

PROFILES OF RESPONDERS TO A NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING
AWARENESS CAMPAIGN*

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A Natural Family Planning (NFP) public awareness campaign was conducted in the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas, under the auspices of the NFP office. This article presents an analysis of client data collected. The goals of the program were to raise awareness of NFP and elicit inquiries from the community-at-large. The data suggests that there is wide interest in NFP from the non-Catholic community and that responders to the campaign came from several distinct groups, each with its own characteristics. Based on the successful outcomes of the program, ways of segmenting the target market in future NFP awareness campaigns are presented.

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Background

In 2003, the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas test marketed a campaign to promote Natural Family Planning (NFP). This effort was part of a larger project, underwritten by the Family of the Americas Foundation (FAF) through the *Pax et Bonum* Foundation. The FAF project has four main objectives:

1. To test market a strategy to reach out to the entire community (including Hispanics) with various marketing and public relations tools promoting NFP;
2. To train additional teachers to provide quality NFP services to married and engaged couples, using Family of the Americas Foundation's material, and providing compensatory salaries;

3. To provide education on human fertility and procreation including a fundamental explanation of the fertility cycle and how to interpret the physiological signs of fertility;
4. To expand the capacity of current office operations through additional teaching sites, phone lines, computer equipment, audio-visual equipment and staff as needed for twelve months.

This article describes the results of an awareness campaign addressing the first goal of reaching out to the community. The data presented here comes from the first phase of the campaign, which lasted from September 2003 through December 2003. The tabulations are based on information collected from calls made to the NFP Office in response to the advertising. A follow-up campaign is planned for the future.

The Awareness Campaign

The promotional campaign consisted of a combination of radio ads, print ads, publicity, and four billboards. The target audience for the first phase of the campaign was the female population of the Wichita Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) of childbearing age (18 to 45 years old).

One of the challenges of using the mass media in this effort is that NFP encompasses the full range of the human being: physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and intellectual.¹ The most effective mass media messages tend to be simple and quickly grasped by the passing motorist or radio listener.² To get the attention of the population, concisely touching on all aspects of the human person, while remaining faithful to the Roman Catholic Church's teaching on natural law, the tag line chosen to complement the billboards and radio ads was: "99% Effective. 100% Natural. Your Body Knows."™

The multimedia campaign started on September 22, 2003 and ran for three months. Radio spots were purchased from fifteen stations, including a Hispanic radio station. All three radio commercials featured women discussing NFP, with the word "naturally" featured prominently in the dialogue. The billboard depicted a woman sitting on a bed dreamily looking at a long-stemmed rose. Two of the billboard locations were set up on a rotating basis. Two interviews on the local television news and several letters to the editor were published in the *Wichita Eagle* as a result of this promotion.³

The campaign was extensive. The reach (a measure of the number of different individuals exposed to the media) of the radio advertisements over the three-month period was estimated to be 96%, with an average exposure to the message of 23 times. The billboards reached 88% of the population with an exposure of 58 times.⁴ In the eight months prior to the campaign, the NFP office had 196 calls and eight months after the start of the campaign, call volume exceeded 1000. Consequently, twelve new training couples were recruited and an additional 150 couples were trained in the practice of NFP.

Those who contacted the NFP office either by telephone or by walk-in were asked a set of questions regarding personal information and the medium prompting the inquiry.⁵ The inquirer's name, address, sex, marital status, age, religion, and which media they were exposed to (radio station, billboard location, newspaper print ad, personal recommendation) were captured in the questionnaire. The resulting data set contained 702 records, although some records were incomplete.⁶ The data was analyzed to see if any patterns might emerge that would offer insight into the characteristics of those responding to the awareness message. (In the course of looking at the data, several hypotheses presented themselves for further study).

Caller Profile by Age, Sex, and Marital Status

As expected, the awareness campaign elicited inquiries from the target age group (18-45)—some callers were as young as 16, and a few as old as 61 who called on behalf of their daughters—with the mean age of the callers being 28 and a median age of 26. There were no appreciable differences between the age distributions of male and female callers.

A tabulation of the data by gender and marital status is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Caller Profile by Sex and Marital Status

	<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>		<i>Total</i>	
Married	46	58%	371	63%	417	62%
Engaged	16	20%	71	12%	87	13%
Single	13	16%	74	13%	87	13%
Not reported	4	5%	73	12%	77	12%
Total	79	100%	589	100%	668	100%

As reflected by the percentage of men and women in the “not reported” category, it appears that women tend to be more reticent about providing personal information.⁷ There may be several reasons for this. First, women may be more concerned about privacy than men. A second reason may be that the propensity to share private information may be directly related to the degree of desire to learn about NFP. Those unsure if they wanted to use NFP would have been less likely to answer the questionnaire fully. Because of cultural factors (i.e., *machismo*) and the fact that the campaign was targeted to women, it is reasonable to presume that men who made the effort to call were highly motivated to learn about NFP.⁸ Although an in-depth examination of this question is beyond the scope of this analysis, future research should provide some valuable insights into the attitudes of the callers.

Media Impact

A central question of the campaign was in what way a particular radio station impacted the response rate. The relationship between the radio stations and their listener responses was analyzed. Table 2 provides information about the radio stations, format, call letters and frequency, the number of respondents citing each station, and two measures of station ranking. The format was usually reported to the NFP office by the station, but in a few cases when it was not, the format cited in the Broadcasting & Cable Yearbook was used. The stations were rank ordered by the number of respondents identifying that station as carrying the ad that motivated the inquiry. For comparison, the Arbitrend rank listing by AQH (average quarterly hour) share for the winter of 2003 is presented.⁹

Table 2
Responses and Rankings by Radio Station

<i>Radio Station</i>	<i>Format</i>	<i>Number Inquiries</i>	<i>NFP Rank</i>	<i>Arbitrend rank</i>
KDGS (93.9)	Modern rock	85	1	3
KTLI (99.1)	Christian	81	2	13
KYQQ (106.5)	Hispanic	67	3	18
KRBB (97.9)	Adult contemp.	44	4	2
KFDI (101.3)	Country	43	5	1
KFBZ K (105.3)	Classic rock	37	6	10
KKRD (107.3)	Contemp. hit	33	7	7
KZSN (102.1)	Country	27	8	4
KICT (95.1)	Modern rock	23	9	5
KMXW (92.3)	Adult contemp.	21	10	15
KFXJ (104.5)	Classic rock	18	11	9
KFH (98.7)	News	14	12	14
KEYN (103.7)	Oldies	13	13	6
KRZZ (96.3)	Classic rock	5	14	12
KFH (1330 AM)	News	4	15	16
<i>Total</i>		<i>515</i>		

Although the response rates (number of respondents divided by total number of listeners) were too small for the application of many statistical analysis methods, the Spearman rank-correlation coefficient provided an indirect test of whether the responses varied by station format. If the number of respondents in each category comprised of an equal percentage of each station's audience (i.e., station format did not matter), then the ordinal rankings would be identical for both series and the correlation would equal one. The data suggests that the higher Arbitrend ranked stations did not necessarily bring forth more responses. The characteristics of the individual radio station programming and their listenership do seem to affect the response rate.¹⁰

Table 3 shows the number of callers associated with each type of radio programming. Although programming may be taken as a proxy variable for listener demographics and psychographics, the definitions of specific formats are not always precise and may change over time.¹¹ However, in spite of this drawback, this data offers some valuable insights. As will be discussed below, the stations ranked by number of callers differs from a ranking based on NFP training session attendees.

Table 3
Distribution of Responses by Radio Format

<i>Format</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Modern rock	108	21.0%
Christian	81	15.7%
Country	70	13.6%
Hispanic	67	13.0%
Adult contemp.	65	12.6%
Classic rock	0	11.7%
Contemp. Hit	33	6.4%
News	18	3.5%
Oldies	13	2.5%
<i>Total</i>	<i>515</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

The Impact of Religious Affiliation

The Catholic ethic encompasses NFP.¹² Therefore, it was important to determine if Catholic callers differed from other groups. Respondents were divided into three categories; “Catholic”, the broadly defined “non-Catholic”, and “Not reported”. Most of the non-Catholic callers were Protestant but there were a few Muslims, a Buddhist, an atheist, and a pagan among the callers.

About 12% of Wichitans are Catholic, while approximately 78% of the inquiries came from non-Catholics or non-reports.¹³ Many Catholics have been exposed to NFP through channels other than the radio ads, news media and billboards. The Most Reverend Thomas J. Olmsted (who was at that time Bishop of the Diocese of Wichita) sent a letter to the parishes alerting priests and parishioners of the upcoming project. In addition, couples marrying in the Roman Catholic Church are introduced to NFP as part of their marriage preparation. Table 4 shows the breakout of callers by religion and sex.

Table 4
Caller Profile by Religion and Sex

	<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>		<i>Total</i>	
Catholic	16	20.3%	129	21.9%	145	21.7%
Non-Catholic	55	69.6%	339	57.6%	394	59.0%
Not reported	8	10.1%	121	20.5%	129	19.3%
Total	79	100.0%	589	100.0%	668	100.0%

The relationship between religious background and the marital status of callers is explored in Table 5. There does seem to be some evidence that the representation of marital status varies by religious background.¹⁴

Table 5
Caller Profile by Religion and Marital Status

	<i>Catholic</i>		<i>Non-Catholic</i>		<i>Not reported</i>	
Married	87	58%	282	68%	67	48%
Engaged	14	9%	69	17%	8	6%
Single	18	12%	43	10%	33	24%
Not reported	30	20%	20	5%	31	22%
Total	149	100%	414	100%	139	100%

A critical question addresses the relationship between religion and radio station preferences. In other words, did Catholics and non-Catholics tune in to different types of radio stations? Table 6 shows the religious background of callers based on the type of station that prompted the call. There does appear to be some evidence that the three religion groups have different tastes in radio programming.¹⁵

Table 6
Distribution of Respondents by Radio Format and Religion

	<i>Catholic</i>		<i>Non-Catholic</i>		<i>Not reported</i>		<i>Total</i>	
Modern rock	11	8.8%	64	21.5%	33	35.9%	108	21.0%
Christian	5	4.0%	72	24.2%	4	4.3%	81	15.7%
Country	13	10.4%	48	16.1%	9	9.8%	70	13.6%
Hispanic	53	42.4%	7	2.3%	7	7.6%	67	13.0%
Adult contemp.	16	12.8%	43	14.4%	6	6.5%	65	12.6%
Classic rock	15	12.0%	27	9.1%	18	19.6%	60	11.7%
Contemp. hit	4	3.2%	18	6.0%	11	12.0%	33	6.4%
News	6	4.8%	9	3.0%	3	3.3%	18	3.5%
Oldies	2	1.6%	10	3.4%	1	1.1%	13	2.5%
Total	125	100.0%	298	100.0%	92	100.0%	515	100.0%

More than one third of the Catholic respondents who heard one of the radio ads, heard it on KYQQ, the Spanish-language station. As can be seen in Table 6, this group had a large impact on the Catholic distribution of radio listenership but had a much smaller presence in the other two religion groups. The order of preferences of radio format for non-Hispanic Catholics was adult contemporary, classic rock, and country, while the corresponding ranking for non-Catholics was Christian radio, modern rock, and country.

Hispanic and non-Hispanic Catholics

Even though no data was collected on ethnic background, Hispanics could be identified as listeners of Spanish radio. While this operational definition missed Hispanics listening to English-language radio (and included non-Hispanics who listened to Spanish-language radio), it was able to bring out some insights into the cultural differences among Catholic respondents. In 2002, according to the Bureau of the Census, 8.8% of the population of Wichita was Hispanic or Latino.¹⁶ Of the 702 callers in the database, 67 (or 9.5%) said they were listeners of Spanish-language radio. Of these 67 respondents, 53 identified themselves as Catholic.

One distinction of the Hispanic callers is that they were predominantly female—only one caller who listened to the Spanish-language radio station was male. In contrast, the non-Spanish radio listeners had a different profile. Thirteen percent of the non-Hispanic callers were men and 87% were women. The corresponding rates for non-Hispanic Catholics were 16% and 84%.

A second distinction of the Hispanic callers was the low reporting rate for single callers, as can be seen in Table 7. Of the 53 Catholic Hispanics, 27 (or 51%) did not report their marital status. Many of these non-reports are due to interviewee refusals. This finding underscores the cultural sensitivity needed in a successful NFP awareness campaign and it supports the idea of using Hispanic media.

Table 7
Catholic Callers by Marital Status and Ethnicity

	<i>Hispanic</i>		<i>Non-Hispanic</i>		<i>Total</i>	
Married	24	45.3%	63	66.3%	87	58.8%
Engaged	1	1.9%	13	13.7%	14	9.5%
Single	1	1.9%	16	16.8%	17	11.5%
Not reported	27	50.9%	3	3.2%	30	20.3%
Total	53	100.0%	95	100.0%	148	100.0%

Attendance Rates

Since a goal of the campaign has been to promote the practice of NFP, it was imperative to track follow-ups to the initial inquiry call. One of the hypotheses tested was whether attendance was contingent upon whether the man or woman made the inquiry call. Note that this hypothesis should be interpreted with care, because couples, not individuals, receive training. The decision to attend a session is made jointly by the caller and the caller's spouse.¹⁷ For individual cases, it is unknown which of the two partners (the caller or the "silent" spouse) had the greater desire to attend.

Whether attendance was contingent upon marital status was also analyzed. Seventy-seven out of the 81 callers for whom marital status was not recorded did not attend a training session. Furthermore, four people with missing marital status data attended a session.¹⁸ Even after considering interviewer error, it is reasonable to conclude that non-attendance is positively related to refusals. This strongly suggests that the openness of the caller to share information at the initial contact is a predictor of the likelihood of follow-up. It is likely that the decision to learn NFP occurs either before survey questions are asked or during the survey administration.

As noted above, the radio format could be interpreted as a proxy variable for caller attitudes. Table 8 lists the radio formats by non-attendee ranking.¹⁹

Table 8
Cross-tabulation of Respondents by Radio Format and Attendance

<i>Format</i>	<i>Attendees</i>		<i>Non-Attendees</i>	
Modern rock	15	13.9%	93	22.9%
Christian	28	25.9%	53	13.0%
Country	20	18.5%	50	12.3%
Hispanic	11	10.2%	56	13.8%
Adult contemporary	16	14.8%	49	12.0%
Classic rock	10	9.3%	50	12.3%
Contemporary hit	3	2.8%	30	7.4%
News	4	3.7%	14	3.4%
Oldies	1	0.9%	12	2.9%
Total	108	100.0%	407	100.0%

Table 9 ranks the formats and shows those yielding higher and lower than the average attendance rate of 21%. It shows the total number of callers citing each station format and the percentage of those who followed up with training. In particular, listeners of Christian, country, and adult contemporary seem to have a greatest desire to learn NFP. Listeners of the oldies station, contemporary hits, and modern rock had a smaller probability of follow-up than average.

Table 9
Attendance by Format

<i>Format</i>	<i>Number Citing Format</i>	<i>Percent Attended</i>
Christian	81	34.6%
Country	70	28.6%
Adult contemporary	65	24.6%
News	18	22.2%
Classic rock	60	16.7%
Hispanic	67	16.4%
Modern rock	108	13.9%
Contemporary hit	33	9.1%
Oldies	13	7.7%
Total/average	515	21.0%

Conclusions

The two main purposes of compiling the database of callers were to (1) track the clients and the media that brought them to the NFP office, and (2) gather information to guide future awareness campaigns. The effort was successful on both counts.

The analysis of the data helped the NFP office reach several conclusions. The first was that the target audience exhibited great heterogeneity and had sub-groups, each with its own set of behaviors, divided along religious and ethnic lines. The four major groups represented in the data are: (1) Hispanic Catholics, (2) non-Hispanic Catholics, (3) non-Catholics, and (4) those not listing their religious denomination. This finding argues for further investigation into the cultural aspects of the callers. Like St. Paul standing in the Areopagus in Athens, the Church should continue to present its message in a culturally appropriate manner.

A second conclusion is that some callers, mostly women and non-attendees, are reluctant to answer questions. It is likely that privacy is an issue for the former group, while the latter group seems to be those who are “checking things out” but did not possess a great deal of motivation to practice NFP. A better understanding of these dynamics may help in getting them more involved.

The results regarding radio formats are intriguing. It is interesting that (in an area of the Midwest where country music is the most popular format) modern rock listeners accounted for the largest number of inquiries, but a proportionately smaller number of attendees. Modern rock listeners seem curious about NFP but are hesitant to come to a training session. This also argues for further research into how a person decides whether or not to practice NFP.

This research also presents some good news for the Roman Catholic Church. In light of the fact that 12% of the population of Wichita is Catholic, the high percentage of Roman Catholic attendees (22%) reveals that the Church’s message about NFP is reaching the Catholic population. It is unfortunate that some Catholics may need a second invitation, but the high response rate indicates that the first invitation (such as through marriage preparation or a homily) did leave an impression.

There is another side to the high Catholic response rate. One of the goals of the test market was to reach the general population and the campaign was consciously designed not to be “Catholic.” While the finding that 78% of the callers were non-Catholic certainly is welcome news, successful achievement of this particular goal would be indicated

by a caller profile that mirrors the overall population of Wichita. Future campaigns have the promise of reaching out to non-Catholics even more as the NFP office was successful in fostering a higher “comfort” level for non-Catholic callers.

A caution must be noted in the interpretation of the data. “Marketing” NFP is not like marketing a soft drink. The success or failure of the NFP campaign can only be determined over time, perhaps even years, since NFP involves a process of maturation—both in relationship with God and inter-spousal relationships. A delay between exposure to the message and the inquiry call may indicate that couples are mulling over NFP and, therefore, are taking it very seriously. Hesitation to act may mean, “I’m not interested,” or it may mean, “I want to take the time to think about it carefully and learn more.”

In summary, the campaign was very successful and resulted in a marked increase in the number of couples receiving training in NFP. In the eight months after the start of the campaign, the NFP office had over 1000 calls inquiring about NFP from both Catholics and non-Catholics. In contrast, there were 196 calls in the eight months preceding the commencement of the campaign.

The campaign revealed a hunger for an alternative to artificial birth control. People want to know and are responsive when NFP is presented in an attractive, secular format. The response of men to the campaign was surprising and suggests that advertising through media that men listen to, such as talk radio or sports stations, may be very effective. It was a bold step in the community of Wichita publicizing a topic not easily discussed in public. Without a doubt, it was a very successful campaign that could easily be adapted for any other community.

Notes

1. Pope Paul VI wrote, “The problem of birth, like every other problem regarding human life, is to be considered, beyond partial perspectives—whether of the biological or psychological, demographic, or sociological orders—in the light of an integral vision of man and of his vocation, not only his natural and earthly, but also his supernatural and eternal vocation.” #7 *Of Human Life (Humanae Vitae)* (Boston: St. Paul Books & Media).
2. St. Paul was faced with a similar challenge when he preached the Gospel in Athens (see Acts 17:20-34).
3. Letters to the Editor, *The Wichita Eagle*, January 13, 2004.
4. The audience delivery estimates were provided by a marketing firm retained by the NFP Office.
5. People who have been prompted to inquire about NFP through the campaign are generically called “callers” in this paper, although there have been a few walk-ins. As the advertisements specified only a telephone number, only those with some familiarity with the diocesan offices would have been able to be a walk-in.
6. There are several reasons for missing data in market research; administrative error (such as data processing or interviewer error) and respondent error (that is, refusal to answer the question). Callers to the NFP Office were interviewed by the staff. The Spanish-language advertisements referred inquirers to a different office, which was not fully staffed. Callers sometimes left the information on an answering machine. Of the 702 records, the following are the number of missing records in each field: gender (34), age (68), marital status (81), religion (139), radio station prompting the call (187), attendance at an introductory NFP training session (0).
7. Even though there were some cases of interviewer error, anecdotal evidence suggests that women, especially Hispanic women, often refused to provide some personal information.
8. As an example of the reactions of men, a 33 year old man said, “Heard the ad and thought it sounded good. There has to be an alternative with all the problems with the pill we’ve been having.”

9. The AQH (average quarter-hour figure) is a measure of the average number of listeners of a particular station for at least five minutes during a 15-minute period. The data was obtained from *Radio Daily News* (<http://www.radiodailynews.com/5-1wichita.htm>.)

10. The r_s value for the correlation between the two rank orderings was 0.098 with the standard deviation of the sampling distribution of r_s of 0.267.

11. See Schulberg, Bob, *Radio Advertising: The Authoritative Handbook*, pp.36-40.

12. See, for example, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2370 (Boston: St. Paul Books & Media, 1994).

13. Data on the Catholic population is available at <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/country/scus1.html>. The percentage of Catholic callers to the NFP Office in response to the campaign of 21.7% underestimates the true percentage to the extent that some Catholics may have decided not to report their religious affiliation.

14. A contingency test in the data in Table 5 resulted with a χ^2 statistic of 72.22 with 6 d.f.

15. A contingency analysis on Table 6 yielded a χ^2 value of 184 with 18 d.f. More than one third of the Catholic respondents who reported hearing a radio announcement heard it on KYQQ, the Spanish-language station. When the contingency test was performed with Hispanic callers (defined as a listener of KYQQ) removed, the χ^2 statistic dropped to 59. However, the results were still highly significant with 16 d.f. and a p-value close to zero.

16. Bureau of the Census, *The 2002 American Community Survey*, (<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/Profiles/Single/2002/ACS/Tabular/380/38000US90401.htm>)

17. The use of the term “spouse” here does not exclude engaged couples (i.e., future spouses). “Partner” is overly broad and does not conform well to the Catholic Church’s teachings. A contingency test on the sex of the caller and attendance at an NFP training session revealed a χ^2 statistic of 2.64, which with 1 d.f. and a p-value of 10.4% is not significant. There does not seem to be a strong relationship between attendance and the gender of the caller.

18. A contingency test on marital status and attendance resulted in a χ^2 statistic of 20.79, with 3 d.f. The corresponding p-value is .01%, which is highly significant.

19. A contingency test on Table 9 showed a χ^2 statistic of 21.0 (with 8 degrees of freedom). The results are highly significant that the number of attendees and non-attendees are contingent on the radio station the caller listened to.

Further References

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