

Marketing sport and exercise to women from 18 to 30 years old

Understanding your audience

As women enter their twenties they start working and many of them work long hours and can spend a lot of time commuting. This means that their lack of free time in which to exercise should always be considered.

The social side of sport and health benefits are what matters to these women. This can mean being able to play as part of a team or to take part with friends. However, the interests and barriers for this age group differ considerably depending on how much they earn, so we have split these into two sections: Financially better off women and financially less well off women.

Better off women

What interests these women?

Sports they are interested in playing are usually team or competitive ones, but can also include new and interesting activities such as salsa dancing, judo or pole dancing.

What stops them from taking part?

1. Women who are earning more money find the biggest problem for them is the lack of convenient places to play the sports they're interested in (or unawareness of where they are).
2. The lack of time they have available due to work or family demands.

So . . . what can you do?

In order to make sport appeal more to these women you could:

- Create sporting social events
- Offer sports to play with minimum travelling time
- Set up new classes (at a local level) without having to run them by providing "seed money" to new private instructors. This money is there to help private instructors get through the first ten to twelve weeks of running courses, and gives them the opportunity to get started and build up numbers without a worry of not having enough money (for more detail see the how to guide section).
- Use photography of people they can relate to when promoting what sports and exercise is available. This means no lycra or incredible athletes, there is a wide range of this kind of photography available at www.sportengland.org/promotingsport
- Remind them they can get involved in mass participation events and provide them with information on how to train for such events and where they can find people to train with. This will give them a chance to get good at something and get people to join clubs (e.g. running club for fun runs).

Less well off women

What interests these women?

Sport and exercise would be a lot more fun to these women if they had a chance to take part with friends and family or to meet with other women of their age especially if they can have fun and enjoy it.

What stops them from taking part?

In general, women who are less well off tend to do less sport. A negative cycle seems to occur, when their friends and family don't do sport or exercise, it seems less normal and it is therefore harder for these women to take part themselves.

Most women at this age are not interested in the health benefits, they tend to believe that they have an immunity due to their youth and because they look good right now.

They also tend to feel that there aren't places for them to take part. Part of this is the cost of nice gyms, but even though there are plenty of other opportunities available they are often not aware of the chances to 'pay and play' offered by local sports centres.

So . . . what can we do?

1. Again, because of the interest in socialising and meeting new people there is a real benefit to making sure that the classes, clubs and any other opportunities to do sport and exercise are set up to help people be sociable. This can be as simple as making sure the instructors are friendly and help get everyone talking.
2. Find ways to make exercise seem like something they would do. So when trying to promote classes to women of this age try to use photography of attractive normal women, including latest trends. Make sure they include people they can relate to and also aspire to – so no lycra and no ultra-fit athletes. (For good photography please visit the photography section of www.sportengland.org/promotingsport)
3. Show people they have the ability to look better through exercise and explain there are many people there to support them. We all know rationally that doing exercise can help someone to lose fat and look fitter, but it sometimes doesn't seem possible to actually do it. In order to help give people confidence that they will be able to use exercise to change their body you can explain the results in terms of numbers. For instance if you're trying to promote a spinning class, you could promote that a 45 minute class would burn 320 calories, and that if they made this part of their routine twice a week then they could lose 4lbs of fat every 12 weeks.