

Social Marketing Quarterly: 16(3) Fall 2010

www.socialmarketingquarterly.com

Online Recruitment of Targeted Populations: Lessons Learned From a Smoking Cessation Study Among Korean Americans

BY DIANA D. MCDONNELL; HYUN-JU LEE; GENE KAZINETS AND JOEL M. MOSKOWITZ

Abstract

Korean Americans (KAs) have among the highest smoking rates in the United States. They are unlikely to participate in conventional evidence-based smoking cessation programs, preferring to quit on their own. Since KAs have good Internet access, the study's community advisory board recommended evaluating the efficacy of an online cessation program. In conjunction with the board, an Internet-based, self-help program was adapted to ensure that it was culturally and linguistically appropriate and was evaluated with a randomized trial. This article describes the real-world experience recruiting 1,261 KA participants, primarily through online methods. Paid online advertising was essential to the recruitment effort. The 31 months of advertising cost approximately \$84,000, or \$66.50 per study enrollee. Based on self-reports, most participants learned about the study from either a text link such as Google AdWords (44%) and/or a graphic link such as an online newspaper ad (35%). Among the methods used, Google AdWords' cost-per-click content site ads were the most cost-effective. Other types of outreach, including unpaid Internet ads, cable television, newspapers, fliers, and word of mouth, had very low reach. Geographically dispersed, linguistically unique, and privacy-oriented communities can be recruited for eHealth studies and interventions. However, a paid advertising campaign may be necessary.

[Supplementary materials are available for this article. Go to the publisher's online edition of *Social Marketing Quarterly* for the following free supplemental resources: an animated flash version of Figure 3.]

