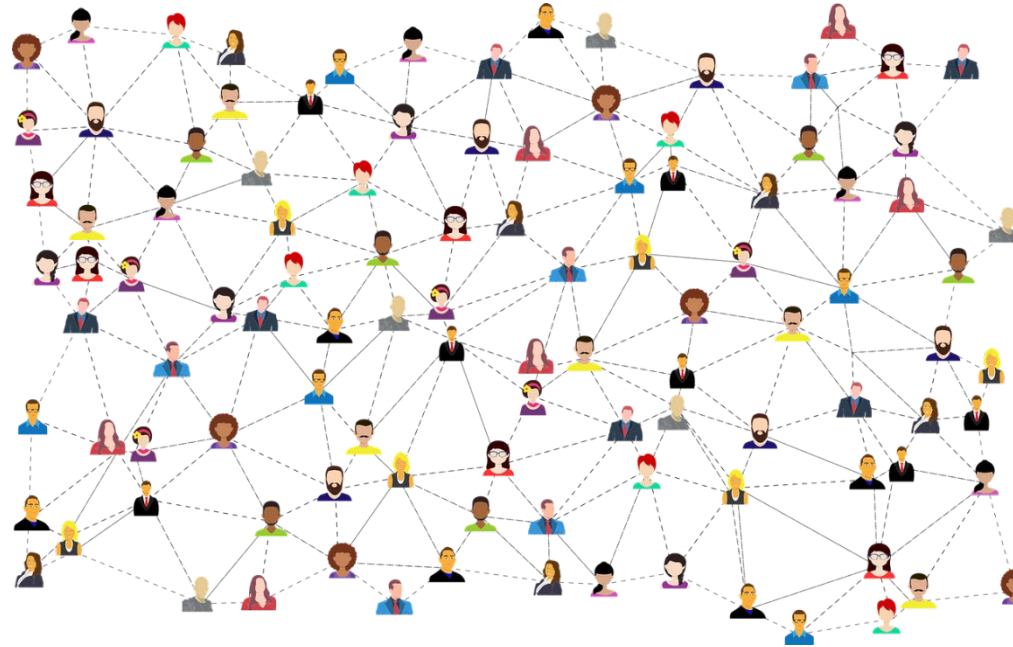




Social Media & Research:

Participant Recruitment Tips & Tricks

Outline

- Introduction to social media platforms
- Social media terms and acronyms
- Determining engagement style
- Advertisement types
- Considerations for campaigns
- Tips and tricks
- Measuring and adapting to metrics
- Additional resources

Social Media Platforms for Recruitment

There are about 3 billion Facebook users, 3 billion Instagram users, 2.5 billion YouTube users and 1.9 billion TikTok users monthly. Among U.S. adults, over 50% report using each of the social media platforms. Additionally, the average user profile for each of the platforms reaches across age, race, ethnicity, and gender. With social media use on the rise, it is an easy and cost-effective recruitment method to reach a broad audience.

Advertising costs per platform range based on type of advertisement chosen. Paid advertisements are adaptable and created based on your needs and budget. For more information on requesting a paid social media campaign at OHSU, including selecting the best platform for your goals and budget, please visit the OHSU Social Media [O2 page](#) or email socialmedia@ohsu.edu.



Terms and Acronyms

There are a lot of terms to describe how the viewer is engaging with your content. Are they viewing it? Clicking on it? These terms, and how you want the viewer to engage, determines things like which advertisement type is best for your study and the cost of that advertisement.

Impressions: The number of people who view your advertisement

Engagement: A viewer interacting with your content. Engagement can include such things as liking, sharing, reposting, and commenting on your advertisement

CTR (Click-Through Rate): The number of people who click on your advertisement after viewing it

CPC (Cost-Per-Click): Cost structure based on the number of people who click on your advertisement. CPC rates vary per social media site

CPM (Cost-Per-Thousand-Impressions): Cost structure based on the number of people who view your advertisement (i.e. impressions), in this case for each group of 1,000 people. CPM rates vary per social media site

CPE (Cost-Per-Engagement): Cost structure based on when users actively engage with your advertisement. CPE rates vary per social media site

CPS (Cost-Per-Send): Cost structure based on the number of direct messages you send to users. CPS rates vary per social media site

Determining Your Best Engagement Style

CPC (Cost-Per-Click)

- Pay when people click on your ad
- Best for when your goal is to drive traffic to your website or generate leads

CPE (Cost-Per-Engagement)

- Pay when people engage with your ad
- Best for when your goal is to connect with users and increase interest

CPM (Cost-Per-Thousand-Impressions)

- Pay when people view your ad
- Best for when your goal is to increase awareness

CPS (Cost-Per-Send)

- Pay when messages are delivered
- Best when your goal is to target high quality leads or event registrations

Advertisement Types

There are two types of advertisements for social media – “organic” and “paid/sponsored”

“Organic” Advertisement:

- The social media user posts content on their personal/business page to their followers
- There is typically no cost associated with this type of advertisement*
- Pros: 1) Low cost and 2) Simple process that involves posting content to your own site
- Cons: Small recruitment reach, ad views limited to those who follow your site

“Paid/sponsored” Advertisement:

- The social media user pays for advertisements that will be seen broadly by users on the social media site
- Costs for paid advertisement vary based on social media site, needs, and budget and range from \$0.27 to \$65 per click
- Pros: 1) Broad recruitment reach, able to have your ad viewed by a larger number of people and 2) The ability to tailor your advertisement to better reach your desired population
- Cons: The cost. The more specific and tailored your advertisement becomes, the more expensive the cost of the advertisement can become

Considerations for Social Media Campaigns

- **What type of advertisement you will create**
 - Who is your ideal participant and what kind of advertisement would attract them to it?
 - Will you upload a copy of your recruitment flyer and add text to the post?
 - Will you upload a generic image/graphic and add text to the post?
 - Will you upload a video?
 - Will you use already created advertisement materials?
- **What the advertisement will look like**
 - Will your advertisement(s) catch the user's attention?
 - Focus on the use of colors, font type, wording, images, etc.
 - Does the advertisement have too many words on it, too much to read?
 - Is the font size large enough and one your intended audience can read?
 - Are the word choices sensitive to your audience's feelings, culture, etc.?
 - Is the advertisement written at a 6th grade reading level and use lay language?
 - Are the images representative of your intended audience?
- **Use more than one advertisement style and social media site**
 - Every person responds to ads differently. By creating at least 2 to 3 versions of your advertisement, each with different images and wording, you can attract more people and expand your recruitment reach
 - Don't limit yourself to one site. Each social media site attracts different users and user demographics, to reach the broadest and largest amount of people, it is best to post advertisements on multiple social media sites at a time

- **How you will engage the viewer**
 - Is there an action item?
 - Should they like, comment, or share your content?
 - Is there a website link to send them to a study website?
 - What is the next step you want them to do after viewing your advertisement?
- **Posting schedule**
 - Think about what days and times are the best to reach your ideal participant – will they be most likely to be online during their daily commute to work, after dropping the kids off at school, during the evening, etc.?
 - Think about what days and times your preferred social media site sees the most user engagement
- **Where you should post**
 - There are various ad placement options on social media sites. Ads can appear in the newsfeed, video/stories, banner, and many other options. Think about where you want these ads to be seen and where your ideal participant is most likely to see these ads
- **How often you should post**
 - Posting an advertisement one time is never enough. It is important to run your advertisement multiple times during your recruitment period and for paid advertisements, to have each individual ad run be long enough (~1-2 weeks)
 - Based on your recruitment goals, how many times will you repost the advertisement?
 - How much time will you have between re-postings?
 - Don't forget to consider the time to gather enough responses relative to study activities (i.e. lead time, response time, screening, scheduling, etc.)
- **Have your advertisement be viewable on both desktop and mobile**
 - Social media users are more often using their handheld devices over their computer to go online. Is your advertisement created in a way to be readable to both the desktop and mobile user?

Recruitment Tips & Tricks

Stay aligned with institutional or industry standards

- When creating and posting content, make sure to stay within your [institution's](#), or the sponsor's, standards and policies

Add value, not just asks

- It is important to be constantly engaging the user and adding value to their experience. Organizations who post a mixture of 'value added' content and requests typically see more of a response than those who only post requests

Stay engaged

- Monitor social media sites and posting(s) for user engagement, questions, and other items requiring a timely response

#Promote #Visibility

- Strategically use social media options and tricks that promote your post and increase visibility (e.g. hashtags, keywords, geotag)

'Follow' other organizations on social media

- 'Follow' other accounts that are related to you/your study in some way (e.g. disease association). It is typically standard practice for accounts to 'follow back' those who have followed them, which has the potential to increase traffic to your site and viewership of your ad

Don't be afraid to ask

- Reach out to other organizations you've connected with on social media and ask if they can share your study ad with their followers

'Promote' or 'Boost' any 'organic' advertisements

- Paying to 'promote' or 'boost' your post makes your posting more visible to your followers and target who your content is seen by (e.g. age range), increasing viewership while keeping costs low

Don't forget about the budget

- Include social media costs within your recruitment budget, allowing for what monetary amount is best to meet your recruitment goals

Get proper approvals!

- Ensure your materials and plan for social media are approved by OHSU Social Media, OHSU IRB, and sponsor (if applicable) prior to beginning any recruitment via social media

Measure and Adapt

Knowing your social media metrics is an important tool for recruitment success. By understanding how well the advertisement is doing, you can update your recruitment strategy if needed to produce better results.

How to measure:

- To understand your social media metrics, it is best to begin by determining what specific elements your organization will track and measure to determine success
- You can measure through counting the number of likes, comments, or shares of your post
- It can be measured through the number of people who completed a certain action you requested of them on your post
- Or through the number of people who clicked through to your website from the post
- It can also be measured using social media metrics sites (e.g. [Google Analytics](#))

Adapt...and then adapt again:

- With the information gained from chosen metric(s), adapt your recruitment strategy to produce better results
 - Was there a day or time that saw more user engagement and would be the best time to advertise?
 - Was there a certain advertisement type or design that produced better results?
 - What were the lessons learned from the metrics that can be used to update your strategy?
- Make measuring and adapting your social media advertising a recurring part of your recruitment strategy

Additional Resources

OHSU Communications

<https://o2.ohsu.edu/communications>

OHSU Social Media

<https://o2.ohsu.edu/communications/social-media>

NIH Guidance on Social Media Tools

<https://www.nih.gov/health-information/nih-clinical-research-trials-you/guidance-regarding-social-media-tools>

For more information, additional resources, and to request a recruitment consultation, please visit the OCTRI Recruitment [webpage](#) or email us at octrirecruitment@ohsu.edu.



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