

Appendix C

Audiences for Data and Results

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AUDIENCES FOR DATA AND RESULTS

C.1 Health Care Professionals

Recent articles in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* have suggested that there has been a change in the ways in which health care providers communicate with patients. Many patients go to their health appointments armed with information—some credible, some not so credible—that they have downloaded from the World Wide Web. Others explain how they have been ordering herbal supplements, and sometimes prescription pharmaceuticals, online. Health care providers will benefit directly from information about how members of the general public are acquiring their health-related information in order to accommodate their patients' health information needs.

C.2 “Consumer Informatics” Specialists

Recent meetings of the American Medical Informatics Association have emphasized the emergence of a new field in communication referred to as *consumer informatics*. With the emergence of a better educated middle class, along with a broad dissemination of information technology, more and more individuals are personally seeking out recommendations for health living. Consumer informatics specialists are those responsible for publishing the information needed by consumers in easy-to-use and accessible formats. Knowing how individuals acquire knowledge about cancer and cancer prevention should enable consumer informatics professionals to make important decisions about channels (e.g., World Wide Web versus traditional broadcast media), what type of information to publish within those channels, and how best to reach certain, especially minority, populations.

C.3 Public Health Professionals

Directors of public health departments throughout the country are constantly in the position of making critical administrative and budgetary decisions about the number and format of effective public service announcement campaigns. HINTS provides public health administrators with data on which to base their communication decisions.

C.4 Behavioral and Communication Researchers

Much of the scientific knowledge that is underpinning public health campaigns has been collected within traditional “broadcast media” domains. Given the failure of many commercial “dot-com” health web sites, there is some reason to believe that some of the traditional behavioral communication models, which were formulated during an age of one-way broadcast media, may not work as effectively in a highly networked communication environment. New research is needed to inform the next generation of behaviorally oriented communication theories.