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U.S. Weight Loss Market Worth \$66 Billion

Commercial Chains Rebound But Number of Dieters Falls to 97 Million

May 4, 2017

John LaRosa, Marketdata Research Director

Many Millennials see Weight Watchers and Jenny Craig as your mother's (or grandmother's) weight loss program. It will be a challenge to change this view."

May 4, 2017: Marketdata Enterprises, Inc., a leading independent market research publisher of "off-the-shelf" studies about service industries since 1979, has released its biennial 443-page study: *The U.S. Weight Loss & Diet Control Market* (14th edition). This is a complete analysis and forecast of ALL ten major segments of the U.S. diet market.

"The number of active dieters is estimated to have fallen 10% since 2015, to 97 million, due to a growing size acceptance movement and dieter fatigue. About 80% try to lose weight by themselves, but many fail and the latest CDC statistics show that we are getting fatter, not thinner. The new diet season has started strongly for the largest

players such as NutriSystem and Weight Watchers.”, according to Research Director, John LaRosa.

Major Findings:

Market Value... Marketdata estimates that the total U.S. [weight loss market](#) grew just 2.2% in 2016, from \$64.9 billion to \$66.3 billion. The total market is forecast to grow 2.8% in 2017.

Commercial chains are posting a strong turnaround, boosted by an 18% sales gain at NutriSystem and moderate growth at Weight Watchers in 2016, plus a strong Q1 2017. This segment of the market was worth \$2.77 billion in 2016 and is forecast to grow 9.4% to \$3.03 billion this year.

Meal replacements (shakes, nutrition bars) are posting strong growth and are still popular with dieters. Sales of these products will outpace the growth of OTC diet pills to 2022 (7.2% per year vs. 4.8%). This market segment is worth a combined \$4.16 billion in 2016. Multi-level marketing companies such as Herbalife, Shaklee, Isagenix and more provide a significant distribution channel for these products, since they are safe, portable and inexpensive.

Prescription obesity drugs is a \$615 million market that has been flat for years. Sales of the newest medications (Contrave, Belviq, Qsymia) have not gained traction due to cost, insurance coverage and very moderate weight loss. Drug company R&D has yet to produce an anti-obesity drug with blockbuster potential, constrained by slow FDA approval and side effects.

Weight loss surgeries - An estimated 201,000 were performed in the U.S. in 2016, up just 2.6%. Reimbursement for this typical \$25,000 surgery remains a problem.

Medical weight loss clinics and franchises have grown in number as MDs seek to replace income lost to managed care. However, hospitals are still taking a wait and see attitude, trying to make sense of an uncertain healthcare environment and how to make a profit.

Low-calorie (diet) frozen entrée sales have been declining for years, as consumers avoid highly processed foods with artificial ingredients. However, producers such as Stouffer's (Lean Cuisine) have turned declines into growth via new items, more natural ingredients and attractive packaging.

Diet and fitness apps - Contrary to popular belief, free diet apps such as MyFitnessPal were NOT the main reason for recent diet company woes. Usage is waning and research shows that they don't produce lasting weight loss. Rather, the problem has been a lack of compelling programs and management/structural problems at some companies.

Diet Websites... Online dieting is worth at least \$990 million, by our estimates, and WeightWatchers.com is the leader with 2016 revenue of \$349 million.

Untapped Niche Markets... American diet companies will seek to boost revenues by looking at untapped or under-served markets and niches, such as: the men's market, teen market, African-American and Hispanic markets, the diabetic market, the elderly market, the worksite-based B2B market, and overseas markets.