

And Instagram!
And Grindr, too!

Recruiting? Facebook can help: Using social media to recruit participants

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Uses of social media recruitment



Randomized Control Trials and Survey Research

Healthy Teen Network used social media to recruit for its study of Pulse, a digital sexual health intervention for young women. All interaction with participants from recruitment to incentive distribution occurred online.



Focus Groups

Healthy Teen Network used social media to recruit for a series of digital focus groups held during the formative research stage of a sexual health intervention that later became known as Stache. These groups were implemented on a private Facebook group, and all participant interaction occurred online.



Programs and Services

Healthy Teen Network used social media to recruit Spanish-dominant Spanish speakers for HIV screening services in Baltimore, Maryland. While recruitment occurred online, social media ads were complemented with traditional marketing and advertisements, and follow-up and screening services occurred over phone and in-person.

Why social media recruitment?

Reduces cost

Recruitment Costs, Pulse Study



Incentives matter! Typically, increasing the incentive amount decreases the ad cost per eligible enrollee.

Saves time

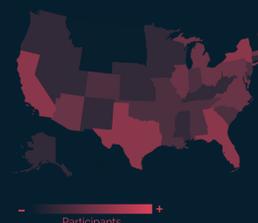
Recruitment Pace vs Cost, Pulse Study



With the right creative and targeting, recruitment can happen rapidly, even while the advertising costs diminish.

Improves reach

Participant Geographic Distribution, Pulse Study



With the right creative and targeting, recruitment can strategically reach diverse people from large urban centers across the country including less represented groups.

Trans identified recruits, Stache Focus Group



Visual model of platform recruitment effectiveness



Platform-specific targeting capabilities

Targeting Parameters

- Location
- Age
- Gender
- Language
- Race/Ethnicity
- Sexual Orientation

Facebook

- Social networking service and marketplace.
- Less effective when filtering your sample based on sexual orientation.
- More effective when recruiting Spanish-dominant Spanish-speakers.

Instagram

- Photo and video-sharing social networking service.
- Filtering age in Instagram is very effective. Instagram is the most effective platform to use to recruit adolescents.

Twitter

- News and social networking service.
- Less effective when filtering your sample based on race and ethnicity.
- Better suited for reach (e.g., to disseminate educational messages) than recruitment.

Google Ad Grants

- In-kind search engine advertising for select nonprofit organizations.
- Only users logged into Google accounts can be precisely targeted.

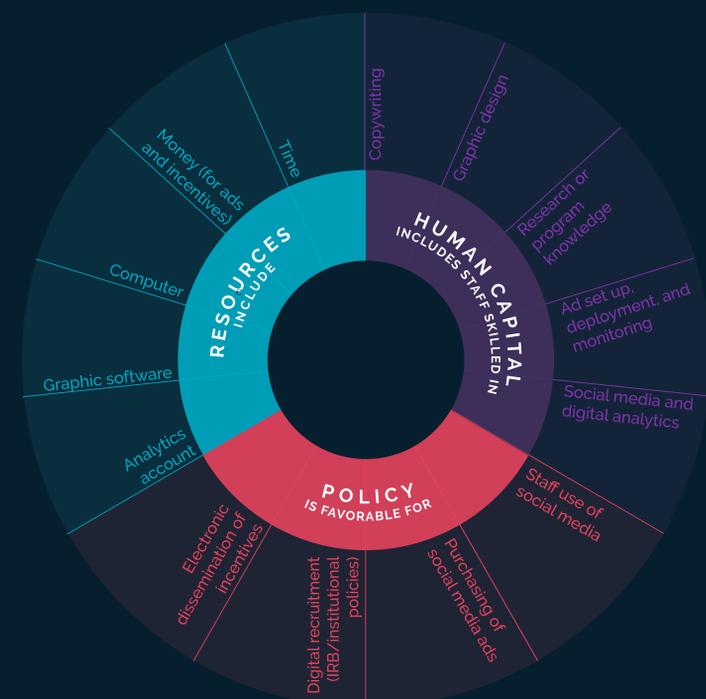
Grindr

- Geosocial networking mobile app geared towards gay and bisexual men.
- Less effective when filtering sample based on language and race and ethnicity.
- Effective at achieving high click-through rate.

Scruff

- Geosocial networking mobile app geared towards gay and bisexual men.
- Placement inferred based on targeting capabilities. The effectiveness of this targeting capabilities required further analysis.

Requirements for Successful Social Media Recruitment



Anatomy of Successful Ad Creative

Polished graphics
Keep it simple. Avoid stock photography. Do not place the logo in the ad's image if it appears elsewhere.

Clear and concise copy
Use minimal text in imagery. Avoid jargon, aggressive sales pitches, and cluttering your ad with too many thoughts or ideas.

Iterate, iterate, iterate
Test multiple ad concepts and multiple iterations of the same ad concept. Then, budget accordingly.

Think of user experience
Ensure that the user can complete desired action in as few clicks, and as few webpages, as possible. Ensure that the transition between ad and webpage is seamless (e.g., use the same graphic style throughout).

High performing ad, Pulse Study

Acknowledgments

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