CTSI Career Development Seminar

Using Social Media to Recruit and Retain Study Participants – the PI's perspective

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Presented by:
CTSI Research Education, Training and Career Development (CTSI-Ed)

Researchers' Perceptions and Use of Social Media

Sarah Gollust, PhD

November 20, 2014

CTSI Career Development Seminar

By David Grande, Sarah E. Gollust, Maximilian Pany, Jane Seymour, Adeline Goss, Austin Kilaru, and Zachary Meisel

Translating Research For Health Policy: Researchers' Perceptions And Use Of Social Media

- Mixed methods survey
- Random sample of 325 university faculty at the 2013 Academy Health Annual Research Meeting

Randomized to 1 of 3 vignettes describing research dissemination

University researcher publishes a study comparing the impact of various policies on childhood obesity

Traditional Media

Social Media
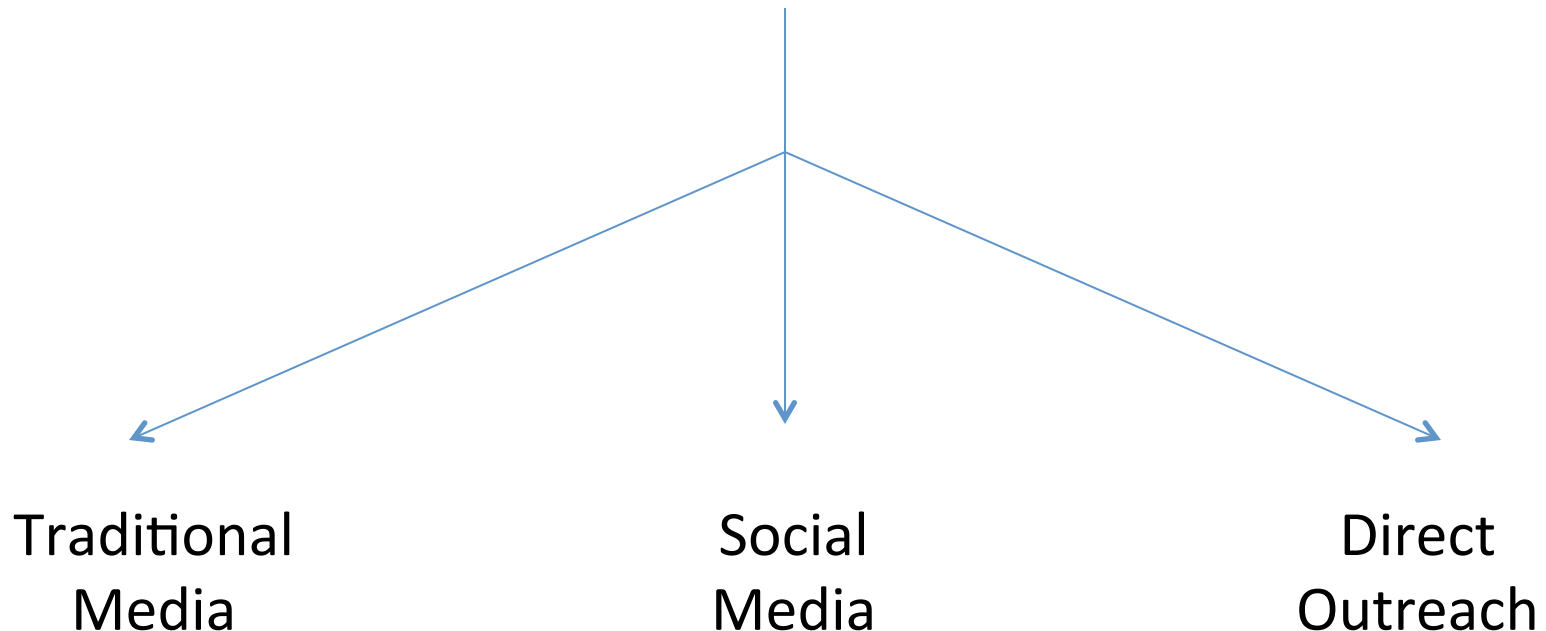
Direct Outreach

Experimental results - participant attitudes

	Traditional Media	Social Media	Direct Outreach	P-value[3]
Perceived efficacy[1]	6.7	6.6	7.3	0.06
Self-confidence[1]	7.0	5.4	6.0	<0.001
Peer respect[1]	7.7	5.8	7.4	<0.001
Academic promotion[1]	7.1	5.2	5.9	0.003
Overall impression[2]	73.2	69.0	75.6	0.04

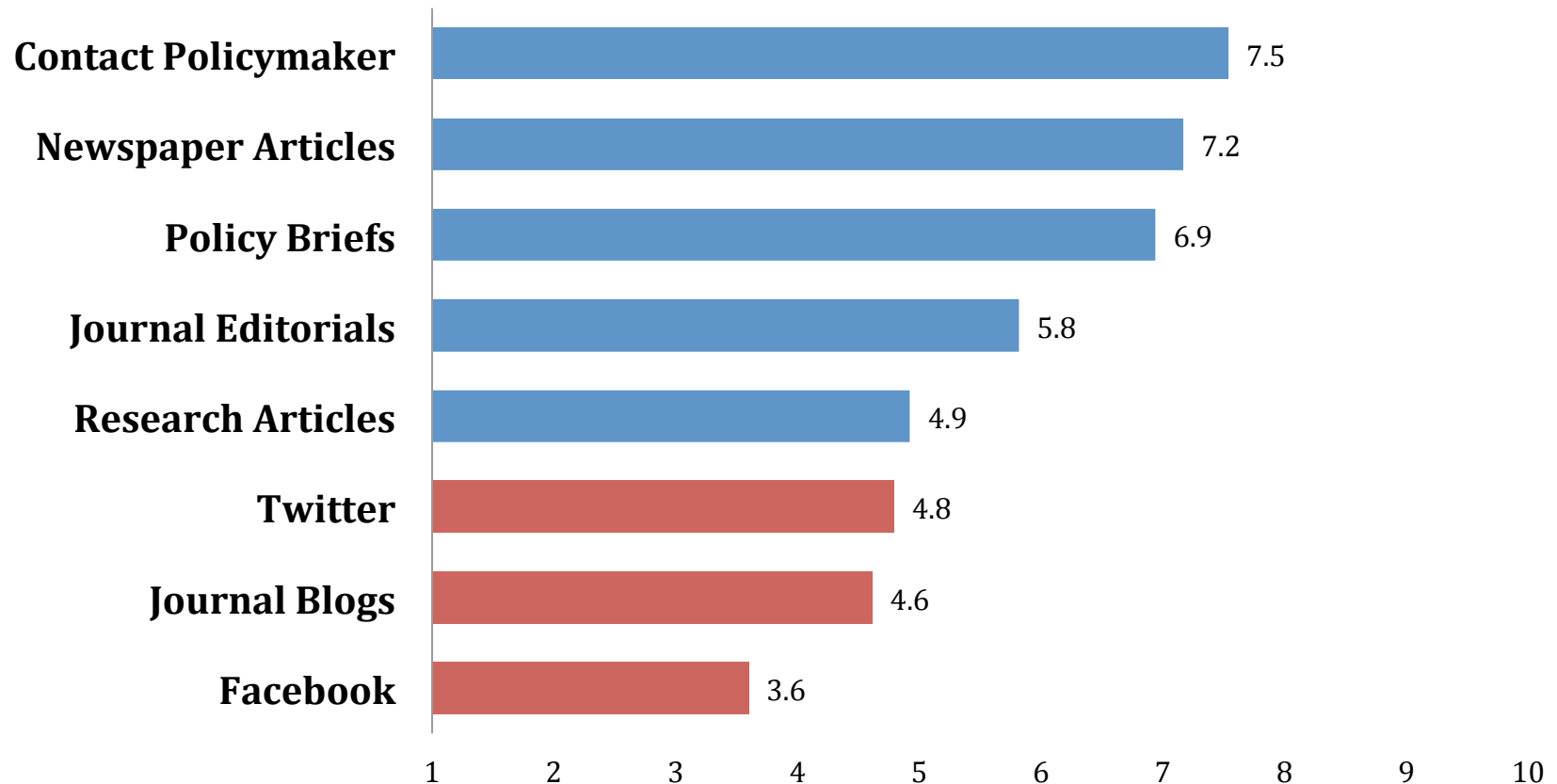[1] 1-10 scale where 1=not at all and 10=very
[2] 0-100 scale where 0 = "cold" feeling about researcher and 100 = "warm" feeling toward researcher
[3] P-values calculated using ANOVA and test for a difference between experimental groups.
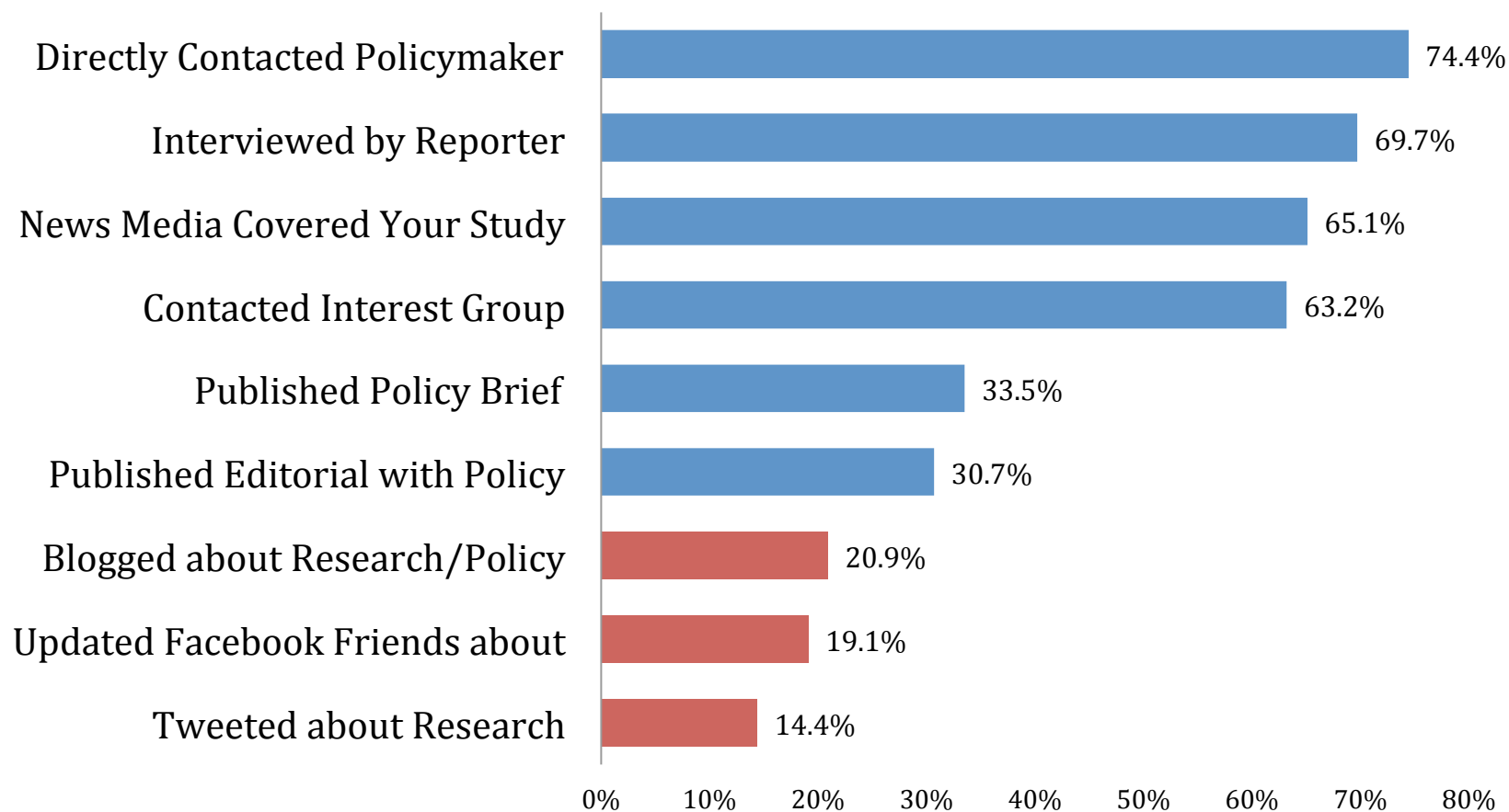
Efficacy by Rank
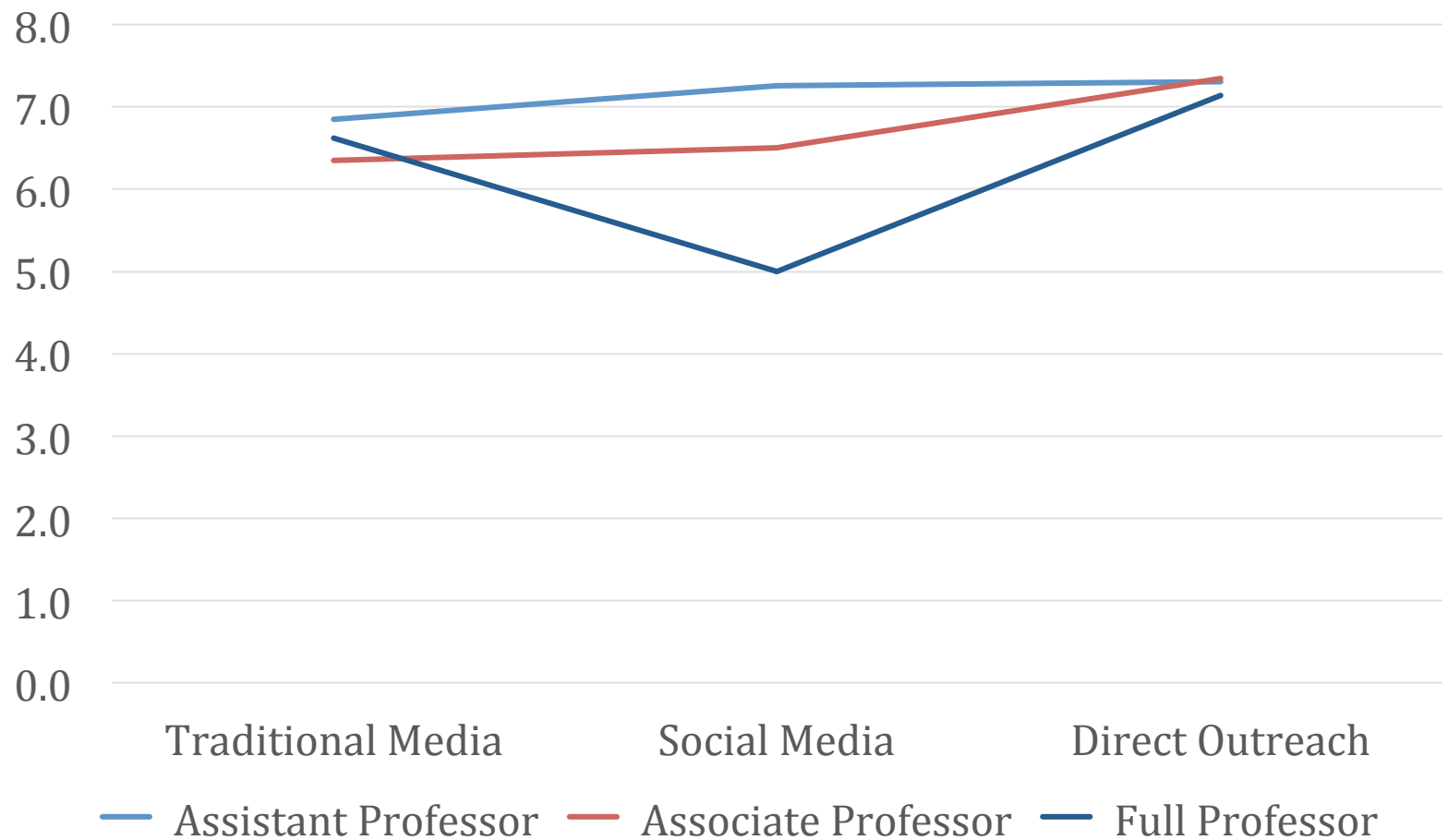
Perceived Efficacy of Methods to Communicate with Policymakers

Note: Respondents were asked to directly rate the efficacy of each dissemination channel to communicate research to "policymakers and other decision makers" on a 1-10 scale (1 = not at all effective, 10 = very effective).

Self-Reported Dissemination Activities in Prior Year

Note: Respondents were asked to self-report whether they had used any of the above communication methods in the past year.
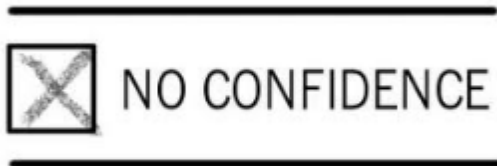
When we asked researchers to talk about using social media…

Culture

Professional Risk

NO CONFIDENCE

Low Confidence

Uncertainty of Efficacy

Acknowledgements

- Contact me at: sgollust@umn.edu
- David Grande, PI of study
- Funding from the RWJF Health & Society Scholars Program at the University of Pennsylvania
- Zachary Meisel, Austin Kilaru, Jane Seymour, Adeline Gross
- LDI SUMR Scholars of 2013

My Research Interests

- Men who have sex with men
 - 2-10% of the US adult population
- People with HIV
  - 1.1 million

Should I recruit using social media? (or: Can I convince reviewers that this recruitment approach will work?)

- Who are you trying to reach?
  - Representative or convenience sample?
- How many participants do you want to recruit?
- Is your target population online & using social media?
- Does the social media platform(s) that your target population uses allow advertising & work with researchers?

87% of US Adults use the Internet in 2014 (http://www.pewinternet.org)

Social media sites, 2012-2013

% of online adults who use the following social media websites, by year

■ 2012   ▢ 2013

Facebook	LinkedIn	Pinterest	Twitter	Instagram
67 / 71	20 / 22	15 / 21	16 / 18	13 / 17
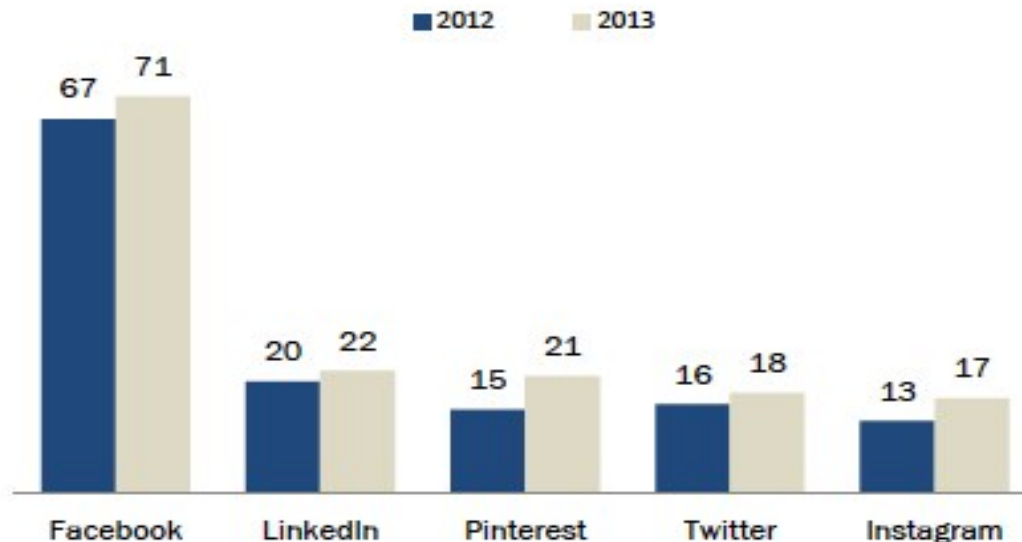
Pew Research Center's Internet Project Tracking Surveys, 2012 -2013. 2013 data collected August 07 –September 16, 2013. N=1,445 internet users ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error for results based on all internet users is +/- 2.9 percentage points.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Example description in grant:

For Aim 3, we will recruit MSM from across the US via online, targeted ads placed on key social media websites, such as Facebook. Members of the study team have used a similar recruitment strategy to enroll MSM in prior (e.g., SILAS) and ongoing studies (e.g., HIV Prevention Toolkit for HIV-negative Male Couples), and therefore we do not anticipate difficulty in reaching recruitment targets.

Example description in grant:

We will use targeted Facebook advertisements to recruit participants for the online focus groups. The 2013 Pew Research Social Media Report confirms that Facebook remains the dominant social media platform; 84% of young adults who go online report using Facebook (Duggan & Smith, 2014). Secondary recruitment methods, if needed, will be paid advertising in the xx sections of local media and online classified advertisements with Craigslist.

Facebook Ad Placements
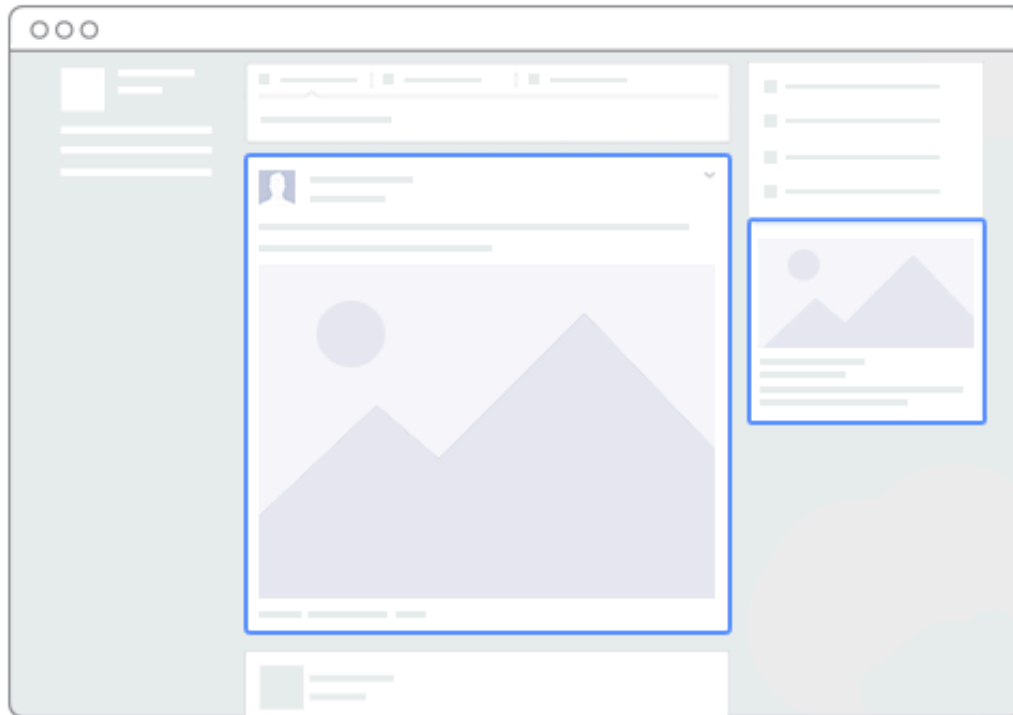
DESKTOP NEWS FEED AND RIGHT COLUMN
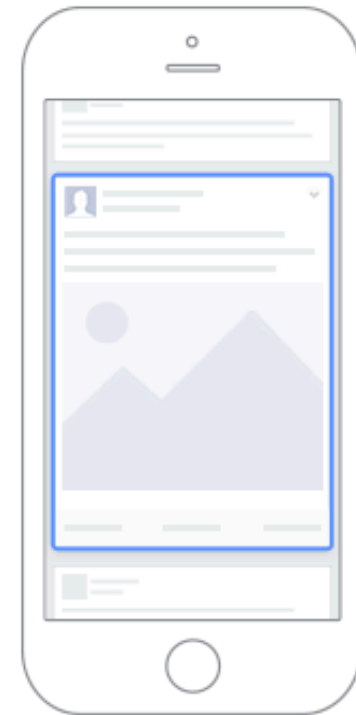
MOBILE NEWS FEED

Competing Interests

- Your Goal → Recruit you targeted sample
- Facebook → Make money from clicks on ads
  - Facebook will kill ads that aren't performing (i.e., ads where X% of the potential pool is not clicking on your ad)
- Implication:
  - Use tested principles to create an effective ad
  - Understand the ad lifecycle

Effective ads:

- Are directive
  - "Get involved"
  - "Take our survey"
- Have the right picture
  - One, smiling person
- Use punctuation
  - Exclamation point, question mark
- Limits the sample with the "Precise interests" tool

Ad Lifecycle
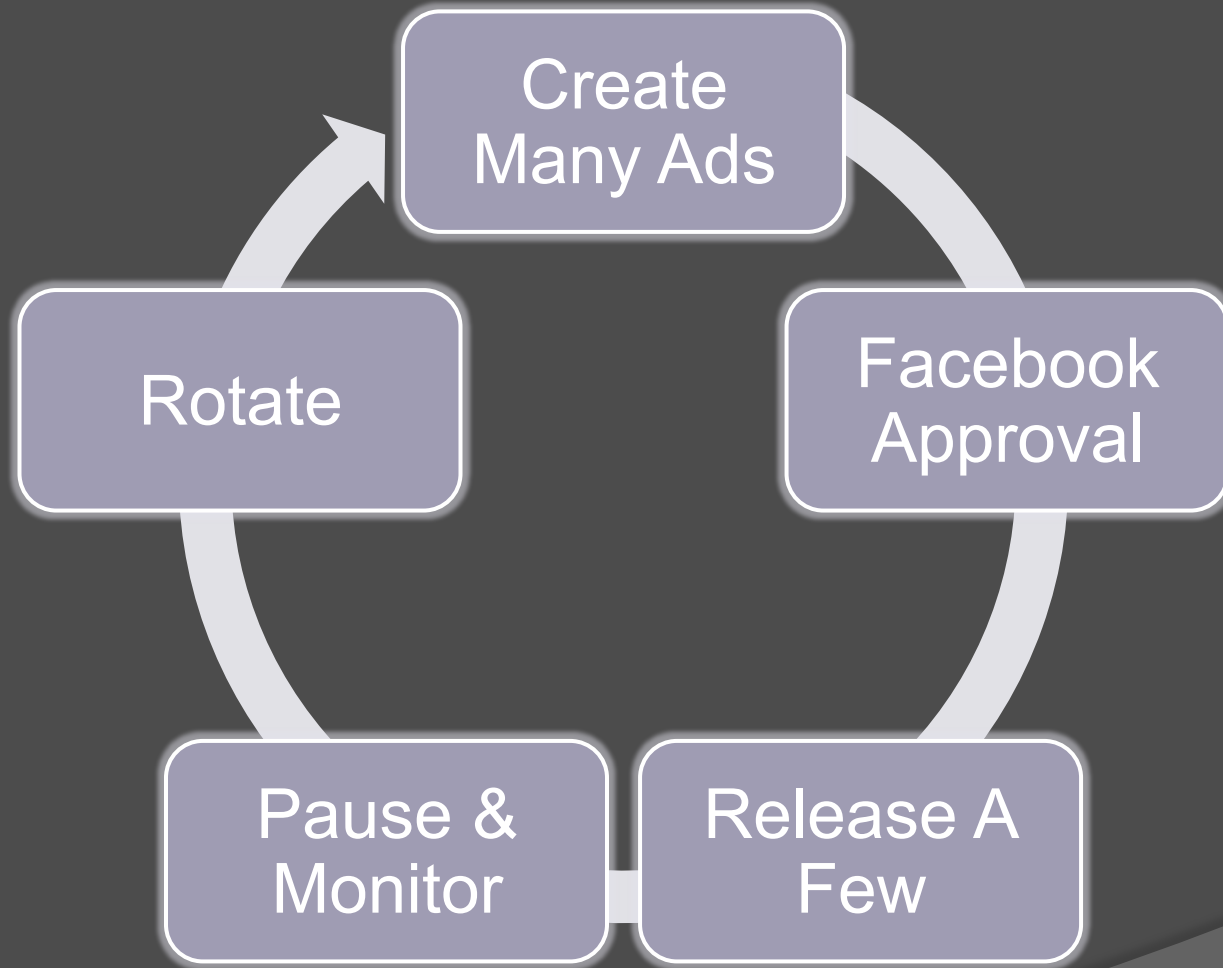
Thank You

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Social Media Tips

Melissa Mueller, MPH

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Clinical and Translational
Science Institute

Driven to Discover℠

General 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

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/

- IRB Guidance on Using Social Media for Recruitment of Research Subjects: http://www.research.umn.edu/irb/guidance/documents/SocialMediaforRecruitment.pdf

- Social Media for Researchers: Tips for #Success:

- http://www.ctsi.umn.edu/news-and-events/events/past-events

- Penn Social Media and Health Innovation Lab: http://www.med.upenn.edu/socialmedialab/