The Digital Age: Reminder and Confirmation Preference in Blood Donation

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Recommended Citation
Chung, Michael; Hayes, Catherin; Hyson, Peter; Khuong, Y-Lan; Patel, Saurabh; Powers, Brett; Ryan, Emily; Schmoldt, Ryan; Carney, Jan; and Fung, Mark, "The Digital Age: Reminder and Confirmation Preference in Blood Donation" (2016). Public Health Projects, 2008-present. 221.
https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/comphp_gallery/221
The Digital Age: Reminder and Confirmation Preference in Blood Donation

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Introduction

It is widely accepted that individuals are more likely to comply and follow through with responsibilities when reminded and asked to confirm their commitments. With the American Red Cross’ access to fast and affordable communication and this notion in mind, there is potential to develop new recruitment strategies and better methods of ensuring blood donation commitments.

In particular, understanding modes of communication with the donor population can have significant implications: avoiding loss of follow up, improving donor experience, and ensuring appropriate use of resources and staff; therefore, the American Red Cross is interested in understanding demographic differences among those who prefer different modes of communication for blood donor appointment reminders and confirmations.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to gauge the level of interest amongst blood donors in utilizing appointment reminders and confirmations as well as to determine the best mode of communication by which to reach blood donors.

Methods

Paper surveys were distributed to donors at the American Red Cross donor center in Burlington, Vermont and at mobile donation sites in VT from Oct 29th to Nov 17th 2015. The survey was anonymous and consisted of twenty questions that assessed communications technology access and usage habits of donors, preferences for scheduling appointments, appointment reminders, and appointment confirmations. Additional demographic information was gathered about age, gender, educational attainment, county of residence, and frequency of blood donation. Questions regarding likelihood to attend scheduled appointments given telephone reminders from people in their town vs. remote call centers.

Most common modes of scheduling were phone (33%) and online (22%); Infrequent donors were more likely to walk-in for their appointment. Most frequently used mode of communication: social media (50%). In contrast, infrequent donors evinced more neutral feelings to confirm their appointments. With the American Red Cross’ access to fast and affordable communication and this notion in mind, there is potential to develop new recruitment strategies and better methods of ensuring blood donation commitments.

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Communication technology among donors

• Most widespread mode of communication: telephone (97%)
• Most frequently used mode of communication: social media (30%)

Reminders and confirmations for appointments

• Although social media was reported as the most frequently used mode of communication, less than 3% of donors want reminders or confirmation through social media
• Most common modes of scheduling were phone (33%) and walk-in (30%)
• Frequent donors were most likely to schedule their appointment by phone; Infrequent donors were most likely to walk-in for their appointment
• Many donors (20%) scheduled their appointment online

Other findings:

• Most donors (83%) felt obligated to attend their appointments given telephone reminders from people in their town vs. remote call centers
• Frequent donors were more likely to answer questions posed on a Likert scale with strongly agree or strongly disagree while infrequent donors evinced more neutral feelings

Conclusions

Blood donors have interest in using appointment confirmations (64%) and reminders (60%), and the most commonly preferred mode for these communications is email (40%). These data will allow the American Red Cross and other blood centers to better tailor their modes of communications for the various aspects of donor recruitment, scheduling, confirmation, and donation.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following people: Dr. Thomas Delaney, Rajan Chawla, Chaplin Lasahamba, Mary Brant, American Red Cross staff and volunteers, and the blood donors.

References