CTSI Career Development Seminar

Using Social Media to Recruit and Retain Study Participants – the CRC’s perspective

Presented by:
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Recruiting Hidden Populations: Is Facebook the Answer?

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Structural Interventions to Lower Alcohol-Related STI/HIV-Risk

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
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SILAS STUDY

4 year longitudinal study -- The effects of public policy on sexual risk-behavior

- Confined to 16 states (8 pro & 8 anti)
- Survey Instrument administered once/year for 4 years
  - First wave (W1) of data collection was in 2008
  - Last wave (W4) of data collection was in 2011
- Target recruitment was 4,000 MSM each year

SILAS W4: Ran survey as “ManScan”

- W4 included a series of recruitment questions:
  - The W4 outcomes: Variation by Urban MSM vs. Rural MSM?
  - Venue: MSM-oriented vs. general social networking sites?
  - Methods: Banner Ads vs. Membership Emails?
  - Compensation: Paid vs. Voluntary?
Facebook is now used by 1 in 7 people on earth
Lord Zuckerbeast’s appetite for users is insatiable! As membership continues to grow, it appears he may now have the largest group of MSM in any single online forum!
Targeted Ads
~70M
US Male Users

~710K
US Male Users
Self-Identify as MSM

~650K
US Male Users
Self-Identify as MSM
18+

~250K
US Male Users
Self-Identify as MSM
18-24
FACEBOOK RECRUITMENT

Ad Approval – Rejected vs Accepted

APPROVED ✓ REJECTED
FACEBOOK RECRUITMENT

Ad Approval – Rejected vs Accepted

APPROVED ✓ REJECTED
FACEBOOK RECRUITMENT

Ad Approval – Rejected vs Accepted

1. Generic response
2. “MSM” is explicit
3. The word “Sex”
4. Linked landing page
5. *Cultural bias among outsourced ad-review staff
6. *First campaign ad usually reviewed by US-based staff.
7. *No shirtless men
8. *Nipples/bulges...eww!
MEANWHILE...

SOMETHING TO SAY?
We want to hear it. Take the University of Minnesota’s Men’s Internet Study.

ManScan: University of MN
Please take this University of MN survey to help us shed light on how pro and anti-gay laws affect the lives of gay men.

Men’s Health Survey
Help us learn more about men in our community by taking this University of Minnesota survey.

Help Fight HIV?
Get involved in the University of Minnesota’s Men’s Internet Study, to understand and fight the spread of HIV.

Sponsored
Silas.epi.umn.edu

ManScan: Men’s Health
Take the survey. Men who have sex with men are affected by the culture and environment where they live. Help us find out how.

GET IT OFF YOUR CHEST
We want to hear it. Participate in the University of Minnesota’s Men’s Internet Study.

MSM Men’s Health Study
Participate in scientific research learning how men who sleep with men are affected by the culture and environment where they live.

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Several hundred more...
FACEBOOK RECRUITMENT

• Factors for Success in Ad Creation:
  
  – 1. Copy – Used by FB impressions algorithm
Make an invite
Be specific: "Get involved" "Take our survey" etc. etc.
FACEBOOK RECRUITMENT

- Factors for Success in Ad Creation:
  - 1. Copy – Used by FB impressions algorithm
  - 2. Chosen Image – Test Variations!
Apart from shirtless men where you see nipple and/or bulge, a smiling male face produced the highest click through rate, and was the least likely to get rejected.
FACEBOOK RECRUITMENT

• Factors for Success in Ad Creation:
  
  1. Copy – Used by FB impressions algorithm
  2. Chosen Image – Test Variations!
  3. Punctuation – ALWAYS USE PUNCTUATION MARK!
Use punctuation in the title. We found that "?" worked the best, even when the statement wasn't a question.

*USE ALL CAPS? YES!*
FACEBOOK RECRUITMENT

• Factors for Success in Ad Creation:
  – 1. Copy – Used by FB impressions algorithm
  – 2. Chosen Image – Test Variations!
  – 3. Punctuation – ALWAYS USE PUNCTUATION MARK!
  – 4. Targeting – A must! But no more than 5
**INSIDER INFORMATION**

*For broad U.S. recruitment, looking to recruit lots of MSM quickly, target should be roughly 150K*

Use "Precise Interests"  
No more than 5
FACEBOOK RECRUITMENT

- Factors for Success in Ad Creation:
  - 1. Copy – Used by FB impressions algorithm
  - 2. Chosen Image – Test Variations!
  - 3. Punctuation – ALWAYS USE PUNCTUATION MARK!
  - 4. Targeting – A must! But no more than 5
  - 5. Timing – Cycling
    - Start, Pause, Rotate, Create!
    - 3 day cycle
    - Approval is completely arbitrary
FACEBOOK RECRUITMENT

• Recommendations

  1. Plan large number of campaign ads in advance
  2. Carefully name each separate ad
  3. Carefully name each separate campaign
  4. Monitor daily campaign performance, at ad-level
  5. Remember the lessons for copy, punctuation and images
Good Luck!
SHOUT IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION
Hypothesis-Driven

vs.

Not-(Totally)-Hypothesis-Driven
What are your brand assets?
Brand Hierarchy & Persona

Brand Awareness

Brand Capital
Facts tell, but stories sell.
Questions?
Using Social Media to Recruit Study Participants – IRB Guidelines

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Common Types of Internet Research

- Ethnography
- Focus Groups
- Qualitative Research
- Interviews
- Web-based Experiments
Internet Research Survey Tools

• Survey Monkey
  - Cloud based
  - Online Panel

• Qualtrics
  - Cloud based
  - Online panel option
Concerns Relevant to IRBs

• Is information posted online automatically in the public domain?
• How do IRBs assess the expectation of privacy?
  – Terms of Use/Terms of Service
  – Distinction between anonymous & confidential
  – Provide information about the environment
Subject Recruitment

- Facebook Page
- YouTube video
- Matching algorithm on social media sites (e.g. PatientsLikeMe)

- Consider the information that will be exchanged with prospective subjects, use a dedicated site that is individual for all other purposes
Recruitment is part of informed consent

- Study title, purpose, protocol summary, etc.
- Description of research risks/potential benefits
- Solicitation of identifiable private information (e.g. eligibility survey)
- Recruitment plan
Social Media Tips/Considerations

- Engagement versus advertisement
- Does social media make sense for your study?
- Relevancy: what does this look like and do you have the resources to achieve it?
- Budget considerations: do you need staff, student worker, paid promotion, etc?
- Use an existing platform
- Consider disease specific versus study specific
Social Media Resources

- U of MN Social Networking Guidelines, Basics of social networking, What to know before using social networking, Tool comparison chart: [https://www.ur.umn.edu/brand/requirements-and-guidelines/social-networking/](https://www.ur.umn.edu/brand/requirements-and-guidelines/social-networking/)
- Social Media for Researchers: Tips for #Success:
  - Penn Social Media and Health Innovation Lab: [http://www.med.upenn.edu/socialmedialab/](http://www.med.upenn.edu/socialmedialab/)
CTSI Recruitment Resources

- CTSI Recruitment Center
  - Consultations
  - Leverage recruiting technologies, University networking, and community partnerships
  - Feedback on recruitment plans
  - Connection to informatics experts and clinical data

- Contact Research Navigator: ctsi@umn.edu
Questions for the panel