficacy of massage with over 80 percent of them seeing massage as effective in reducing pain and as beneficial to their health and wellness. Also, 26 percent of the population expects to get a massage in the next twelve months.

The Massage Therapy Profession

During 2010, massage therapists worked an average of 19.4 hours per week, down slightly from 20.4 hours per week in 2009. Including tips, the average therapist earned \$41 per hour in 2010 vs. \$44.90 in 2009.

Although the last decade has seen the number of practicing massage therapists increase by close to 60 percent, this growth slowed in 2010 (1 percent increase over 2009). Most massage therapists continue to be female (87 percent), are older (average age is 43), had a different profession prior to becoming a therapist (74 percent) and are sole practitioners (65 percent). Massage therapists tend to work in multiple settings (an average of two settings) and practice a number of modalities (an average of eight).

Health Care and the Massage Industry

As the health care industry grows, this could mean growth opportunities for massage therapists. The health care industry is the largest industry in the U.S., employing 14.3 million people in a variety of settings and with varying education levels. Twenty-five percent of massage therapists reported working in a health care environment in 2010, compared to 10 percent of massage therapists working in these environments in 2005.

Training and Education of Massage Therapists

Massage therapy schools report their three top challenges include difficulty in attracting students, difficulty in marketing their schools or programs, and difficulty in keeping in touch with graduates.

In 2010, the average amount of initial training was 660 hours, an increase of 36 hours over 2009. Fifteen percent of schools offer distance learning classes.

Almost forty percent of massage therapists said they would like to have had more specific modality training in school with over two-thirds expressing the greatest interest in continuing education in new modalities/techniques. Ninety-seven percent of massage therapists took continuing education classes in 2010.

Most massage therapists want to use their training to start a business. Consistent with that is the finding that fifty-five percent of therapists said they wished they were taught more business skills in massage school. Most schools offer marketing courses, about two-thirds offer management courses, but less than half offer accounting courses or finance classes.

Massage Therapists' Use of Technology

Massage therapists are increasing their use of digital technology. Practically all therapists surf the Web and are increasing their use of basic Internet technology including using social media, managing social network profiles, building their own websites, uploading video clips, booking flights and sharing iTunes playlists.

Massage therapists are using technology in their business with twenty-eight percent of therapists using social media to stay in touch with clients and seventy percent of therapists using online advertising.

In the report to follow, these issues are explored in more detail, along with other issues important to the massage profession.

We'd love to hear from you.

Let's work together to educate the next generation of massage therapists. If you have suggestions, or identify additional information your need, please contact us anytime at research@amtamassage.org

Section 1 — Consumers of Massage Therapy¹

Consumers are the engine that drives the massage therapy profession. Without consumers, there would be no work for massage therapists. Without work for massage therapists, there would be no need for massage therapy schools. Ongoing consumer demand for massage drives longevity—of individual practitioners, graduates, schools and our profession.

Key Concerns:

How is the slow economy affecting consumer massage use?

How can you connect with the populations most likely to seek massage therapy?

Is there information that can help you make informed decisions about how you approach the business of massage therapy?

How can you gear your services towards the markets most likely to grow?

According to AMTA's 14th annual Consumer Survey conducted in July 2010, the percentage of adult American **consumers who said they received a massage in the last twelve months went down by** four percentage points, from 22 percent to 18 percent, compared to the previous year. This is not a surprise given the troubled economy.

In order to build continuing success, massage therapists need to identify categories of people most likely to use massage, and know what benefits of massage therapy most resonate with those consumers.

In this section, you'll...

- Find the latest data and trends on U.S. population and massage consumer use.
- See how data from AMTA's annual consumer survey and current U.S demographics can provide massage therapists with information to guide their marketing efforts.
- Recognize changes in attitudes and use of massage therapy by characteristics such as age, gender, income and region of the country.
- Better understand the massage therapy marketplace, so you can effectively plan for the future.

These questions will be answered:

- 1A. What changes are taking place in the overall U.S. population?
- 1B. What drives consumer use of massage therapy?
- 1C. Who gets massage?
- 1D. Why do consumers get massage?
- 1E. Where are consumers getting massage?
- 1F. What are the interesting consumer trends of the decade?

1A. What changes are taking place in the overall U.S. population?

As stated earlier, consumers are the engine of growth in the profession. The first part of this equation is the number and demographics of potential consumers. The greatest growth of the U.S. population will take place in the oldest segment. The population is becoming more diverse, driven by the surge of Hispanics in the U.S.—a segment that is getting massage at a slightly higher rate (20 percent) than the overall population (18 percent).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. population is growing, but at a slower rate

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. population grew from approximately 281.4 million in 2000 to 308.7 million in 2010. That's a population growth of 9.7 percent in the past decade, the slowest growth since the Great Depression. This slowdown in growth is due to three primary forces:

1. An aging population
2. Reduction in childbirth rates
3. A recent decline in immigration.

The U.S. population is aging

In 2000, the average age of the U.S. population was 35.3 years. As shown in the table below, the average age is expected to increase over the next decades.

Year	Average age of U.S. population
2000	35.3
2010	36.9
2020	37.7
2030	38.7
2050	39.0

Figure 1. Average current and projected age of U.S. population.

The largest percentage of growth in the U.S. population will occur within the oldest segment (ages 85 and older). In 2000, there were 4.2 million Americans age 85 and older. By 2030, this number is expected to more than double, and by 2050 more than double again to 19 million.² The number of people in the 70-85 age bracket will also double between 2010 and 2050.

The U.S. population is becoming more diverse

In 2009, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that the minority population in the United States reached an estimated 104.6 million, or 34 percent of the nation's total population, as compared to 31 percent reported in 2000.

The Hispanic population is a major driver of diversity. They:

- Represent the **fastest growing group**, with nearly one in six Americans, or 46.9 million, being of that origin.
- Keep the U.S. population **growing steadily** with 25 percent of the births in this country and high immigration levels.
- Are predicted to contribute **45 percent of the nation's population growth** between 2010 and 2030, and 60 percent between 2030 and 2050.²

For more information on U.S. population trends, refer to the U.S. Census Bureau data at <http://www.census.gov>.

Applying the Research:

1. Keeping track of the changing population trends and consumer massage use in the United States can be invaluable in planning how to better **market your practice to the right audience**.
2. As the population ages, consumers and health care professionals will increasingly look to massage to help **relieve pain and increase wellness**. Consider ways your practice might better support this trend.
3. Many massage therapists say they wish they'd better understood **the business of massage before they launched their career**. Anticipating changes in consumer expectations can help you better target your marketing efforts.
4. Massage therapists can expect the number of **Hispanics seeking massage to increase** in line with the population growth. What implications might this have for your practice? Are you bi-lingual? If so, you may be able to maximize your presence in the Hispanic market.

1B. What drives consumer use of massage therapy?

Overall, massage use has fluctuated over the past 5 years as the economy has encountered changes.

Massage use declined significantly in 2010

The 2010 AMTA Consumer Survey results show that:

- Fewer people received massages and with less frequency.
- Eighteen percent of all adult Americans had a massage at least once in the previous 12 months, compared to 22 percent in the 2009 survey.
- Twenty-eight percent of all adult Americans received a massage in the last five years, down from 34 percent a year ago.
- On average, those people who received massage in the previous year had 2.2 fewer massages than the previous year (6.5 massages in 2009 vs. 4.3 massages in 2010).
- Roughly, 37.7 million people had a total of 162 million massages in 2010, compared to 48 million people and a total of around 292 million massages in the U.S. reported in 2009.

- The total number of massages reported in 2010 decreased by 130 million from 2009, a 45% decrease in the number of massages received.
- With the gradual recovery of the economy, we expect the usage of massage to return to previous levels and continue to grow, but at a slower pace than in the past ten years.

During the past five years, consumer use has fluctuated year to year. For example, usage spiked in 2007 at 24% and then dipped to 20% in 2008. In 2010, consumer use for massage was 18% down from 22% in 2009.



Figure 2. Total use of massage among adult U.S. population.

Though consumer usage is down, data from the 2010 AMTA Consumer survey indicates consumers strongly believe in the efficacy of massage:

- 86 percent of consumers believe massage can be effective in reducing pain
- 84 percent of consumers believe massage can be beneficial to your health and wellness

Additionally, 26 percent of the population expects to get a massage in the next 12 months. This is further indication that the recent decline in consumer usage has been due to the recent economic recession.

1C. Who gets massage?

Gender, generation, education and income all affect the likelihood of consumers using massage. Populations that continue to use massage regularly are women and younger baby boomers (45-54). It is noteworthy that, despite the economy, those with less education, and lower household income, increased their use of massage in 2010, compared to the previous year.

The 2010 AMTA Consumer Study showed that the main consumers of massage are:

Women... receive 70 percent of all massages.

- Women’s usage of massage remained steady with 25 percent of all adult women getting at least one massage in the past 12 months.
- However, women got half the number of massages in 2010 (an average of 3.8), as in 2009 (7.6 massages). This data is consistent with data found in other industries such as the beauty industry, where women continued to use beauty products and treatments but spent 50 percent less on those products in 2010.
- The decline in the average number of massages women received greatly contributes to the overall decline of total massages given in the U.S in 2010.

Adult Americans who received a massage	2009	2010
Men	18%	10%
Women	26%	25%

Figure 3. Total use of massage among U.S. population by gender.

Men – Contrary to the trend for women’s use of massage, fewer adult men received a massage in 2010, 10 percent compared to 18 percent in 2009. This is consistent with other 2010 research that shows fewer men are visiting health care providers in the depressed economy.

However, those men who did have massage went more often, an average of 5.8 times in 2010 compared to 4.7 times in 2009.

Baby Boomers and up – Younger boomers usage remained steady, while older boomers and seniors decreased their usage in 2010.

- Younger Baby Boomers (ages 45-54) usage remained steady in 2010 at 23 percent compared to 24 percent in 2009.
- Older Baby Boomers (ages 55-64) usage of massage declined in 2010 to 18 percent compared to 24 percent in 2009.
- Seniors (ages 65+) usage declined to 8 percent from 12 percent a year ago.

College educated — In 2010, the correlation previously seen between the level of consumer education and massage use occurred to a lesser degree, as those who ‘didn’t complete high school’ actually increased their usage by 5 percentage points from 2009. And, those who ‘completed college’ decreased their usage by 6 percentage points.

Level of consumer education	Massage use 2009	Massage use in 2010
Completed college	35%	29%
Didn't complete high school	8%	13%

Figure 4. Total use of massage among U.S. population by level of education.

Still, as you can see in the above chart (Figure 4), those who have completed college were more than twice as likely to get a massage than those who didn’t complete high school. The fact that those who ‘didn’t complete high school’ increased usage of massage by 5 percentage points this past year likely indicates the general population is increasing its acceptance of the value of massage.

Lower Income Households — Further supporting the data above, the usage among those households with a yearly income less than \$35,000 remained the same at 10 percent, despite the economy, and those households with yearly income between \$35,000 and \$50,000 increased their usage from 24 percent in 2009 to 26 percent in 2010.

Regions – With the exception of the Northeast, massage usage decreased in all regions in 2010. Massage usage particularly declined in the West, from 31 percent usage in 2009 to 21 percent usage in 2010. Massage usage increased in the Northeast from 14 percent in 2009 to 20 percent in 2010. This likely reflects that the Northeast was less affected by the economy than those in the western states where the housing market collapse was more pronounced.

Metro and Non-Metro Areas – Usage decreased in both Metro and Non-Metro areas in the past 12 months. Metro area residents decreased their use of massage by 4 percentage points to 19 percent, and Non-Metro area residents decreased their usage by 5 percentage points to 13 percent.

Applying the Research:

1. The **state of the economy** affected the rate of consumer use in 2010, as men’s usage decreased substantially, and women drastically cut back on the average number of massages they received.
2. While the economy affected use of massage in almost all demographic groups, there are some bright spots as lower income households usage increased in spite of the economy, signaling increased acceptance of massage in general. Consider ramping up your marketing to lower income demographic groups.

3. **Marketing to men** may open new streams of revenue. While male massage usage decreased in 2010, those men who did receive massage went more often than the previous year.

1D. Why do consumers get massage?

In 2010, massage for relaxation increased, as more consumers looked to massage to reduce stress, including stress from a flagging economy.

Primary reasons for receiving last massage

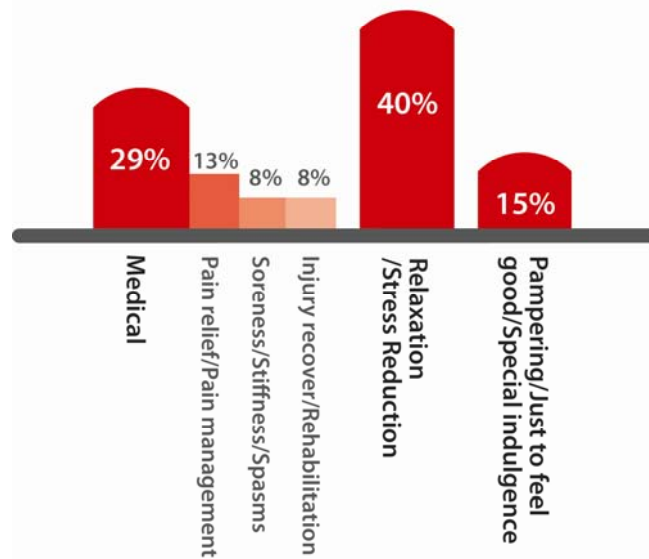


Figure 5. Primary reasons for receiving last massage in 2010.

Consumers are seeking massage therapy for stress reduction and relaxation more than ever. While use of massage for medical reasons decreased slightly this year (down to 29 percent from 32 percent last year), the use of massage for relaxation went up significantly.

- In 2010, 37 percent of Americans said they felt more stressed than they did a year ago. In 2009, 57 percent of Americans felt more stressed than the previous year.
- Forty percent of Americans who received a massage in the past 12 months said their last massage was primarily to reduce stress or relax — up 8 percentage points from 2009.

Who's most likely to get massage to manage stress in 2010?

- **Men** — 45 percent of men receiving massage cited stress management as the primary reason for their last massage. That's a 23 percentage point increase from 2009, when only 22 percent of men cited stress as the primary reason for their last massage.
- **African Americans** — 55 percent of African Americans vs. 35 percent of Caucasians.

- **The Northeast and South** – 54 percent of Northeasterners and 48 percent of Southerners.
- **College graduates** — 48 percent of college graduates vs. 28 percent of high school graduates.
- **Young consumers** — 44 percent of 18-34 year olds vs. only 17 percent of those 65+.
- **Metro residents** — 41 percent of metro residents vs. 30 percent of non-metro residents

Massage for medical and health reasons declined slightly in 2010.

Twenty-nine percent of massage consumers had their last massage for a medical reason, which is slightly lower than last year’s results of 32 percent.

Who relies on massage for medical reasons?

- **Seniors** — 58 percent of consumers over 65 years of age got their last massage for medical reasons (41 percent in 2009).
- **Men** — At 38 percent, **significantly more males got a massage for medical reasons** than women (28 percent). Men’s usage, though, declined from 2009 (45 percent) and women’s usage increased for medical reasons from 2009 (24 percent).
- **Those in pain** — 13 percent of consumers got their last massage specifically for either pain relief or pain management compared to 19 percent in 2009.
 - The percentage of seniors (65+) getting massage primarily for pain relief increased to 27 percent in 2010 compared to 18 percent in 2009.
 - 24 percent of non-high school graduates received their last massage for pain relief compared to 9 percent of college graduates.
 - The percentage of those 45-54 years old getting their last massage for pain relief declined to 15 percent compared to 25 percent last year.
- **Those with an injury** — 8 percent of consumers received their last massage for injury rehabilitation, with 13 percent of those 45-54 years old getting their last massage for that reason (compared to 4 percent in 2009).

Americans’ beliefs about medical applications of massage	2009	2010
Massage can be effective in reducing pain.	86%	86%
Massage can be beneficial to health and wellness.	85%	84%

Figure 6. American’s belief about massage in 2010

The third most prevalent reason for consumers to get massage is for pampering, a special indulgence, or just to feel good.

This reason accounted for 15 percent of recent massage purchases by consumers, which is down from 17 percent in 2009.

- Women are more likely than men to use massage for pampering or special indulgence, 18 percent of women vs. 10 percent of men in 2010. Men’s usage of massage for pampering was down from 15 percent in 2009.

- **Those 45-54** are more likely to say they received their last massage for pampering reasons (20 percent) than any other age group.
- Those in the **Midwest** (31 percent) were twice as likely as those in any other region to have received their last massage primarily for pampering reasons in 2010.³
- Thirty-six percent of those who had a household income between \$50,000 and \$75,000 received their last massage for pampering/just to feel good/special indulgence. That percentage is twice as high as the next closest income group, those with household income between \$35,000 and \$50,000 (18 percent).
- Twenty-nine percent of high school graduates received their last massage primarily for pampering.

Applying the Research:

1. Consumer usage and the number of massages given are significantly down from last year, but massage continues to grow in acceptance across all demographics as evidenced by the increased usage by lower income households and high school non-graduates.
2. Stress/relaxation reduction (40 percent) was the top motivator for consumers of massage in 2010, followed by medical reasons (29 percent) and pampering (15 percent).
3. Consider marketing to men for stress and relaxation as 45 percent of men cited stress/relaxation as the primary reason for their last massage.
4. **Older massage recipients** are most likely to respond to a marketing message that includes **pain relief or treatment for a health condition**.
5. **Women** are most responsive to the idea of **massage for pampering**.

1E. Where are consumers getting massage?

Men and women prefer to receive massage therapy in different venues—women are most likely to choose a spa, whereas men are most likely to receive it in a massage therapist’s office.

Spa is the most frequently chosen venue for massage.

In the 2010 AMTA Consumer Survey, consumers were asked where they received their last massage. Spas are still the top venue for people to get a massage. However, only 20 percent received their last massage at a spa in 2010, down from 24 percent in 2009. The percentage of consumers receiving massage at a hotel/resort/cruise greatly increased in the last year and was one of the top venues. (See Figure 8.)

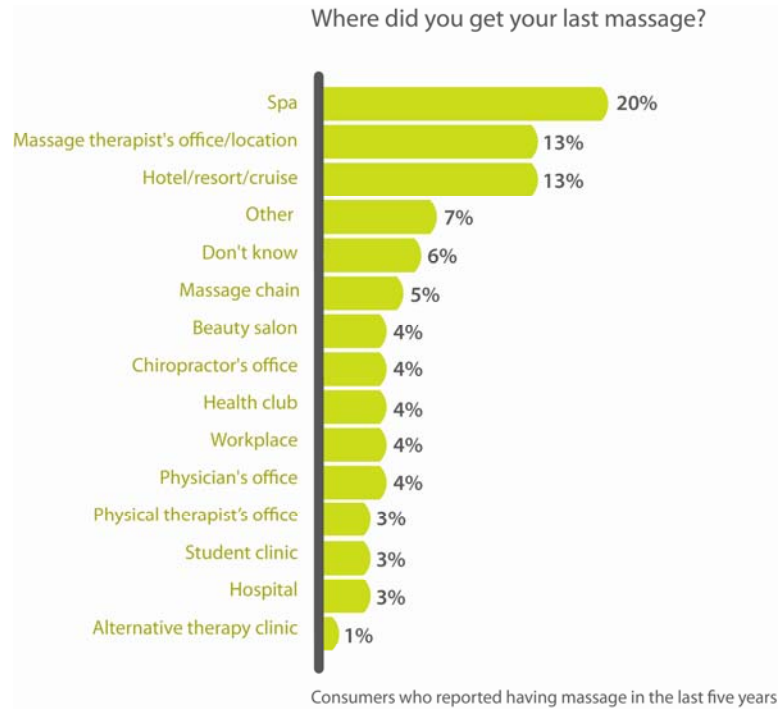


Figure 8. Where did you get your last massage in 2010?

What demographics affect where consumers receive massage?

Men and women prefer different venues:

- Women are far more likely to choose spas as their preferred venue for a massage (27 percent of females vs. 7 percent of males)
- Men are more likely to choose a massage therapist's office/location as their preferred place to get a massage (18 percent of males vs. 11 percent of females)
- However, both men and women are getting more massages at a hotel/cruise/resort. Thirteen percent of men, and fourteen percent of women, said their last massage was at a hotel/cruise/resort

Younger and older consumers have different preferences:

- Seniors (65+) strongly favor getting massage at massage therapist's office/location (25 percent).
- Younger respondents (18 to 34 years old) have a preference for getting massage at a spa or at a hotel/cruise/resort (22 percent).³

Applying the Research:

1. Consider your place of practice and where consumers are receiving massage. It's unlikely you can change your location but how can you tailor your marketing to attract more clients?
2. Consumers prefer receiving massages at spas, particularly women, and more people are getting massage at a hotel/resort/cruise location. How can you capture that "get away" feel in marketing your practice?

3. If you work out of an office, consider **marketing to older consumers and men** who prefer receiving massage at a massage therapist's office/location.

1F. What are the interesting consumer trends of the decade?

- **Consumer use of massage** over the past decade increased in seven of the last ten years, peaking at 24 percent in 2007. Due to the recent economic recession, however, consumer usage (18 percent) and the average number of massages (4.3) in 2010 were nearly at the same levels as 2001.
- Men's use of massage was at a ten year low in 2010 at 10 percent, down from a ten year high of 18 percent in 2009.
- Women's use of massage has grown, but women reported far fewer massages overall in 2010 than they did in 2009.
- Fewer consumers are getting a massage for pampering/just to feel good/special indulgence – just 15 percent in 2010 compared to 31 percent in 2001.
- College graduates and high school non-graduates have increased their use of massage over the past decade. Twenty-nine percent of college graduates in 2010 reported receiving a massage in the past year, compared to 22 percent in 2001. Eleven percent of high school non-graduates reported receiving a massage in 2010, compared to 4 percent in 2001.

It's exciting to consider how the field of massage therapy will continue to grow and evolve over the next decade. If you have questions regarding information included in this report or can think of additional data that you would like to have available in the future, please contact us anytime at research@amtamassage.org.

We are here to serve your needs.

Section 2 — The Massage Therapy Profession³

As a massage professional, understanding the latest trends as well as the challenges facing the profession is key to your success. Incorporating up-to-date demographics allows you to explore new approaches to building a successful career.

Key Concerns:

How can you adapt your practice to reflect changes occurring in the massage profession due to the economy?

What are the latest trends in hours and compensation for massage therapists, and where do you fit into that picture?

How are today's massage therapists finding and retaining clients?

Where are the best opportunities for therapists being created within the profession?

In this section, you'll...

- Learn the latest demographics of massage therapists.
- Gain insight into current challenges facing massage therapists.
- Understand the role of the current economy in the employment, compensation, and overall business outlook for massage therapists.
- Find practical ideas for incorporating the latest professional trends into your practice.

As you answer these questions:

2A. Who is practicing massage therapy?

2B. How much are massage therapists compensated for their work?

2C. What are some of the biggest challenges facing massage therapists?

2D. Where do massage therapists practice?

2E. What's the latest on the spa industry and massage therapy?

2F. Are national massage chains still expanding?

2A. Who is practicing massage therapy?

In the last decade, the number of practicing massage therapists has increased by around 59 percent. The profession is still adding massage therapists, but at a slower rate than in the past.⁵

According to the 2010 AMTA Industry Survey, massage therapists in the U.S. are:

- **Mostly female** — 87 percent of massage therapists are women, a fact that hasn't changed over the last few years.
- **Older**— The average age of a massage therapist is 43, which is comparable to data before 2009. (See the figure 9 that follows for more on this trend.)

- **Educated** — 40 percent of massage therapists have a Bachelor’s Degree or higher, with 44 percent having completed some college, a vocational certificate or an Associate’s Degree. (See Figure 9 below.) This is roughly consistent with previous data.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Average Age	44	42	44	49	43
<u>Education (Non-Massage)</u>					
High school grad or less	11%	14%	13%	12%	15
Some college	27	28	27	28	23
Associate’s Degree	15	14	14	12	13
Technical/vocational certificate	10	9	11	10	8
Bachelor’s degree	27	25	26	25	29
Master’s degree	9	8	8	11	10
Doctorate	1	2	2	2	1
<u>Gender</u>					
Male	15%	15%	12%	15%	13%
Female	85	85	88	85	87

Figure 9. Massage therapist’s profile.

Highlights from Figure 9:

The average age of massage therapists went from 49 in 2009 to 43 in 2010. This is in line with the years prior to 2009, suggesting there was a statistical anomaly in 2009.

Most massage therapists are coming from another profession.

Three fourths of massage therapists (74 percent) had a different profession prior to becoming massage therapists. However, more therapists are reporting massage as a first career, indicative of the increasing popularity of massage therapy as a profession.

We also learned that:

- Therapists working at spa/salon and health club settings are comparatively **more likely to enter massage therapy as their first profession.** (These types of work settings may attract younger candidates with less prior work experience.)
- At 77 percent, **sole practitioners and health care workers are most likely to have had a different occupation** prior to becoming a massage therapist (see figure 10 on the next page for more information).
- **Business and health care jobs are the most common** careers therapists had before entering the massage profession.

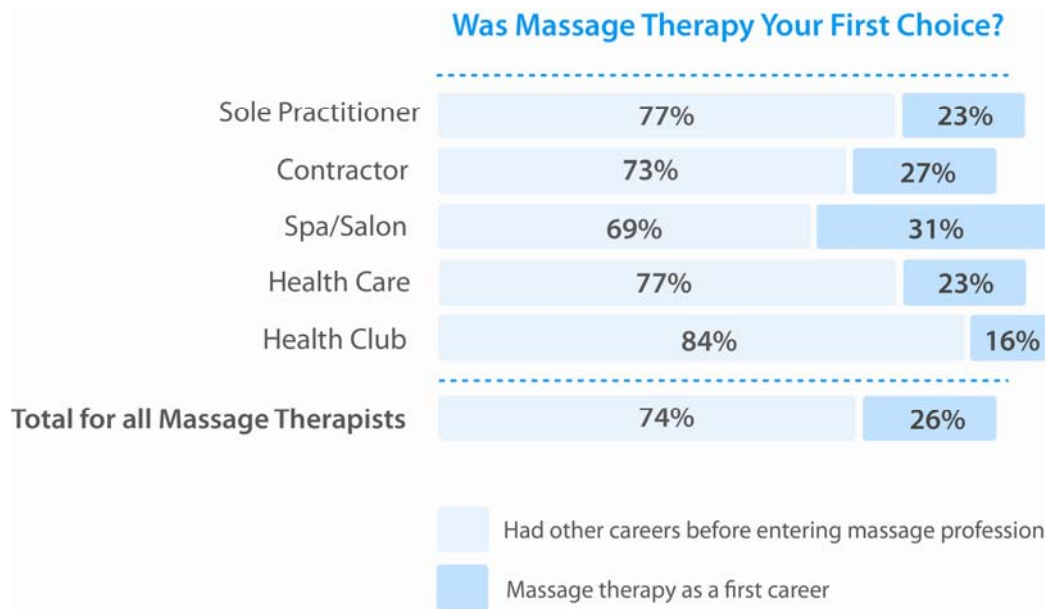


Figure 10. Was massage therapy your first career choice? (2010 data)

Massage therapists continue to expand their repertoire.

Therapists report using an average of eight modalities/techniques:

- This is in line with 2009 data of seven modalities but up from five modalities reported in prior years.
- Top modalities practiced include Swedish massage, deep tissue, chair, trigger point and hot stone. (Similar to 2009 data.)
- **Specialization in myofascial and craniosacral techniques has gone up** significantly, which shows that massage therapists may be looking to become more marketable to clients that seek out massage for pain relief and wellness.
- **More massage therapists are performing chair massage at any time in the past 5 years (62 percent).**

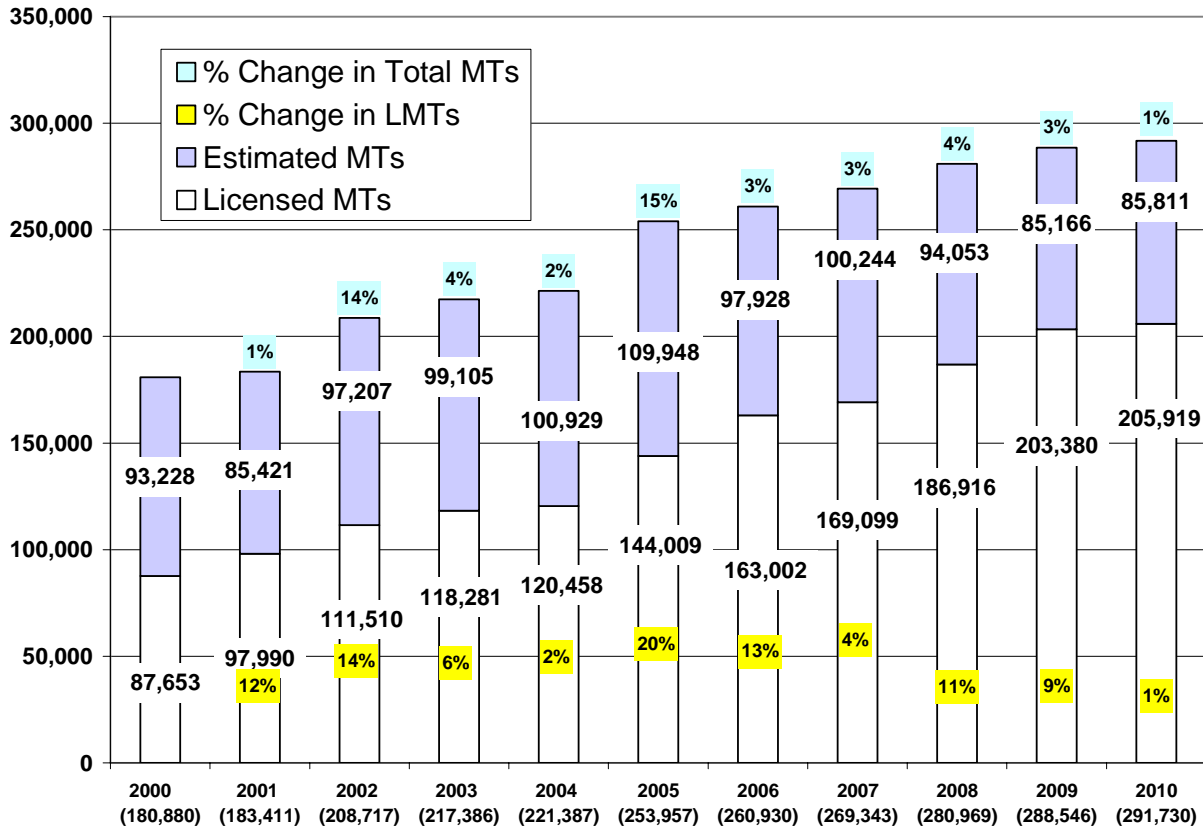
The number of massage therapists in U.S continues to increase.⁴

In the last decade, the massage therapy profession experienced a fantastic growth—the number of practicing massage therapists has increased by around 59 percent.

But in the last couple of years, mostly due to the decreasing number of new graduates and the effect of the economy on consumer demand for massage, the **growth has become more moderate and is likely to remain moderate to flat.** The total growth in practicing massage therapists from the beginning of 2009 to the beginning of 2010 was 1 percent, compared to a growth of 3 percent last year.

The following chart illustrates the growth of the total estimated number of massage therapists over time

Figure 11.
Total MTs By Year
(LMT and EMT Combined)



*LMT: licensed massage therapists, MT: massage therapists from non-licensing states.

Highlights from Figure 11:

In 2010 there were approximately 291,730 massage therapists in the United States, which is up from 288,546 massage therapists in 2009.

Applying the Research:

1. Have you had a different profession prior to becoming a massage therapist? If so, consider how you can use the lessons and skills acquired in your previous career to bolster your current practice.
2. Massage therapists are using an average of 8 modalities/techniques, with many specializing in myofascial and craniosacral techniques. To maintain professional success, you might consider specializing or **incorporating a new technique** into your repertoire.

2B. How much are massage therapists compensated for their work?

Due to a weak economy, massage therapists are receiving less compensation per hour than they did last year.

How much are clients paying for massage?

- According to the results of the *2010 AMTA Industry Survey*, clients pay an average of \$60 per one hour of massage. That's \$3 less per hour than last year.
- Spa/salons charge the most at \$66.00.
- Sole practitioners and health clubs charge the least at \$60.00.

Last year saw a decrease in the average hourly wage of massage therapists.

On average, **massage therapists earn \$41.00 (including tips) per hour down from \$44.90 (including tips) per hour in 2009.**

Excluding tips, **employers pay** massage therapists an average of \$31.60 per hour. That's \$3.80 less per hour than in 2009.

The dollar amount of tips has remained steady at an average of \$9.50. However, clients are tipping more frequently, 55% of the time in 2010 compared to 44% in 2009.

The table below shows that sole practitioners receive the highest pay, while Spa/salon workers get the lowest rate. Health club massage therapists were the only group to see their average wage increase (by \$1.50 per hour) from 2009 to 2010.

Setting/Practice	Average hourly pay (excluding tips)
Sole practitioners	\$36.10
Health club massage therapists	35.30
Contractor	33.30
Health care	30.90
Spa/salon	30.60

Figure 12. An average hourly pay (excluding tips) by setting (2010 data).

Massage therapists are working slightly less hours than last year.

On average, **massage therapists work 19.4 hours per week**, slightly down from 20.4 hours per week in 2009.

Massage **therapists are paid for 14.7 of the 19.4** average hours they work per week, 79 percent of the time they spend at work.

According to the respondents of the survey, **a full-time practice for massage therapy is about 26 hours per week**, which is consistent with the number of hours reported in prior years.

Significantly fewer employers are offering health benefits.

As the economy struggles to recover, a **smaller percentage of massage therapists receive health benefits** from their employers (10 percent). That’s a decline from 19 percent of massage therapists a year ago. Spa/salon massage therapists are the most likely to receive health benefits (11 percent).

Massage therapists continue to depend heavily on repeat clients.

In 2010 massage therapists saw an average of 41.5 clients each month, a decrease from 44.3 clients in 2009.

Repeat **clients make up the majority of appointments** – in fact, around 72 percent! (See below). With the effects of the poor economy and the growing difficulty in attracting new clients, massage therapists should focus more than ever on meeting their repeat clients’ needs.

	<u>Total Clients</u>				<u>% New Clients</u>				<u>% Repeat Clients</u>			
	2007 #	2008 #	2009 #	2010 #	2007 %	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %	2007 %	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %
Total	41.1	40.9	44.3	41.5	35	29	26	28	65	71	74	72
Sole Practitioner	36.8	40.4	45.1	41.0	26	23	20	22	74	77	80	78
Contractor	39.0	39.3	44.3	38.9	41	33	32	34	59	67	68	66
Spa/salon	43.8	43.4	45.7	38.5	54	45	45	43	46	55	55	57
Health care	51.8	45.2	53	47.6	30	28	28	23	70	72	72	77
Health club	40.6	42.8	43.7	36.8	36	37	29	32	64	63	71	68

Figure 13. Monthly clients of massage therapists.

Highlights from Figure 13:

Repeat clients comprised a large majority of the customers massage therapists saw on a monthly basis in 2010 (72 percent).

Sole practitioners and massage therapists working in health care settings are most likely to have a larger share of repeat customers (78 percent for sole practitioners and 77 percent for health care practitioners).

Massage therapists continue to depend on bartering.

Eighty percent of massage therapists barter or trade their services. That’s up from 72 percent of massage therapists in 2009.

On average, therapists barter massage services about 12 times per year, higher than reported in prior years. Massage therapists in all work settings have significantly increased their use of bartering, the sole exception being those working in a health club setting.

The average dollar value of services bartered each year rose to \$558 in 2010 from \$535 in 2009. Sole practitioners and Spa/Salon workers saw their dollar value of services increase, while those

that worked as a contractor, at a health club or in a health care setting saw their average value of bartered services decline in 2010.

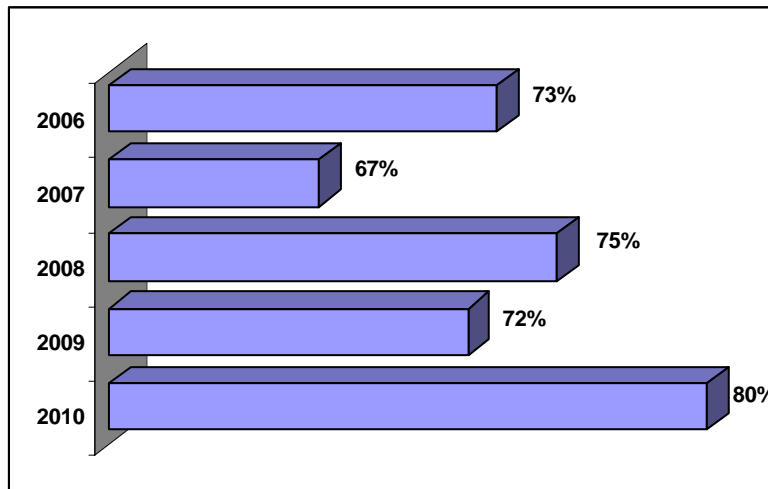


Figure 14. Percentage of massage therapists bartering services.

Highlights from Figure 14: Eighty percent of massage therapists report bartering massage services in 2010, significantly more than in 2009 (72 percent).

More massage therapists are advertising their services

Seventy-seven percent of massage therapists advertised their services in 2010 compared to 68 percent in 2009.

Consumers find therapists through referrals and internet

While eighty-four percent of massage therapists said that new clients come from referrals, 51 percent of massage therapists also said new clients were finding them online via internet/websites and social media.

More massage therapists advertising online

Online advertising grew by 7 percentage points this past year to 70 percent – largely driven by internet/websites. Online advertising has doubled since 2008 when only 36 percent of massage therapists advertised online.

Medium	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<u>Advertise Services</u>	73%	72%	72%	68%	77%
<u>Online (Net)</u>	22	32	36	63	70
<i>Internet/website</i>	---	---	24	28	50
<i>Social media</i>	---	---	---	52	55
<u>General Print (Yellow Pages, Newspapers, Newsletters)</u>	38	42	40	38	36
<u>Referrals</u>	52	37	40	30	30
<u>Community/Local Events</u>	16	38	38	33	35
<u>Radio</u>	3	5	5	4	1
<u>Business Cards</u>	3	4	5	1	2

Figure 15. Media massage therapists use to advertise their services (2010 data)

Massage therapists are using social media in their practices

Massage therapists are increasingly using social media to stay in touch with clients. In 2010, twenty-eight percent of massage therapists said they use an online social network to stay in touch with clients, that's a 15 percentage point increase from 2008. Facebook is the most popular site as 63.2 percent of therapists now use it compared to 30.2 percent in 2008.

More massage therapists have websites

Thirty-eight percent of massage therapists now have a website, compared to 27 percent in 2008.

Compared to last year, massage business has improved

2009 was the most difficult year for independent massage therapists in the recent past. The good news is business has reportedly improved for more massage therapists (44%) than declined (27%) — similar to levels seen before 2009.

Business outlook has improved across all work settings

- Forty-four percent of massage therapists reported that business had improved in the past year, compared to 25 percent of therapists the previous year. This positive outlook in business was seen across all massage therapy work settings. (Read more about health care trends and employment opportunities in Section 3 of this report).
- Sixty-two percent of massage therapists who are new to the industry (0-2 years in practice) said their business had improved in the past year.

Compared to last year, massage business has....

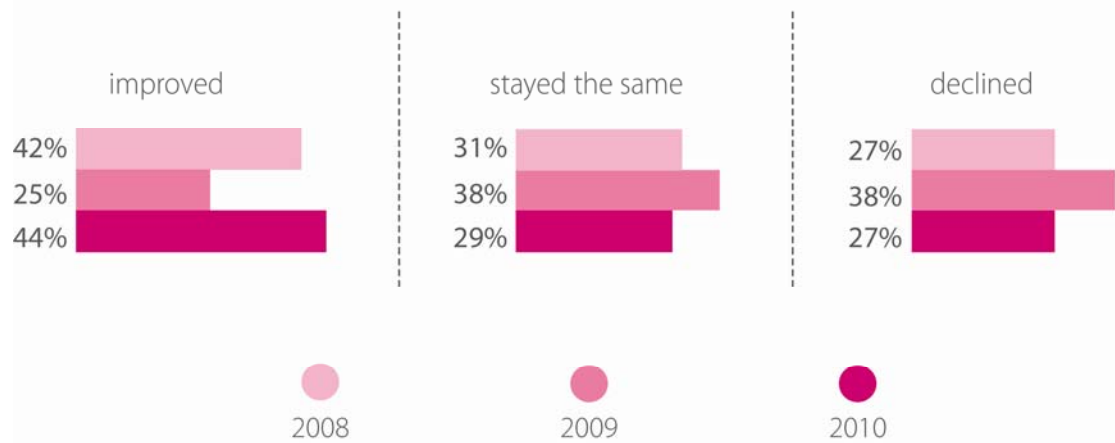


Figure 16. Compared to last year, your massage business....

Applying the Research:

1. Where do you fit into the current professional trends for massage therapists? Use the latest information about compensation, tips, and hours for each setting **to make educated decisions** as you build your career.
2. As for most people in the United States, **the economy is a major concern for massage therapists**. However, there are signs of recovery as massage therapists across all work settings report business has improved in the past year.
3. **Seventy-two percent of appointments in 2010 came from repeat clients**. With this in mind, massage therapists should focus more than ever on meeting their repeat clients' needs.
4. Referrals continue to be the most effective source of new clients, but **online advertising**, driven mostly by internet websites, has doubled since 2008. **Do you have your own website?** Get a free website from AMTA and reference AMTA's social media guides to increase your online presence.

2C. What are some of the biggest challenges facing massage therapists?

Business/economic issues were the biggest challenge cited by massage therapists in 2010 followed closely by Industry Perception.

Massage therapists are affected by the economic recession.

- Fifty-one percent of respondents cited business/economic issues as being their biggest challenge.
- Twenty-one percent of all respondents marked “**poor economy**” as the top industry challenge, making it the most prevalent response. Figure 17 below illustrates the top challenges reported by massage therapists.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<u>Industry Perceptions (Net)</u>	<u>53%</u>	<u>52%</u>	<u>47%</u>	<u>45%</u>	<u>46%</u>
Being recognized/respected as health care professionals	23	17	15	19	14
Public awareness of the benefits of massage	13	10	14	14	12
Bad history/poor reputation	8	3	2	4	2
Recognition from insurance companies	6	4	5	4	7
Credibility	4	4	8	6	5
Sexual connotation/massage parlor	1	8	8	5	7
Under qualified massage therapists	-	5	5	3	4
<u>Business/Economy Issues (Net)</u>	<u>30%</u>	<u>34%</u>	<u>48%</u>	<u>47%</u>	<u>51%</u>
Licensing/legislation	7	5	7	6	5
Maintaining steady business/finding new clients	7	8	7	4	12
Too much competition	6	7	4	5	2
Difficulties with insurance	2	2	7	8	7
Poor economy	2	3	20	19	21
Inadequate standards for certification/need national regulation	-	-	4	4	2
<u>Job Factors (Net)</u>	<u>28%</u>	<u>27%</u>	<u>22%</u>	<u>24%</u>	<u>26%</u>
Avoiding personal injury	6	11	8	7	9
Adequate knowledge/training	6	3	*	1	1
Low income	5	5	5	7	7
Sexual boundaries	4	1	1	1	1
No health insurance as a massage therapist	4	3	4	3	5
Full-time therapists getting burnt out	3	3	5	4	4
Finding/maintaining employment	2	2	1	1	1
<u>Education Issues (Net)</u>	<u>4%</u>	<u>2%</u>	<u>8%</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>7%</u>

Figure 17. Top challenges facing massage therapists

Highlights from Figure 17:

Look in the “2010” column to see what were reported as 2010’s top challenges by category and subcategory. Top challenges include “poor economy,” and “being recognized as health care professionals.”

Other top challenges included being recognized/respected as health care professionals, public awareness of the benefits of massage and maintaining steady business/finding new clients.

Applying the Research:

1. One of the top challenges reported by massage therapists is the current economic situation. Think of some adjustments you can make in your business plan **to help you thrive in difficult economic times.**
2. Massage therapists cite being recognized and **respected in the healthcare industry** and credibility as main concerns. As a practicing massage therapist (or someone preparing for practice), what can you do to boost your credibility within this growing industry?

2D. Where are massage therapists practicing?

Massage therapists tend to work in multiple settings

According to the results from the *2010 AMTA Industry Survey* question, “In what type of massage setting do you work?”

- Therapists are working in their client’s home/business/corporate setting (39 percent) and *My home* (37 percent), comparable to last year.
- Fewer massage therapists are working at *My Office*, 34 percent compared to 36 percent in 2009.
- Twice as many massage therapists are working in massage therapy-only massage franchises or chains, 8 percent in 2010 compared to 4 percent in 2009.
- **Employment in the spa/salon bounced back** by three percentage points to 26 percent.
- **Employment within the health care setting appears stable at 25 percent.**

See Figure 18 for the visual representation of this data.

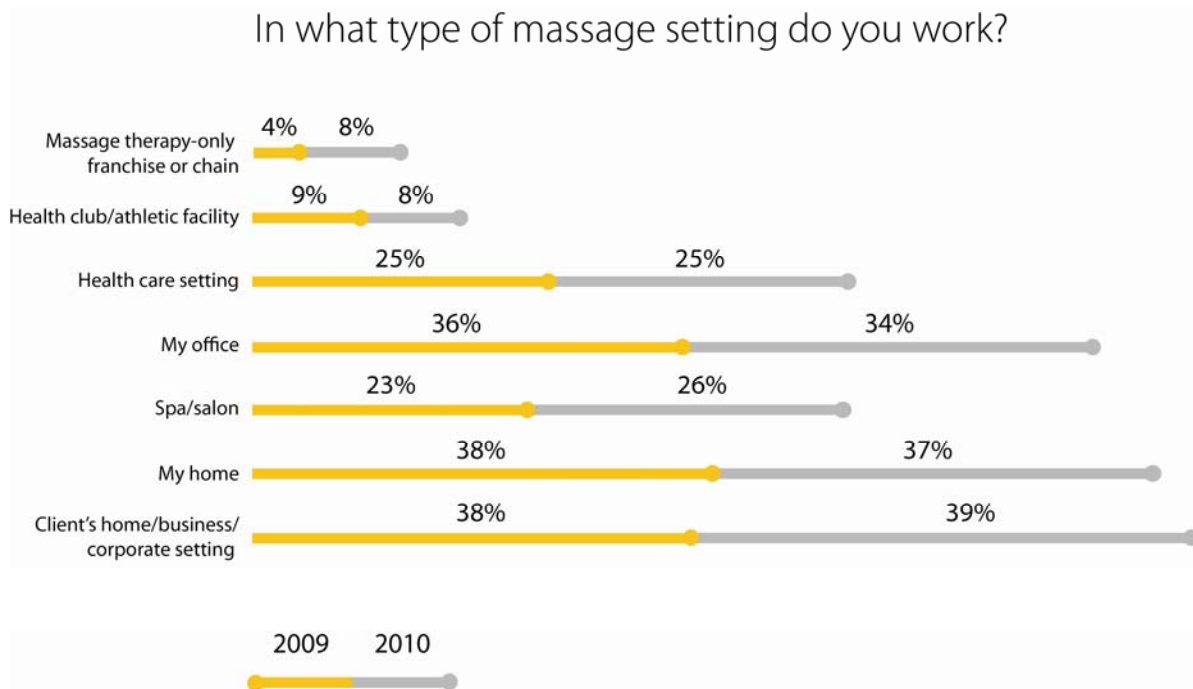


Figure 18. In what type of massage setting do you work?

The majority of massage therapists describe themselves as sole practitioners, and many work in multiple settings.

Massage therapists work in an average of two settings.

In 2010, fewer massage therapists described themselves **primarily** as sole practitioners (65 percent as compared with 74 percent in 2009), and more as spa/salon employees (see figure 19 below).

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Sole practitioner/partner in own business	68%	56%	67%	74%	65%
Self-employed contractor to other business	25%	20%	25%	22%	24%
Spa/salon employee	17%	29%	29%	23%	26%
Health care setting employee	13%	24%	27%	25%	25%
Health club employee	3%	7%	8%	9%	8%

Figure 19. Massage therapists by how they describe themselves

The average massage therapist worked 19.4 hours a week in 2010, that's slightly down from 20.4 hour per week in 2009.

19.4 hours	The hours that the average massage therapist works in a week (20.4 in 2009).
26 hours a week	What most massage therapists consider a full-time practice (consistent over the last 3 years).
13 hours a week	For the 47% of therapists who want to work more hours, the number of extra hours they would like.

Figure 20. Facts about massage therapist's work week and more.

The average massage therapist spends 14.4 hours, 74 percent of their workweek, performing massage. The other 5 hours, 26 percent of their workweek, is spent on marketing, general business tasks and other tasks.

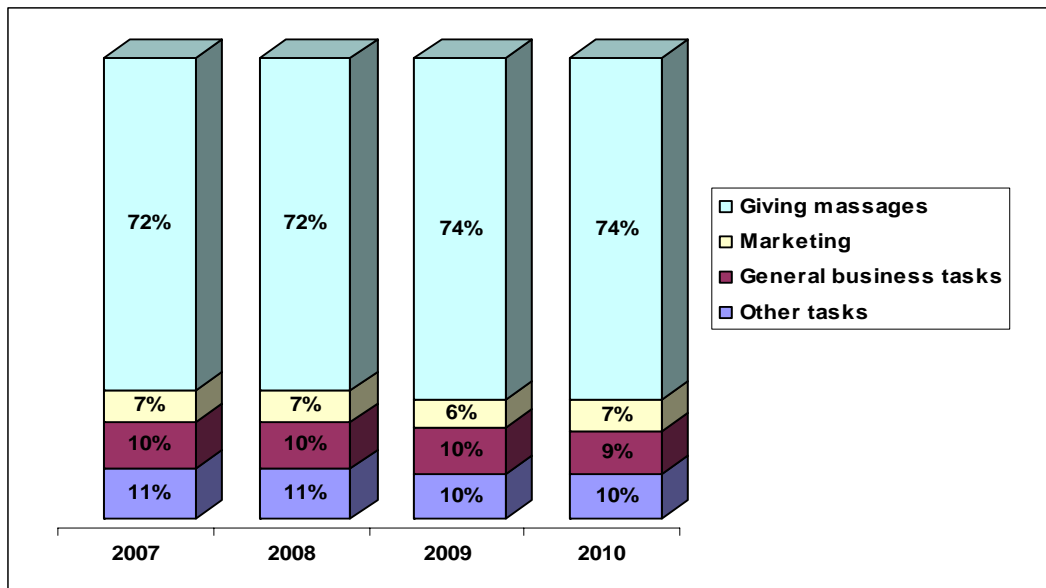


Figure 21. An average workweek of a massage therapist.

Massage therapists tend to have multiple sources of employment.

More than one-half of massage therapists have a job outside of massage therapy and these jobs account for 57 percent of their total annual income. See Figure 22.

Secondary income for massage therapists

2010

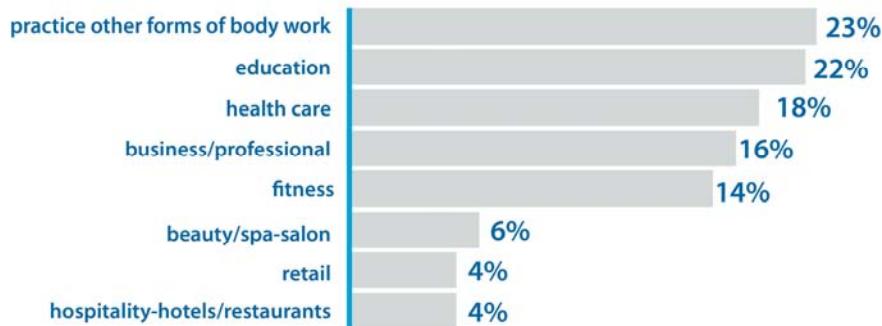


Figure 22. Sources of secondary income for massage therapist

Massage therapists continue to practice more modalities

The average number of modalities reported practiced increased slightly to eight, that's 3 more modalities than in 2005. At the same time, more therapists are specializing in myofascial and craniosacral techniques. Massage therapists **may be specializing in more modalities to become more marketable to clients**, especially those who seek out massage for pain relief and wellness.⁶ To see more details on top modalities practiced by therapists, see figure 23 below:

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Swedish	76%	82%	89%	84%	88%
Deep Tissue	66	70	82	77	84
Trigger Point	35	43	52	49	55
Sports Massage	32	40	49	45	53
Neuromuscular	29	28	31	33	38
Myofascial	28	29	41	46	52
Reflexology	28	31	46	45	47
Chair	32	37	58	52	62
Hot Stone	39	40	55	47	53
Prenatal/ Pregnancy Therapeutic Touch	28	30	49	44	53
	17	17	23	22	20

Figure 23. Top modalities massage therapists specialize in.

Highlights from Figure 23:

Among massage modalities, Swedish (88 percent) and deep tissue (84 percent) still rank as the most frequently practiced modalities.

Massage therapists view their work as a profession

The results of the *2010 AMTA Industry Survey*, surveying **massage therapists at large**, confirmed that the majority of massage therapists (89 percent) view the industry as a profession rather than a trade. This perception is more in line with years previous to 2009:

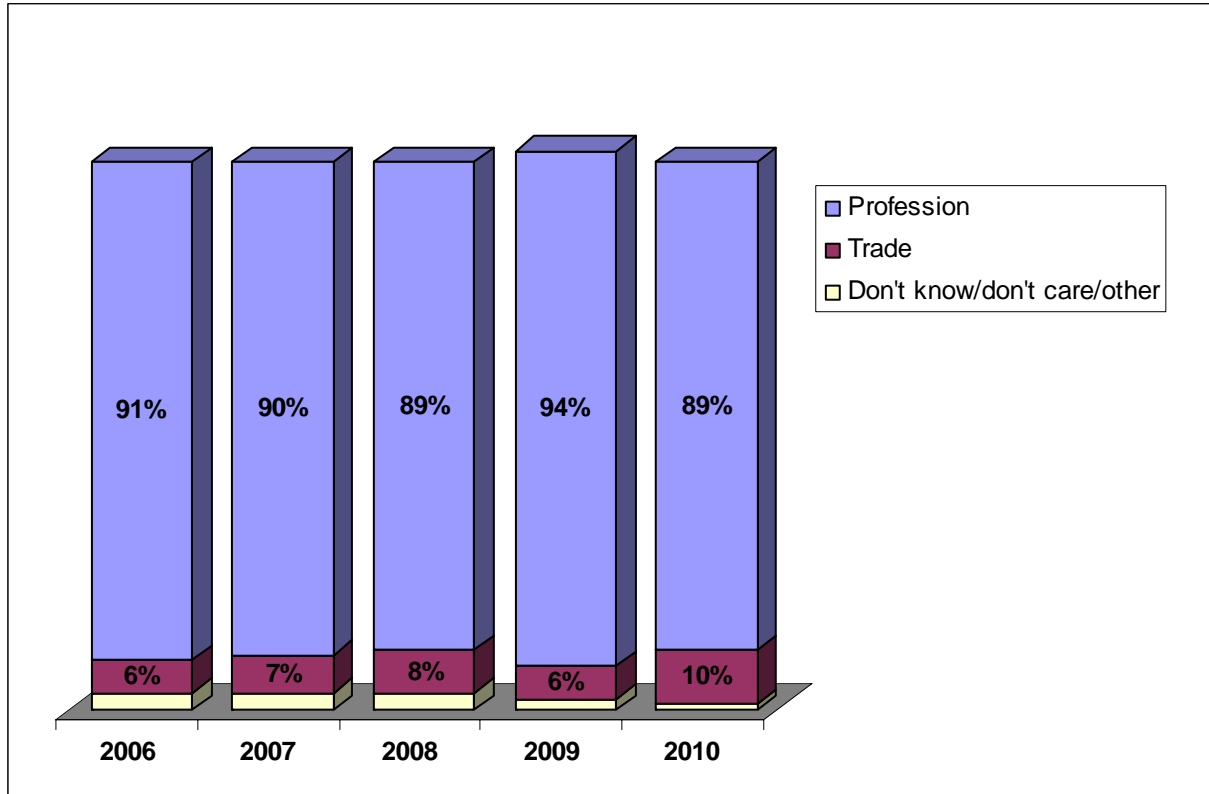


Figure 24. Perception of massage therapy industry as a profession vs. trade.

Applying the Research:

1. Data shows that more therapists are working from their client's home/business/corporate setting. Consider traveling to a client's location, if you are not already doing so.
2. The pressures of the profession and the economy may force massage therapists to diversify. If this trend continues, it will be very important to familiarize yourself with the **differences and requirements of working at various massage settings**.
3. Massage therapists may be expanding the modalities they practice to become more marketable to clients, especially to those seeking massage for pain relief and wellness.

2E. What’s the latest on the spa industry and massage therapy?⁵

According to the ISPA 2010 U.S. Industry Study, in 2009 all five key data points (revenue, spa visits, locations, total employees and square footage) declined for the first time since ISPA began the survey in 2000, reflecting the impact of the economy on the spa industry.

Spa visits declined significantly in 2009.

- The number of spa visits in the United States dropped by 10.2 percent from 2008 to 2009.
- Spa industry revenue declined by 4.3 percent from \$12.8 billion in 2008 to \$12.3 billion in 2009.
- Revenue per spa establishment dropped 1.3 percent from 2008 to 2009, and 42 percent since 2001 when the revenue was \$1.024 million.

Year	Estimated spa visits	Estimated spa industry revenue	Spa revenue per establishment
2007	138 million	10.9 billion	\$ 607,000
2008	160 million	12.8 billion	\$ 601,000
2009	143 million	12.3 billion	\$ 594,000

Figure 25. Information on spa revenue and visits. .

The number of spa locations declined in 2009

For the first time in over a decade, the overall number of spas declined from 21,300 to 20,610 spas in 2009, a decrease of 3.2% (see figure 26).



Figure 26. Growth in Spa Locations (US)

Here are some other findings regarding the spa industry:

- The average revenue per spa establishment declined from \$601,000 in 2008 to \$594,000 in 2009.
- The average number of visits per spa establishment declined from 7,486 in 2008 to 6,939 in 2009.
- The average number of employees per spa rose to 17 employees compared to 15 employees in 2009. However, there has been a profound shift from full-time workers to mostly part-time workers who now make up 82% of the spa workforce.
- However, there is some good news. According to the *2010 AMTA Industry Survey*, **49 percent of massage therapists working at spas/salons reported business had improved in the past year** compared to only 39 percent of massage therapists working at spas/salons in 2009.

More massage therapists worked in spas in 2010.

- Twenty-six percent of massage therapists report working primarily in a spa or salon as compared to 23 percent in 2009.
- The number of self-classified sole practitioners who work secondarily as spa/salon massage therapists leveled off in the past couple of years to 46% in 2010.

Note that the 2010 AMTA Industry Survey references 2010 data while the ISPA 2010 U.S. Spa Industry Study references 2009 data. Thus, the increase in the percentage of massage therapists working at spas/salons (from the 2010 AMTA Industry Survey) may indicate that the spa industry is beginning to grow again as the economy slowly recovers.

Applying the Research:

1. In 2009, spa locations declined for the first time in over a decade. *ISPA* attributes this decline to the worst economic recession since the great depression. Once the economy begins to improve, the spa industry will likely see gains again. Consider how the recession has affected your business compared to the spa business.

2F. Are national massage chains still expanding?

Some massage therapists see national chains as detrimental to the profession. Other massage therapists see them as a place to get steady employment and potential benefits.

National massage chain expansion has slowed.

National massage chains were growing for years as new players entered the market and current chains expanded into new locations. In 2009 growth declined substantially as the economy continued to struggle. However in 2010, all of the larger chains opened several new franchises.

In 2010, 5 percent of consumers reported receiving their last massage at a national massage chain.³ This number is 4 percentage points higher than in 2009 (1 percent) and expected to grow as more chains open, and consumers look for a lower cost massage. Additionally, consumers may not understand the difference between a spa and a national massage chain.

Eight percent of massage therapists now work at a national massage chain, up from 4 percent in 2009.

The main players in the massage chain market include:

Massage Envy, a franchise concept that offers a subscription-based model, is the largest employer of massage therapists in the United States with over 16,000 employees. Since 2002, Massage Envy has grown from one location in Arizona to 657 clinics in 43 states in 2010. They offer a subscription for \$49 a month. Additionally, Massage Envy now offers traditional spa services in 271 locations in 35 states as *Massage Envy Spa*.

Massage Heights began in San Antonio, Texas in 2004. Their stated master development plan is to open 1,620 locations in the U.S. by 2013. Today, they have 66 franchises in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Nevada, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington, which grew from 58 franchises last year. Massage Heights is built on a membership model where the fee is \$49.99 a month for one massage, with any additional massages discounted 50 percent. They also offer more expensive membership levels which include additional services such as hot stone therapy and aromatherapy.

XPressSpa and **Massage Bar** have been opening in many airports throughout the country. XpressSpa was in 16 airport terminals in the U.S. as of 2008, 32 locations in 2009, and decreased to 26 locations in 2010. They offer massage services, as well as some spa services. Massage Bar is currently in 8 U.S. airports, down from 10 airports last year.

Zen Massage Centers, another franchise concept was opened in 8 states. However, in 2010 they only operated in 7 states including Florida, Georgia, Kansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. They closed their locations in California in 2009. In 2010, they offered basic massage services at \$40 per session. This year, consumers must call each location for details and pricing. Prices vary by location, but most are advertising \$39.95 to \$49.95 per 1 hour session of Swedish massage.

Elements Therapeutic Massage is also a major massage therapy franchise. They opened 10 new franchises in the 2nd half of 2010 and now have over 80 locations in 23 states. Wellness program members pay a monthly fee that varies from \$55 to \$65 and receive a discount of at least \$20 on every massage, plus other benefits such as membership only specials. Prices vary per location but an hour massage for non-members ranges in the \$79 to \$89 price range.

Other companies expanding in the market include **LaVida Massage**, **MassageLuxe**, **The Great American Backrub** and several other regional chains.

Applying the Research:

1. Because chains that only offer massage are able to cut overhead, they are able to provide massage at less cost than their competitors. This is **expected to attract more customers in the future**, as in the current economy many are looking for a lower cost massage.
2. **Massage Envy** is the largest employer of massage therapists in the U.S. with over 16,000 employees.

If you have suggestions or identify additional information you need, please contact us at research@amtamassage.org.

Section 3 — A Special Look at Health Care and the Massage Profession

Consumer use of massage for medical reasons declined this year, as did health care referrals.

What does this mean for the massage profession?

Seventy-three percent of massage therapists are getting referrals from health care practitioners, down from 76 percent in 2009.

The percentage of massage therapists receiving health insurance reimbursement has dropped to 15 percent, from 19 percent in 2009.

When asked to rank, by importance, potential ways massage can be integrated into health care, the largest percentage of massage therapists listed referrals by health care providers (50 percent of therapists).³

In the section, you'll...

- See the state of the health care industry and the opportunities this presents for massage therapists.
- Take an in-depth look at the integration of massage into health care, including how more consumers are receiving massage for medical reasons.
- Learn the latest trends in health care referrals and insurance reimbursement, enabling you to better build your practice.

As you examine these timely topics:

3A. The health care industry

3B. Health care providers discussing massage therapy with their patients

3C. Massage and insurance

3D. Integration of massage therapy into health care

3A. The health care industry

The industry is expected to grow more than any other industry between 2008 and 2018, adding 3.2 million jobs. As the health care industry grows, this could mean growth opportunities for massage therapists as well.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics,⁶ the health care industry is the largest industry in the United States and:

- **Is still growing and adding jobs**— Employing 14.3 million people and counting. Currently, ten of the twenty fastest growing occupations are health care related.
- **Makes up a huge part of the U.S. economy** — 17.3 percent of the U.S. economy in 2009, up from 16.2 percent in 2008. Health care spending was \$2.47 trillion in 2009, up from \$2.3 trillion in 2008.
- **Employs people of varying education levels**— Most health care workers have jobs that require less than four years of college education.
- **Includes a variety of settings**— About 40 percent of health care jobs are in hospitals, 21 percent in nursing and residential care facilities and 16 percent in physicians' offices.

The growth in health care is providing jobs for massage therapists

In 2005, 10 percent of massage therapists reported working in a health care environment. In 2010, that number increased to 25 percent, consistent with the percentage in 2009.³

In 2009 and 2010, however, **fewer massage therapists earned additional income from jobs in health care:**

- Of the 57 percent of massage therapists with another job beyond massage therapy, 18 percent work in a health care position, compared to 22 percent in 2009 and 29 percent in 2006.
- As a secondary source of income, health care is now the number three profession massage therapists work in, after 'other forms of bodywork' and 'education'.

Applying the Research:

1. As massage therapy continues integration into a growing health care industry, there may be expanded employment opportunities for massage therapists.
2. Healthcare is the top career therapists had before transitioning into the massage therapy industry. If you have a background in health care, consider how can you apply your knowledge and experience to your massage therapy practice.

3B. Health care providers discuss massage therapy with patients

Consumers and physicians drive the use of massage therapy for medical and health reasons, but at a lower rate in 2010.

Consumers are using massage for medical and health reasons.

Twenty-nine percent of Americans got massage for medical and health reasons, according to the 2010 AMTA Consumer Survey, compared to 32 percent last year:

- **Overall, 86 percent of Americans believe that massage can be effective in reducing pain** and 84 percent believe that massage can be beneficial to health and wellness.
- **More men cite medical and health reasons for having a massage** (38 percent) versus females (28 percent).
- **Older Americans are more likely to seek massage for its medical and health benefits**, with 58 percent of those over 65-plus years of age and 27 percent of 18 to 34 year olds receiving their last massage for that reason.
- **Older consumers are also far more likely to use massage for injury recovery and rehabilitation.** 11 percent of those 65 years of age or older use massage for that reason as compared to 4 percent reported for 18 to 34 year olds.

Women overall and consumers with college degrees are more likely than others to discuss massage with their health care providers. Based on the 2010 AMTA Consumer Survey results:

- **In 2010, fewer consumers overall (16 percent)** discussed massage therapy with their doctor or health care provider, compared to 18 percent in 2009.
- **Women are more likely than men** to discuss massage therapy with their doctor. (See figure 27 below for more information).
- **Consumers with a college degree (20 percent) and 45 to 54 year olds (22 percent)** are more likely to have discussed massage therapy with their health care providers.

Have you discussed massage therapy with your health care provider?

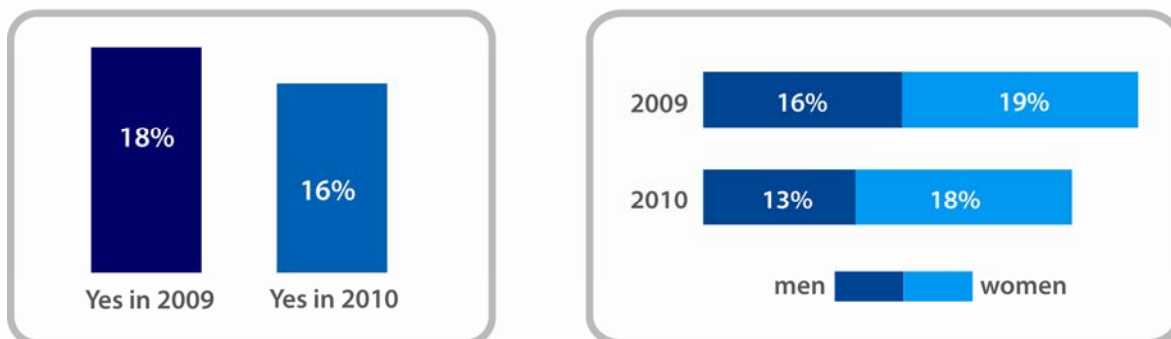


Figure 27. Consumers who discussed massage therapy with their health care providers

Fewer physicians, chiropractors and physical therapists are recommending massage.

From 2009 to 2010, the percentage of health care providers who recommended massage when it was mentioned to them by patients declined. *By looking at figure 28 below, you can get an overall picture of which health care professionals recommended massage in 2010:*



‘When patients discussed massage with their doctor or health care provider.’

Figure 28. Health care professionals who recommended massage in 2010.

Massage therapists report receiving health care referrals.

Nearly three-fourths of massage therapists (73 percent) indicate they receive referrals from health care professionals down from 76 in 2009. The average number of referrals remained the same at 1.5 referral per month per therapist.³

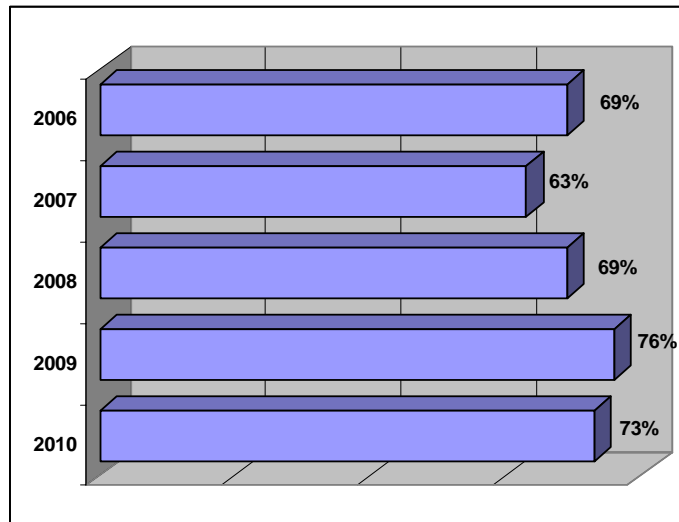


Figure 29. Percentage of massage therapists who receive referrals from health care professionals

The most referrals are received by massage therapists who work:

- In a health care setting (86 percent).
- In a health club (85 percent).
- As a sole practitioner (77 percent).³

Applying the Research:

1. Use of massage therapy for medical and health care reasons is largely driven by consumer use of massage and by health care professionals recommending massage to their clients.
2. A majority of Americans believe that massage can help reduce pain and is beneficial for general health purposes. **Brainstorm some ways you can use this information** to help market to potential clients.

3C. Massage and insurance

Insurance reimbursement for massage therapy decreased in 2010.

Fifteen percent of massage therapists accepted insurance reimbursement in 2010, a four percentage point decrease from 2009 (19 percent).³

Massage therapists working in health care were the most likely to receive insurance reimbursement (27 percent) followed by health club workers (22 percent) and sole proprietors (18 percent).³

Americans would like their health care plans to cover massage.

According to AMTA's 2010 Consumer Survey, 58 percent of Americans would like to have their health care insurance plan cover massage, which is consistent with last year's results. The only group that did not have a strong reaction to whether massage should be covered by insurance was the 65 and older age group (34 percent).

However, out of the consumers who had received massage in the past five years, only four percent indicated that their massage was covered by some type of insurance.

Massage therapists who seek insurance reimbursement have found it to be a viable business practice.

- Seventy-nine percent of massage therapists who received insurance reimbursement indicated that **it is a worthwhile practice for their business**. (Compared to 68 percent who thought so in 2009.)³
- The average amount of reimbursement received for one hour of massage was \$68 per hour in 2010 compared to \$70 in 2009.³
- With insurance regulated at the state level, the amount of reimbursement varies widely from state to state.
- This data does not specify, however, whether massage therapists are referring to medical insurance reimbursement or reimbursement associated with worker's compensation or

auto insurance. (In next year's research we will drill down into the type of insurance reimbursement).

The Future of Health Care and Health Insurance

The delivery of health care and how it is funded in the United States is an ever changing and evolving environment. Given the fluid nature of health insurance participation and reimbursement, it is difficult to accurately predict any impact this may or may not have on massage therapy practitioners. Health insurance companies and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are continually reviewing and reevaluating policies, including payment procedures, acceptable reimbursement and provider provisions. Automobile insurance companies and state worker's compensation health benefit administrators also follow similar evaluation procedures. Consumers are also making their own decisions on how they want health care delivered and reimbursed. As indicated in the 2007 National Health Interview Survey⁷, many choose to pay out of pocket for CAM therapies. While the national health care reform initiative of 2010 has sparked much discussion among the health care and CAM community, there is still a lot of uncertainty surrounding implementation. This uncertainty extends to massage therapy, as well. While the health care reform law leaves much uncertainty, it does identify the need for research in efficacy, comparative effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency.

AMTA understands some members find value in working with health insurance companies while others prefer to not participate in reimbursement. This is not limited to massage therapists as it is a trend emerging across health care. Through activities with a variety of health care organizations, AMTA continues to monitor and engage national and state agencies on behalf of its members and the profession. AMTA continues to stay committed to keeping its membership up-to-date on the latest developments.

Applying the Research:

1. Consumers continue to want massage therapy to be covered by insurance.
2. Fewer massage therapists in 2010 received reimbursement from insurance companies, but **more therapists felt the process is worthwhile.**
3. Have you considered seeking insurance reimbursement for your current (or future) practice? **Use this information to evaluate the pros and cons** of seeking insurance reimbursement for massage. Then, take some time to learn or review the reimbursement process.

3D. Integration of massage therapy into health care

Massage therapists agree that massage should be considered part of the health care field. For this to happen, there needs to be more scientific research conducted on the efficacy of massage.

Massage therapists continue to support integration of massage therapy into health care.

Ninety-six percent of respondents to the 2010 AMTA Industry Survey agree that massage therapy should be considered part of the health care field. To most massage therapists, health care integration means receiving referrals from other health care providers.

There is a need for more research in massage.

There are several organizations, including the Massage Therapy Foundation, that fund scientific research related to massage. Even though there have been many studies that have shown massage therapy can be effective in treatment plans for certain illnesses or injuries, **more research is needed to fully establish its efficacy.**

Applying the Research:

1. As more consumers reach seek massage for health reasons, it's important for you to become specialized in modalities that address specific health concerns and become educated on the latest research showing the efficacy of massage.
2. Consumers and massage therapists have both expressed interest in having massage therapy covered by insurance. For massage therapists, this primarily means getting referrals from health care professionals, such as medical doctors. However, fewer consumers were referred last year and massage therapists did less insurance billing. Visit the career guidance section of AMTA's website (www.amtamassage.org) to get the latest information on insurance reimbursement.
3. Are you in tune with the latest research in the massage profession? Get more research information at www.massagetherapyfoundation.org and at www.PubMed.gov.

If you have suggestions or identify additional information you need, please contact us at research@amtamassage.org.

Section 4 — Training and Education of Massage Therapists⁸

Although the economy has affected the educational market, the number of therapists graduating from massage therapy schools remained consistent in 2010. As AMTA has seen for many years, overall, massage therapists were satisfied with their massage training, but would have liked more training in business.

Key Questions:

- What factors are most likely to influence students to choose a school?
- How successful are formal job placement programs?
- What business skills are most helpful to graduating therapists?
- How can we help an increasingly younger student body? What special concerns should we address?
- What CE offerings are massage therapists most interested in?

There are many things that factor into the success of both massage therapy schools and their graduates. This section takes an in-depth look at demographics, challenges and opportunities that affect schools and students.

Understanding how schools are approaching these issues can provide insight and clarity into what helps massage therapists launch rewarding and long-lasting careers. And, if you are interested in teaching at a school, serving in a leadership position, or even owning a school one day, this information will prove helpful.

In this section you'll:

- Find what most new massage therapists hope to do with their training.
- Explore how the number of hours of instruction correlates with a massage therapist's satisfaction in their training.
- Discover how pay rates for instructors vary across different types of schools.
- Take a deeper look at massage therapist attrition and consider what factors influence massage therapists' longevity in the field.
- Discover what type of continuing education holds the greatest and the least interest for massage therapists.

We will cover these facets of massage education:

- 4A. Hours and types of training
- 4B. Quality of massage training
- 4C. Massage schools — Trends and demographics
- 4D. Massage schools — Accreditation
- 4E. General factors affecting massage schools
- 4F. Number of massage students graduating
- 4G. Massage student demographics

4A. Hours and types of training

New therapists are most interested in starting their own business. Experienced therapists are interested in learning new modalities or receiving advanced training in modalities they currently use.

The total hours of massage therapists' initial training increased significantly in 2010.

In 2010, the average amount of initial training was 660 hours, an increase of 36 hours from 2009, indicating a return to the previous trend of an increasing number of initial massage therapy training hours (see Figure 29).

Hours of Initial Training	Percentage of Massage Therapists				
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Less than 500	11%	12%	16%	16%	13%
500-600	42	32	33	38	32
601-700	14	14	16	15	16
701-900	16	23	20	15	23
901-1,000	9	11	7	8	8
More than 1,000	8	7	6	4	6
Average Number of Hours	653	688	633	624	660

Figure 29. Hours of initial training.

Massage therapists reporting the most initial training hours, on average, were those who work in health care settings. They reported receiving 115 more hours than in 2009 and 65 more than in 2008. Massage therapists working as contractors in 2010 reported having the least amount of initial training (see Figure 30).

Setting	Initial training hours (2008)	Initial training hours (2009)	Initial training hours (2010)
Health care	647	597	712
Spa/salon	646	661	678
Health club	631	628	673
Sole practitioners	618	609	664
Contractors	656	690	640

Figure 30. Hours of initial training by therapists working in different work settings.

Almost all massage therapists participate in ongoing continuing education.

Ninety-seven percent of massage therapists who responded to the *2010 AMTA Industry Survey* took continuing education classes in 2010. Massage therapists who are not nationally certified, or are practicing in unregulated states, are less likely to have taken continuing education classes.

The rate of continuing education use was consistent throughout all work settings and for both full and part-time practitioners. **Therapists reported taking an average of 22 hours of continuing education in 2010.**³

Massage therapists express the greatest interest in **training for new modalities/techniques** (68 percent) and **advanced training for specific modalities** (57 percent). Understanding massage research appears to be the least sought after topic for continuing education, with only five percent of massage therapists planning on taking classes in this area (See figure 31 below)³

Continuing Education Massage Therapists Plan to Take Next Year

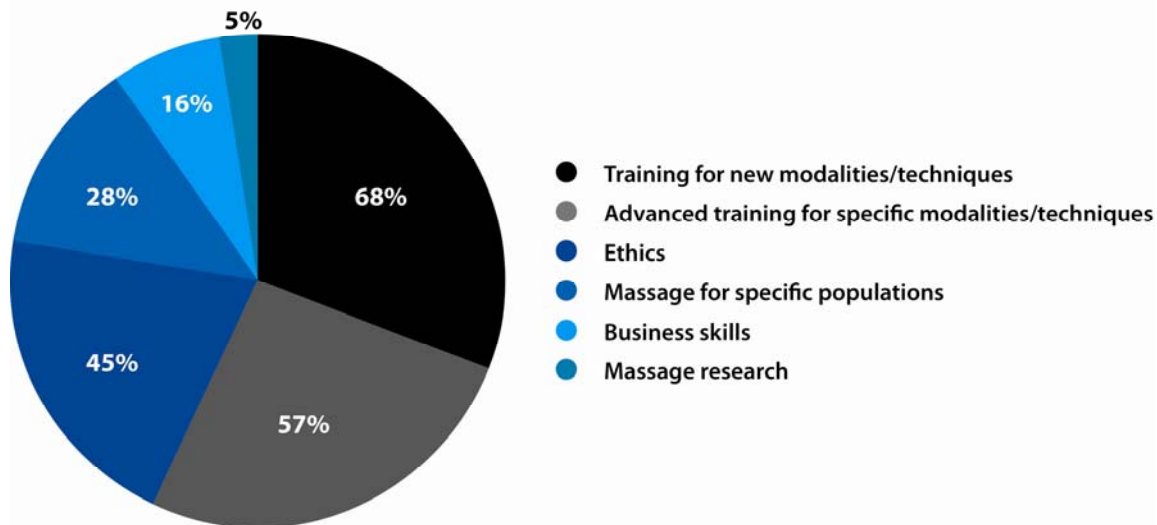


Figure 31. Type of Continuing education therapists plan to take in 2011

Most new massage therapists want to use their training to start a business.

Fifty-nine percent of massage therapists intended to start their own practice after graduation. Additionally, thirty-three percent went into the industry to practice part-time, the same as in 2009.³

Applying the Research:

1. A nearby school of massage therapy might be a resource for training in new modalities and techniques or **advanced training for specific modalities**. Consider what kind of research-based courses would prove helpful to you.
2. Do you need **more training in entrepreneurship** or the business of massage therapy? Consider purchasing *The Business of Massage* (available at amtamassage.org) as a resource for all things business.

4B. Quality of massage training

According to the 2010 AMTA Industry Survey, most massage therapists continue to feel that their initial massage training was adequate for their career choice (see below).

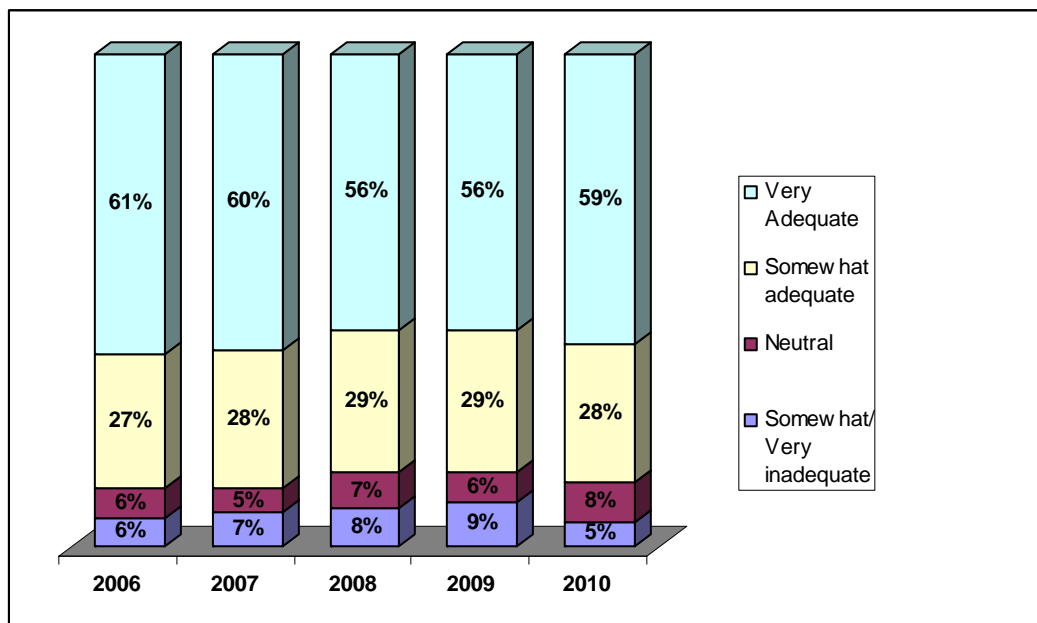


Figure 32. Perception about quality of initial massage training

Therapists with 500-plus hours of training or more felt more adequately prepared.

Therapists who graduated from programs with fewer than 500 hours of training were far less likely to feel their initial training prepared them adequately for practice, which is also consistent with what massage therapists said last year.³

Therapists wish they had more business training.

When asked what they wished they were taught in more detail in massage school, 55 percent of massage therapists mentioned business skills (a decrease from 61 percent in 2009). These included:³

- **Building/maintaining practice** (34 percent).
- **Business management** (29 percent), down from 36 percent in 2009.
- **Marketing/advertising** (28 percent).

Therapists would have liked more training in specific modalities and self-care

- Thirty-nine percent of respondents, up from 34 percent in 2009, would have liked more training in specific modalities.³
- Twenty-nine percent of therapists would have liked more training in self-care.³

Schools often provide education for specific work settings.

According to the *2010 AMTA School Survey*, more schools than in 2009 are offering classes specifically geared toward employment in various work settings such as:

- Sole practitioners – 89 percent vs. 84 percent in 2009
- Medical locations (hospitals, chiropractics offices, etc.) – 83 percent vs. 74 percent in 2009.
- Spas – 73 percent vs. 63 percent in 2009.
- Health clubs – 63 percent vs. 44 percent in 2009.
- National massage chains – 56 percent vs. 35 percent in 2009.

Six percent of schools offer no classes geared toward employment in a specific work setting compared to 11 percent in 2009.⁶

Applying the Research:

1. **Guidance on building and managing a business** continues to be the most frequent mentioned aspect that therapists felt lacked in their initial training. Check out the business building tools at amtamassage.org, then consider attending the *AMTA National Convention* to supplement your business-building training.
2. Thirty-nine percent of therapists said they would have liked more instruction in specific modalities. Consider taking a continuing education course to learn a new modality. Visit the Education section of AMTA's website to search for a class in your area.

4C. Massage schools—Trends and demographics

Schools of massage therapy are diverse in both their approaches to massage education and the types of services they offer students. More instructors are part-time and the average instructor has 6.8 years of experience, fairly consistent with last year’s average of 6.6 years.

There is a wide variety of massage schools in the United States.

The results of the 2010 AMTA School Survey show that within the market for massage therapy training, there are variations across schools. These include:

- Years established
- Number of locations
- Graduation rates
- Length of programs
- Cost
- Type of program/education offered

	Total	School Type			Age of School	
		Individually Owned	Part of Larger Corporation	Public Institution	2001 or Newer	2000 or Older
Average number of locations	2.9	2.3	6.8	1.4	3.8	2.3
Average number of graduates per year	44.1	47.1	49.7	30.3	33.2	52.5
Average in-class supervised hours required (entry-level program)	690	657	742	735	736	652
Average clinical hours required (entry-level program)	80	80	79	80	82	79
Average cost-per-hour of entry level program before financial aid	\$12.6	\$13.0	\$16.1	\$9.0	\$14.0	\$11.8
<u>Length of Operation</u>						
2001 or newer	44%	41%	28%	31%	100%	0%
2000 or older	56%	75%	12%	12%	0%	100%

Figure 34. School profile information from 2010 AMTA School Survey

Highlights of Figure 34

This chart gives insights into some of the main differences in schools of massage therapy. Keep reading for more information.

Year Established: Fifty-six percent of the schools participating in the survey were established in the year 2000 or before. Of those:

- 75 percent are individually owned schools, up from 66 percent in 2009
- 12 percent are part of a larger corporation, down from 18 percent in 2009.

- 12 percent are massage schools within public institutions/community colleges, down from 17 percent in 2009.

Number of Locations: On average, massage schools have 2.9 locations, up from 2.2 locations a year ago. Individually owned schools have an average of 2.3 locations compared to 1.7 locations last year. Schools that are part of larger corporations averaged 6.8 locations, up from 5.5 locations in 2009. The average number of public institution locations remained steady at 1.4 locations. Newer schools (2001 and newer) averaged 3.8 locations up from 2.2 locations last year.

Graduation Rates: The average number of graduates rose slightly to 44.1 per year in 2010, compared to 43.8 in 2009. Those schools that are part of a larger corporation saw their average number of graduates per year drop nearly 30% from 70.6 in 2009 to 49.7 graduates in 2010.

Length of Programs: On average, schools require 690 in-class, supervised hours (680 in 2009) and 80 clinical hours in their entry programs (76 in 2009). Massage programs at corporate-owned schools require the highest number of hours at 742, while schools that are individually owned continue to require the least amount at 657 hours. The average number of school hours for newer schools (2001 and newer) rose 46 hours in the past year to 736 hours required.

Cost-per-Hour: The average cost per hour for entry-level massage programs went up in 2010 after trending down the previous two years.

Average cost per hour before financial aid			
2007	2008	2009	2010
\$12.20	\$11.20	\$10.20	\$12.60

Figure 35. School profile information

Schools that are part of larger corporations typically charge the most (\$16.10) and public institutions charge the least (\$9.00) for an average hour of entry-level study.

All school types raised their class fees in 2010. Public institutions raised their fees by nearly 40% from \$5.50/hr in 2009 to \$9.00/hr in 2010.

Distance learning

For the first time we asked schools on the *2010 AMTA School Survey* if they offered distance learning:

- Fifteen percent of schools offer distance learning classes.
- Individually owned schools offered fifty percent of all distance learning courses.
- Of those schools that offer distance learning, the average number of classes offered is 4.4.

Schools are diverse in the type of program and/or continuing education they offer.

- Eighty-seven percent of surveyed schools offer a basic certificate/diploma in massage therapy, up from 72 percent of schools a year ago.
- Twenty-eight percent offer an associate degree in massage therapy, compared to 24 percent last year.
- Thirty-nine percent of schools offer continuing education classes in massage therapy, compared to 50 percent of schools a year ago. (For more information refer to figure 36 below).

Type of massage therapy program(s) or education schools offer

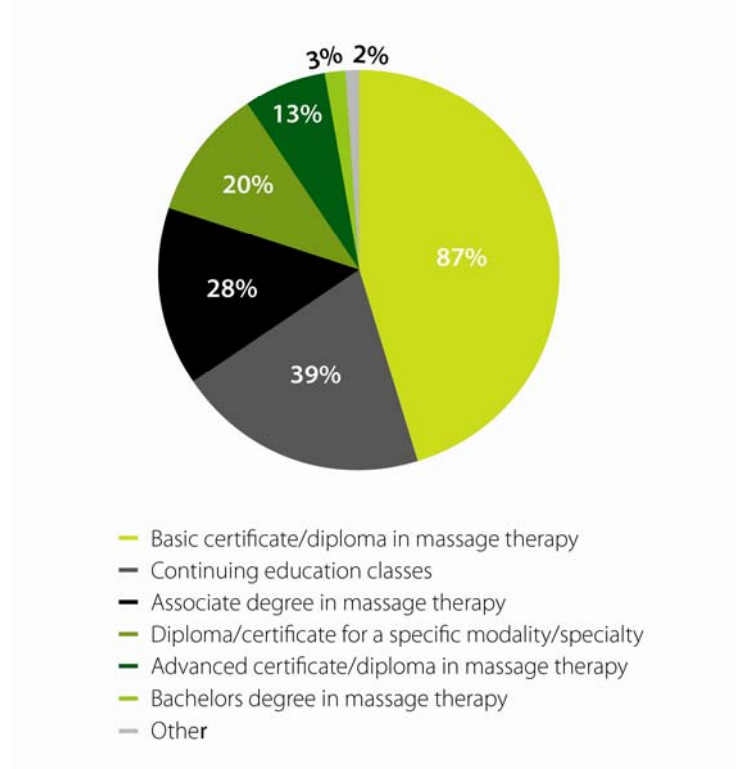


Figure 36. Type of massage therapy program(s) or education schools offer

The majority of schools also have programs other than massage therapy

Sixty-four percent of surveyed schools offer other programs aside from their massage therapy program. Of those schools that did offer other programs, 61 percent offered medical programs (medicine, osteopathy, nursing, etc.), 57 percent traditional programs (business, engineering, etc) and 19 percent offered CAM therapies (acupuncture, chiropractic, etc.).

Business classes

Eighty-four percent of schools offer marketing courses and 66 percent offer management courses. Forty percent of schools offer accounting courses and 33 percent offer finance classes.

Attrition rates vary greatly by school.

Slightly higher than last year's average of 15 percent, 17 percent of all students who entered an entry-level massage program in 2010 did not graduate. The **attrition rate** varies from school to school:

- Almost 49 percent of schools have a rate less than 10 percent.
- A bit more than 12 percent of schools have a rate over 30 percent.
- Individually owned massage schools tend to have lower attrition rates, while public institutions tend to have the highest student attrition rate.

Many schools offer financial aid

According to the *2010 AMTA Schools Survey*, a majority of schools (71 percent) offer financial aid to their students, up from 64 percent a year ago. Thirty percent of schools believe that in the current economic situation it is more difficult for massage students to get financial aid, while 54 percent of schools say difficulty in acquiring financial aid remains about the same as in 2009.

Most massage instructors are part-time employees.

Massage schools continue to employ more part-time instructors than full-time instructors. Overall, schools are employing and hiring slightly more instructors.

7.2	Number of part-time instructors currently employed (down from 7.3 in 2009).
3.5	Full-time instructors currently employed (up from 3.2 in 2009).
3.9	Number of independent contractors currently employed (up from 3.1 in 2009).
57% of schools	Have 1 to 5 full-time instructors.
89%	Have part-time instructors (up from 83% in 2009).
73%	Have full-time instructors (up from 72% in 2009).

Figure 37. Number of instructors in massage therapy schools

The length of teaching experience of instructors varies.

As stated above, the average instructor in a massage therapy program has 6.8 years of teaching experience. However, there is a wide range of experience levels among instructors. See figure 38.

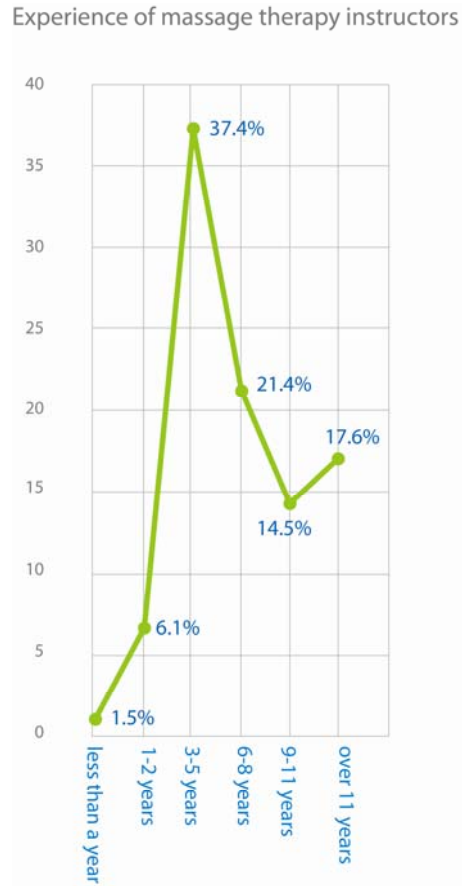


Figure 38. Experience of massage therapy instructors.

What qualifications do massage schools look for in instructors?

In their hiring requirements, massage schools focus on massage therapy experience first. Figure 39 below provides more detail regarding hiring requirements for instructors.

General Hiring Requirements by School Type

	Total	<u>Individually Owned</u>	<u>Part of Larger Corporation</u>	<u>Public Institution</u>
Experience as a practicing massage therapist	92%	94%	92%	89%
Current status as a practicing massage therapist	69%	70%	56%	78%
Teaching experience	54%	61%	36%	52%
Experience in specific modalities	52%	63%	20%	48%
Require massage instructor training	24%	34%	4%	15%
Bachelors degree	20%	11%	12%	52%
Associate degree	18%	13%	40%	15%
Other	18%	17%	12%	26%

Figure 39. General hiring requirements by school type

Hiring requirements have risen across the board in 2010

Ninety-two percent of schools now require “experience as a practicing massage therapist” to qualify as an instructor compared to 58 percent of schools in 2009. Similarly, significantly more schools than last year are looking for instructors who currently practice massage therapy, have teaching experience and have experience in specific modalities.

How much are instructors paid?

According to the 2010 AMTA Massage School Survey, which surveyed instructor pay in 2009, the average hourly pay schools provided their instructors in 2009 was \$26.47. Here is more information on the breakdown of massage therapy instructor pay in 2009:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Individually Owned</u>	<u>Part of Larger Corporation</u>	<u>Public Institution</u>
2009 Average Hourly Instructor Pay by School Type	\$26.47	\$24.66	\$23.25	\$33.32

Figure 40. 2009 average instructor pay.

Public institutions paid \$0.52 more per hour in 2009, while individually owned and corporate schools paid less per hour, \$0.90 and \$0.81 respectively, compared to 2008.

The number of schools offering 500-plus hour programs continued to decrease.

According to AMTA research 15 schools closed in 2010, bringing the total number of schools with 500 hour plus programs to approximately 1,108 schools. This data is consistent with feedback from the schools and in line with the effects the economic recession has had on the massage industry overall.

Year	Approximate number of Programs in the US with 500-plus hours
2001	647
2003	867
2005	1,128
2006	1,134
2007	1,128
2008	1,167
2009	1,123
2010	1,108

Figure 41. Approximate number of 500-plus massage school programs.

Highlights from Figure 41

There was significant growth in the school market between 2001 and 2006, but additional growth has slowed since that time.

Applying the Research:

Thinking about a future career as a massage instructor? Refer to this information as you build your credentials and plan for professional success.

4D. Massage schools – Accreditation

The total number of massage schools accredited by nationally-recognized accrediting organizations has remained fairly consistent since 2007.

Figure 42. Accreditation numbers.

Accrediting Organization	2007 Numbers		2008 Numbers		2009 Numbers		2010 Numbers	
	Institutions	Campuses (Including Main)	Institutions	Campuses (Including Main)	Institutions	Campuses (Including Main)	Institutions	Campuses (Including Main)
ABHES	51	79	75	92	69	84	57	71
ACCET	29	90	21	118	29	77	41	113
ACCST	111	190	109	202	105	192	97	185
COMTA	60	84	61	92	72	97	58	89
NACCAS	62	94	53	73	54	75	61	89

Interpreting Figure 42

In 2010, ABHES, ACCST, COMTA saw a decrease in Institutions and Campuses while ACCET and NACCAS saw an increase in Institutions and Campuses.

4E. General factors affecting massage schools

Massage schools report facing a variety of challenges. The type of challenge depends largely on the type of institution, whether a public institution, an individually-owned massage school or a massage school that is part of a larger corporation.

Individually-owned massage schools:

The biggest challenges for these schools are **attracting students and marketing their schools and programs.**

In 2010, individually-owned schools had less difficulty than in 2009 keeping in touch with graduates, finding employment for graduates and competing with other massage schools. However, they had more difficulty developing a curriculum and obtaining/retaining school accreditation.

	Total	School Type		
		<u>Individually Owned</u>	<u>Part of Larger Corporation</u>	<u>Public Institution</u>
Difficulty in attracting students	45%	44%	48%	44%
Difficulty in marketing school/programs	37%	33%	40%	44%
Difficulty in keeping in touch with graduates	21%	18%	16%	33%
Difficulty in finding qualified teachers	20%	15%	23%	33%
Difficulty in competing with other massage schools	18%	14%	28%	22%
Difficulty in finding employment for graduates	16%	18%	14%	15%
High cost of products/services needed for school	11%	14%	8%	7%
High student drop-out rates	10%	8%	9%	19%
Lack of current information about industry trends, facts, demographics	10%	11%	9%	11%
Lack of guidelines/hiring practices for teachers	6%	8%	0%	7%
Difficulty in developing curriculum	2%	17%	5%	4%
Rising insurance costs	8%	14%	0%	4%
Difficulty in retaining qualified teachers	5%	4%	9%	7%
Difficulty in obtaining/retaining school accreditation	12%	16%	5%	7%
Difficulty in evaluating students and/or the entire school	4%	4%	5%	4%
Insurance access	1%	1%	0%	0%

Figure 43. Top challenges affecting massage schools.

Interpreting Figure 43

Schools mentioned many other challenges beyond those listed on this chart. The majority of the responses to the open-ended questions related to issues of not being able to find qualified teachers and a general lack of teaching experience among the pool of applicants.

Massage schools as part of larger corporations

Their biggest challenge remains attracting students, though they had less difficulty doing this than in 2009. Marketing their program proved increasingly difficult this year, as did competing with other massage schools. However, they had significantly less difficulty dealing with drop-out rates and they had less difficulty keeping in touch with their graduates (compared to the other two categories of massage schools).

Unlike some other types of schools, the high cost of products/services needed for the school, developing curriculum, or rising insurance costs are not a real challenge.

Public institutions with separate massage programs

Their biggest challenges were attracting students, marketing their program, and keeping in touch with graduates. In 2010, they also had increased difficulty finding qualified teachers and experienced high student drop out rates.

4F. Number of massage students graduating

Some students may find it difficult to find a job in massage therapy or a job that will support them until they can build up a client base. Schools with a formal placement program are seeing a large percentage of students finding employment.

Schools are struggling to increase enrollment.

Traditionally, in poor economic times enrollment in educational programs increases as those displaced from the workforce go back to school. During the recession of 2001-2002 schools of all types, including massage schools, saw an increased enrollment. In the current recession, this is not the case. With part of the reason for the current economic situation being the credit market, it has been difficult for many potential students to secure financing to attend school.

The number of graduates per school held steady in 2010.

The number of new graduates coming out of massage therapy programs increased slightly from 2009. According to the *2010 AMTA Massage School Survey*, the average number of graduates of 500-plus hour massage schools was approximately 44.1. In 2009, that number was 43.8 graduates per year.

Schools are doing more to help new graduates find jobs.

While getting ready to graduate, some students may find it difficult to find a job in massage therapy or a job that will support them until they can build up a client base. This is one of the major reasons why new therapists leave the profession.

That may be the reason some schools did more in 2010 to help students find jobs.

- Roughly 40 percent of schools have a **formal placement program** for graduates compared to 38 percent in 2009.

- **In these schools, over 79 percent of graduates find employment** in massage therapy after graduation.
- Roughly 49 percent of schools provide **only a job board or book** that students can use to look for jobs.
- About 11 percent of schools do not offer placement services at all, compared to 13 percent in 2009.

Applying the Research:

1. Many schools are doing more to **help students find employment after graduation.**
2. If you are currently a student or a recent graduate, inquire into your school's placement program. For more help in your job search, be sure to take advantage of the *AMTA Job Bank* at www.amtamassage.org.

4G. Massage Student Demographics

School administrators say students today are much better at using technology to learn. But, they are less effective when it comes to skills such as written and oral communication.

The average student age has remained steady the past couple of years.

According to the 2010 AMTA Massage School Survey:

- Fifty-two percent of school administrators stated that the average age of students has stayed the same.
- Thirty-three percent responded that the average age of students declined.
- The average student is 29 years old compared to 28 in 2009, with 38 percent of student bodies consisting of 25 year olds or younger.

The percentage of men in massage school is higher than the percentage of male therapists.

According to school administrators, roughly 22 percent of massage students are male, compared to 13 percent of practicing male massage therapists. This may point to additional difficulties male graduates may encounter in starting or maintaining their practices.

Students today are more comfortable with technology.

In the *2010 AMTA Massage School Survey*, school administrators were asked what skills today's students are bringing to the classroom compared to years past. For the past couple of years, most mentioned computer and technology skills.

Most felt that **today's students are more comfortable with technology**, have more experience using technology and are better at finding information and doing research on the Internet.

When asked how students today compare to students five years ago, school administrators continue to observe that students lack:

- Written communication skills.
- Oral communication skills.
- The kind of life experience that would benefit them in the classroom, as well as in their career.

Some administrators say the younger students enrolled in massage school don't always have the skills needed to be successful in a massage therapy program. These are the same views expressed by school administrators in 2008 and 2009.

Applying the Research:

1. If you are a student, ask your instructors how you can improve on your verbal and written communication skills.
2. No longer in school? AMTA recently launched the AMTA Mentoring Program to help improve communication skills, goal-setting and success planning for AMTA members just entering the massage therapy profession. To become an AMTA mentee, or mentor, visit the *Career Guidance* section on AMTA's website.

Section 5 — Massage Therapists Use of Technology⁹

5A. Massage therapists perform basic online internet tasks at a high level.

When it comes to surfing the Web, watching video clips online and managing a profile on an existing website, massage therapists perform internet tasks at a rate consistent with the rest of the general population. However, therapists still lag behind the general population¹⁰ on more advanced internet tasks such as starting their own blog. Therapists also spend significantly less time reading blogs (60 percent) than the general population (77 percent). See figure 44 below.

Massage therapists compared to the overall population 2010:

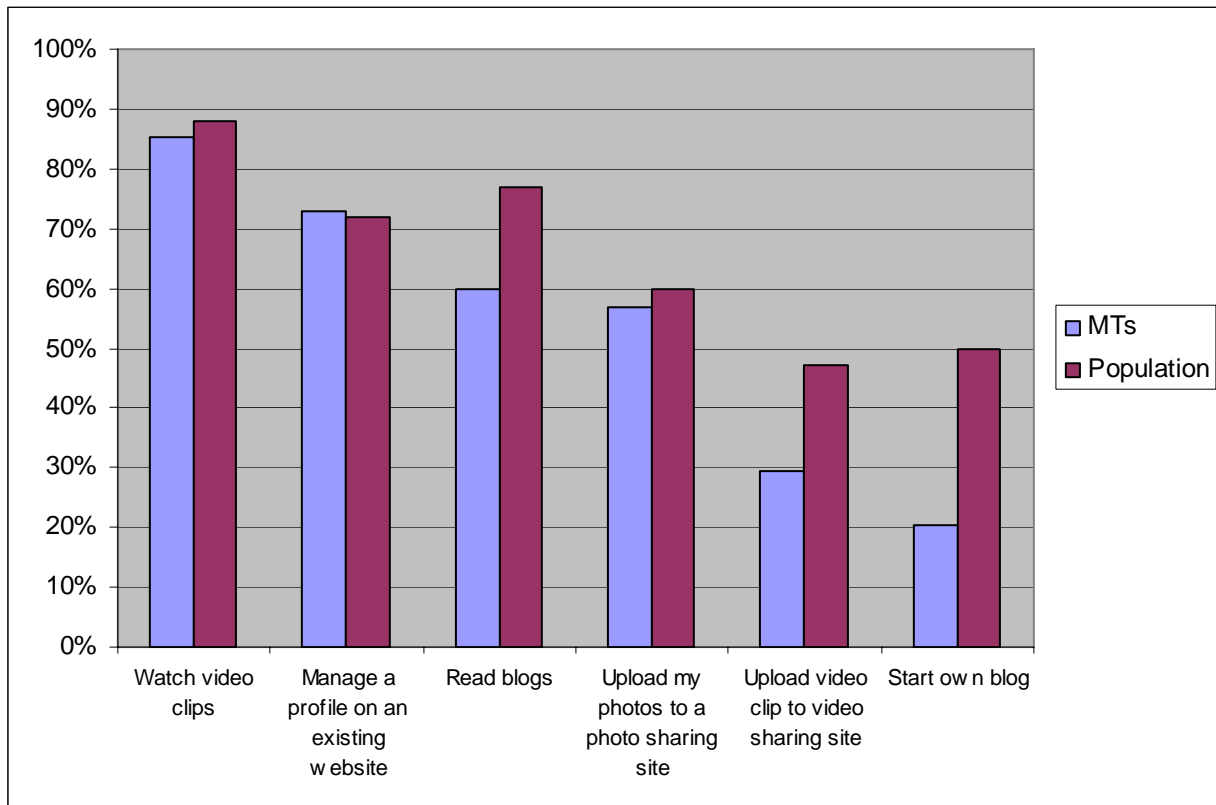


Figure 44. Percentage of massage therapists who perform internet tasks. General Population data .¹⁰

5B. Massage Therapists overall use of technology has improved

In general, massage therapists have improved their use of technology since AMTA’s last technology study in 2008. Of note, 78.7 percent of massage therapists send text messages and 38 percent of massage therapists build their own website. See Figure 45 below.

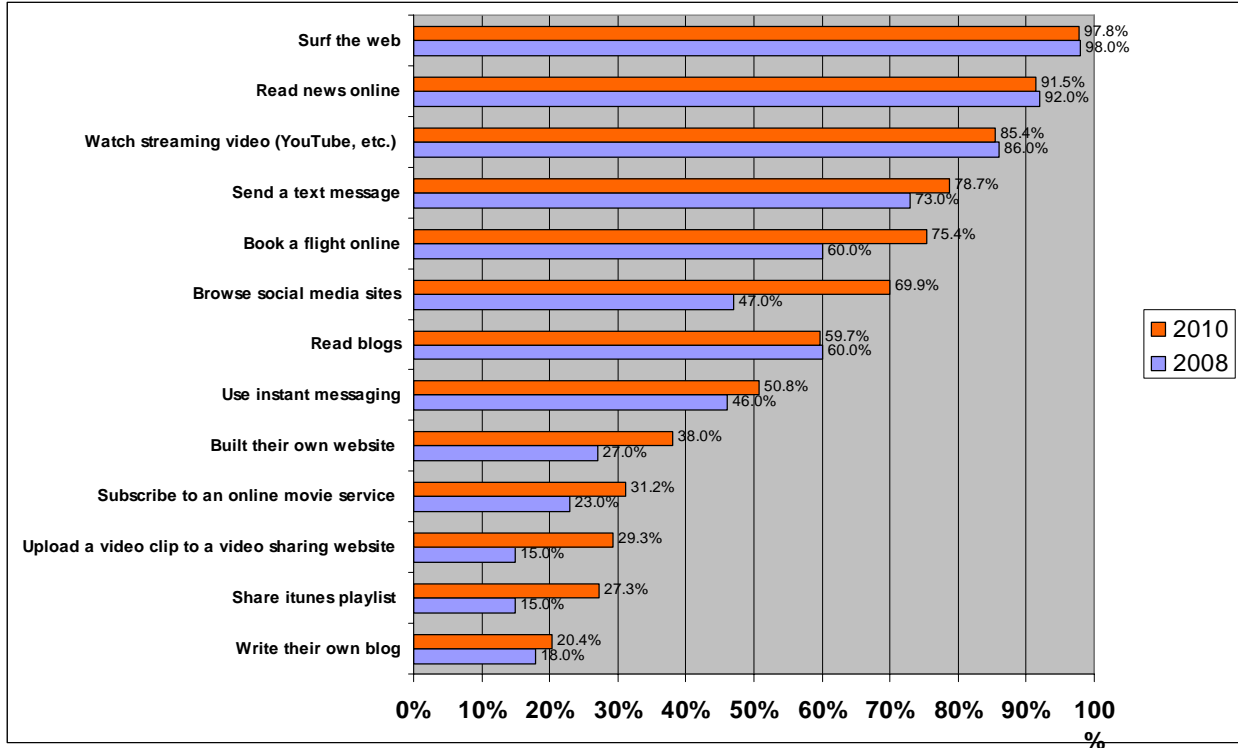


Figure 45. Percentage of massage therapists who use technology skills 2010 vs. 2008.

5C. Social media and massage therapists

Seventy percent of massage therapists now browse social media compared to 47 percent in 2008. Twenty-seven percent of therapists browse on a daily basis compared to 22 percent in 2008.

Facebook is the most popular site as 63.2% of therapists now use it compared to 30.2 percent in 2008. See Figure.46 below.

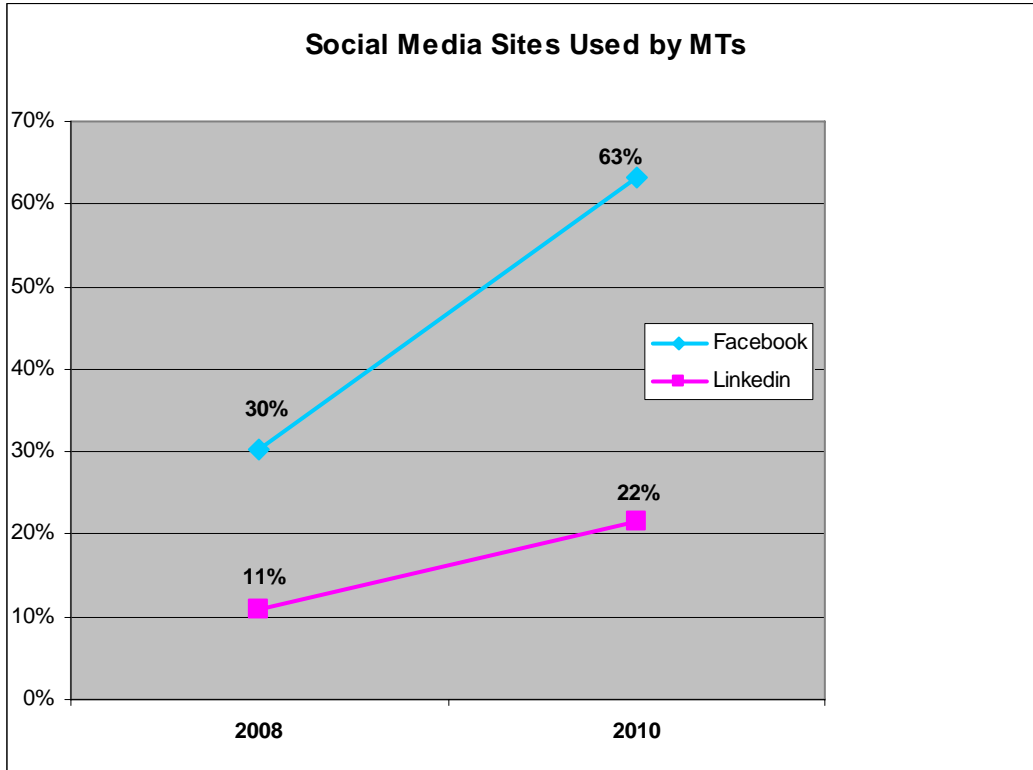


Figure 46. What social media sites do you use?

Massage Therapists are using social media in their practices

Massage therapists are increasingly using social media to stay in touch with clients. In 2010, twenty-eight percent of massage therapists said they use an online social network to stay in touch with clients. That's a 15 percentage point increase from 2008. See Figure 47 below.

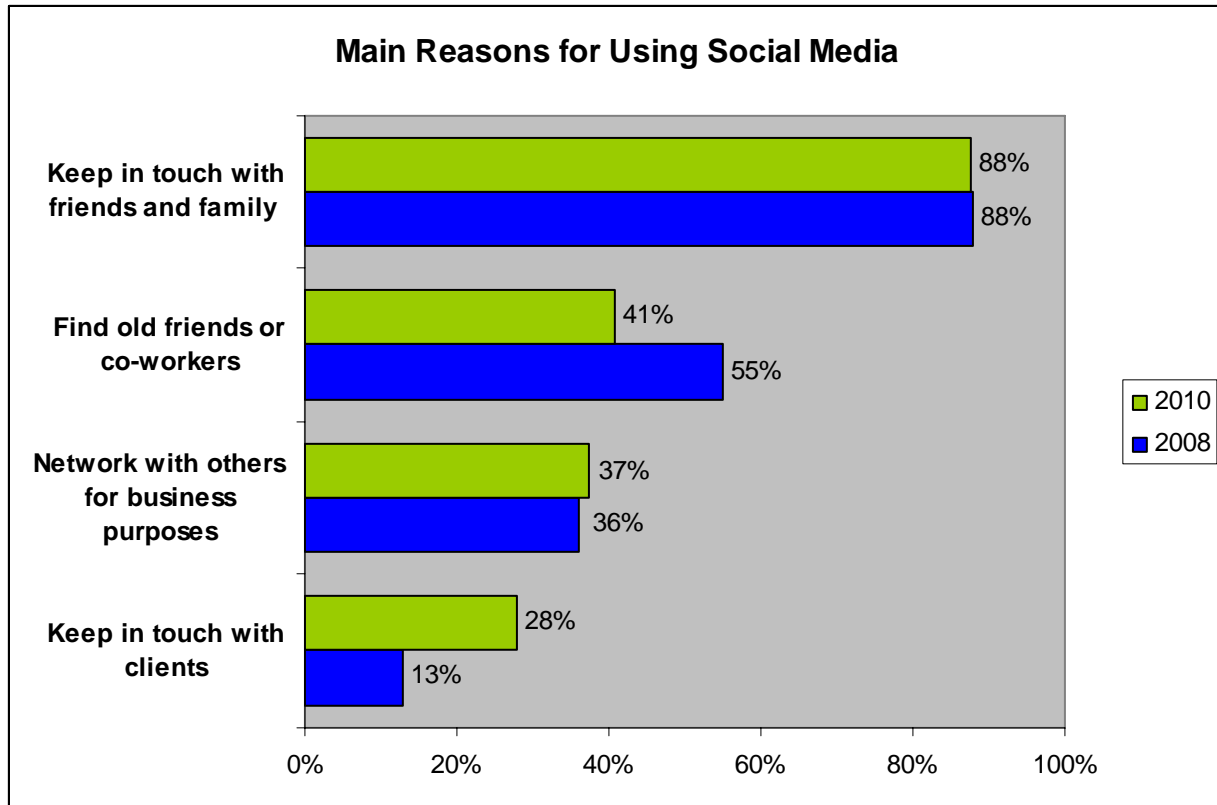


Figure 47. Main reasons for visiting your online social networks.

Applying the Research:

- Massage therapists are increasingly more comfortable using technology. They are on Facebook and LinkedIn, have their own websites and own smartphones. However, they lag behind the general population when it comes to more advanced skills such as starting a blog.
- Massage therapists are increasingly using social media to stay in touch with clients. How are you using social media as a professional massage therapist to connect with current and new clients?
- Not sure how to best use social media for business,? Not on Facebook or Twitter? Download AMTA's Social Media Guides specifically designed for massage therapists at www.amtamassage.org.

If you have suggestions or identify additional information you need, please contact us at research@amtamassage.org.

Appendix

List of Sources

¹All data in ‘Section 1 – Consumers of Massage’ is from the **2010 AMTA Consumer Survey** and the **2009 AMTA Consumer Survey** unless otherwise noted.

2010 AMTA Consumer Survey. CARAVAN[®] Opinion Research Corporation International conducted the annual consumer survey during July 9-12 2010, among a national probability sample of 1008 adults (503 men and 505 women) ages 18 and older, living in private households in the continental United States. The survey has a confidence level of plus or minus three percent. Commissioned by AMTA, this is the fourteenth annual massage therapy survey of American consumers.

² U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division.

³ All data in ‘Section 2 – The Massage Therapy Profession’ is from the **2010 AMTA Industry Survey** and the **2009 AMTA Industry Survey** unless otherwise noted.

2010 AMTA Industry Survey. Northstar Research conducted an annual AMTA Industry Survey during September 2010. A total of 422 qualified surveys were received for a total response rate of 7 percent. The survey has a confidence level of plus or minus three percent. The objectives of the annual *AMTA Industry Survey* are to provide AMTA members, consumers and other professionals with “state-of-the-industry” information by tracking and benchmarking among other things: information on massage therapists working in different work settings, their income, compensation, requirements practices, training, education, industry perception, demographics, and more. The *2010 AMTA Industry Survey* is the sixth annual survey on the massage therapy profession.

⁴From data compiled by AMTA, 2010.

⁵ All data in ‘Section 2E. What’s the latest on the SPA industry and massage Therapy?’ is from the **ISPA 2010 U.S. Spa Industry Study** unless otherwise noted.

ISPA 2010 U.S. Spa Industry Study. This study was commissioned by the International SPA Association (ISPA). The survey was launched on a bespoke registration site in April 2010 and ran until mid-June 2010. The number of responses to the full survey questionnaire was 732. The indicative margins of error at the 95% confidence level are plus or minus 3.9 percent.

⁶ Bureau of Labor Statistics website, U.S. Department of Labor, ***Career Guide to Industry***, Healthcare.

⁷*Complementary and Alternative Medicine Use Among Adults and Children: United States*, 2007. National Health Statistics Reports; No. 12; December 10, 2008.

⁸All data from ‘Section 4 – Training and Education of Massage Therapists’ is from the **2010 AMTA Massage School Survey** unless otherwise noted.

2010 AMTA Massage School Survey. AMTA staff conducted an annual AMTA Massage School Survey in October 2010. An electronic survey was emailed to 1,896 massage schools. A total of 131 surveys were received for a total response rate of 7%. The survey has a confidence level of plus or minus 7.8 percent. This is the fourth annual survey conducted by AMTA on the trends and information pertaining to massage therapy schools in the United States.

⁹All data from ‘Section 5 – Massage Therapists Use of Technology’ is from the **2010 AMTA Technology Survey** unless otherwise noted.

2010 AMTA Technology Survey. AMTA staff conducted an annual AMTA Massage School Survey in October 2010. An electronic survey was emailed to 40,895 professional massage therapists. A total of 4,051 surveys were received for a total response rate of 10 percent. The survey has a confidence level of plus or minus 1.5 percent.

¹⁰ **Wave.5 - The Socialisation of Brands; Social Media Tracker 2010**

Wave 5 The Socialisation of Brands is part of Universal McCann’s ongoing research program aimed at exploring the massive changes occurring in communication technologies. The studies have been conducted annually since 2006. The Social Media Tracker has retained the same methodology from Wave 1 through Wave 5, enabling comparison between data sets. All surveys have been scripted and hosted on Universal McCann’s in-house online research system, Intuition.

About the American Massage Therapy Association

The American Massage Therapy Association[®] represents more than 57,000 massage therapists, students and massage schools. AMTA works to establish massage therapy as integral to the maintenance of good health and complementary to other therapeutic processes; to advance the profession through ethics and standards, continuing education, professional publications, legislative efforts, public education, and fostering the development of members.

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