

Baby Booming

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Two of the most intensely emotional periods in a woman's life include planning for a wedding, and pregnancy.

The folks at the Knot knew this and bought WeddingChannel.com, where brides can get information on everything from wedding dresses to caterers, create their own Web site and get expert advice.

Hilary Zalon has fashioned something very similar for moms-to-be, called the Cradle.

"Nine months is a long time," said Zalon, chief executive of the Cradle. I wanted to create a site where women are not just visiting and leaving to another site looking for information. I really wanted to create a home base for them."

Why now?

"There's a baby boom going on," she said. In 2006, there were 4.3 million births, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The last time the country has seen that many newborns was in 1951.

TheCradle.com bills itself as a one-stop lifestyle destination for expectant and new moms, and features hundreds of articles from obstetricians, pediatricians and contributing writers about pregnancy and birth. It also includes a social networking element and an option to create a personal Web site where baby registries can be maintained. A baby name search function, features 50,000 suggestions.

Each day the Web site greets the expectant mom with a message based upon the baby's time in utero. For example, one note read: "Your baby's fingernails are forming today."

Revenues will come from advertising against a captive audience eager to spend. It is financed by private investors and Zalon said the seed funds should sustain the seven-member company for at least a year.

Since the site launched in December, about 200,000 people have visited and 10,000 have signed up as members.