

Reaching Beyond Age: Marketing Research Studies To Older Adults



MEDICINE *of* THE HIGHEST ORDER

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Today we will cover:

- Select themes and recruitment strategies from the literature
 - potential facilitators, pitfalls, and tactics to enhance community-based recruitment
- Online approaches for reaching older adults
 - Does Facebook make sense?
 - Notes on messaging
 - Case example
- CTSI tools for reaching older adults

People 65 and older are an extremely heterogeneous group

“Older people make up an incredibly diverse demographic that varies in terms of physical and cognitive ability, economic power, and social connection.”

-HBR, 2021

“They range from marathon runners to those in nursing homes, and everywhere in between.”

-Deborah Collyar, president of Patient Advocates in Research

Recruiting healthy participants for a flu study

Four factors seem to be critical for successful recruitment and retention of African American, Latino and Caucasian elders:

1. building trust between the research team and the community at large
2. convenience (or inconvenience) to the volunteer
3. timing of recruitment and data collection
4. incentives

Gonzalez, E. W., et al. (2007). "Recruitment and retention of older adults in influenza immunization study." J Cult Divers 14(2): 81-87.

Recruitment facilitators for older adults with dementia

- Community partnerships and trust
- Incentives
- Use of multiple recruitment methods

Davis, R. and P. Bekker (2022). "Recruitment of Older Adults With Dementia for Research: An Integrative Review." *Res Gerontol Nurs* 15(5): 255-264.

Strategies for recruiting elderly Blacks into Alzheimer's research

- Overall, more women than men (73.8% vs 26.2%) participated in our recruitment activities
- However, a significantly higher proportion of men than women were engaged through family (3.86% vs 1.30%, $p=0.0004$) and referral sources (5.89% vs 2.59%, $p=0.0005$).
- Compared to other sources for recruitment, we encountered a higher proportion of volunteers at health fairs (42.95%) and through advertisements (14.97%) tailored to their

Graham, L. A., et al. (2018). "Best strategies to recruit and enroll elderly Blacks into clinical and biomedical research." Clin Interv Aging 13: 43-50.

Unconventional recruiters: Partner with people that are trusted

“In our study, the trust and partnership that existed between the research team and Community Action Agency facilitated the role of the home-delivered meal drivers as a trusted and untapped resource for study recruitment.

Researchers can benefit from thinking creatively and developing meaningful partnerships when conducting research with older adults.”

Crawford Shearer, N. B., et al. (2010). "An innovative approach to recruiting homebound older adults." *Res Gerontol Nurs* 3(1): 11-18.

Pitfall: Relying on Clinician Referrals

“Participants recommended that direct contact with health professionals would be the most beneficial way to recruit.”

“Referrals were planned to be the main source of recruitment in the Lifestyle Matters feasibility study, but **due to a lack of engagement** from district nurses, community engagement was the main source of recruitment.”

Chatters, R., et al. (2018). "Recruitment of older adults to three preventative lifestyle improvement studies." *Trials* 19(1): 121.

1998: Mailed questionnaires followed by phone calls

A study on outpatient geriatric evaluation and management (GEM) suggested that recruitment success may be enhanced with:

- provision of medical and small financial incentives
- continuous monitoring of recruitment results
- attention to subjects' needs for convenience, time, transportation, and reassurance

Recruitment costs averaged \$286.92 per consenting person

Boult, C., et al. (1998). "Soliciting defined populations to recruit samples of high-risk older adults." *J Gerontol A Biol Sci Med Sci* 53(5): M379-384.

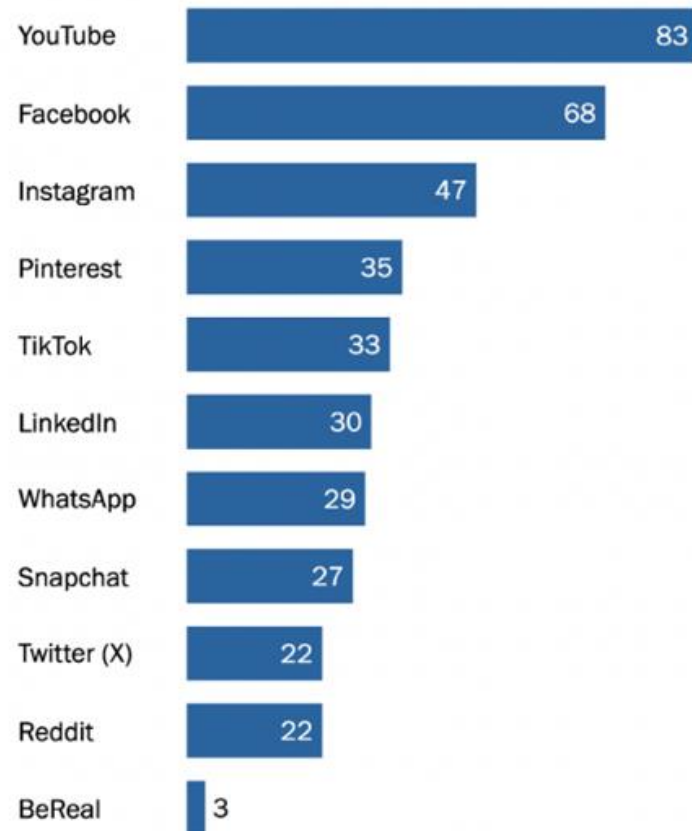
Reaching potential participants today

82% of adults aged 65 to 69 use the internet, 75% of those aged 70 to 74, and 44% of those aged 80 and older.

- Study webpage
- Search engine ads
- Streaming ads (podcasts, radio, YouTube videos)
- **Social ads** and forums (Facebook, Reddit)
- Email marketing (and/or direct mail)
 - CTSI Participant Registry, department registry, past volunteers, lists from community partners
- URMC Communications channels

Most U.S. adults use YouTube and Facebook; about half use Instagram

*% of U.S. adults who say they **ever** use ...*



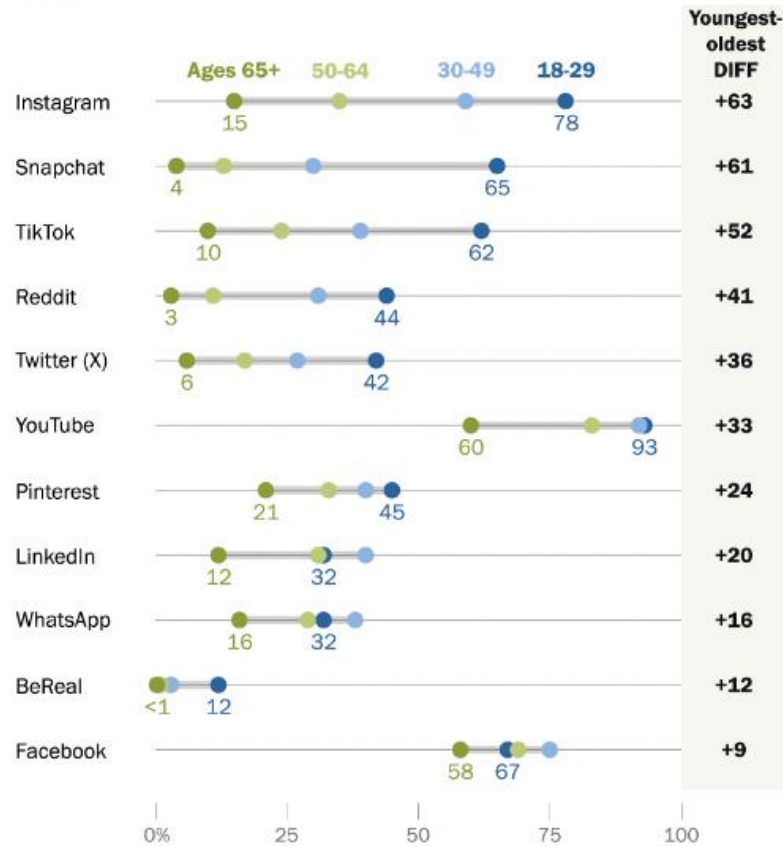
Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 19-Sept. 5, 2023.
"Americans' Social Media Use"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

- About 7 in 10 Americans report using Facebook. (Unchanged since 2016)
- About 7 in 10 of those that use Facebook use it daily

The youngest U.S. adults are far more likely to use Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok; age differences are less pronounced for Facebook

% of U.S. adults who say they ever use ...



Note: All differences shown in DIFF column are statistically significant. The DIFF values shown are based on subtracting the rounded values in the chart. Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 19-Sept. 5, 2023. "Americans' Social Media Use"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

58% of adults ages 65+ report using Facebook which is the least likely age group to use the platform. But that still represents a 38 percentage point increase since August 2012, when just 20% reported using it.

Proportionally, white women respond most often to Facebook Ads

“Although the proportion of men who completed the survey was lower than those who didn't, interventions to increase male responses and enhance representativeness were successful.”

Ali, S. H., et al. (2020). "Social media as a recruitment platform for a nationwide online survey of COVID-19 knowledge, beliefs, and practices in the United States: methodology and feasibility analysis." *BMC Med Res Methodol* 20(1): 116.

Market researchers have shown that older people prefer faces with positive expressions compared to angry or sad ones

One of the most pressing concerns in the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic was how to best communicate information to those who were at greatest risk — particularly, the elderly.

Unfortunately, many attempts were riddled with stereotyped depictions of older people as frail, lonely, and incompetent.

-Harvard Business Review, 2021



Gregory Kuhl, 69, in the Hollywood apartment where he has lived for 40 years. He says he experienced age bias well before the coronavirus pandemic. (Dania Maxwell / Los Angeles Times)

Information Processing Lab needed older research participants ages 55+



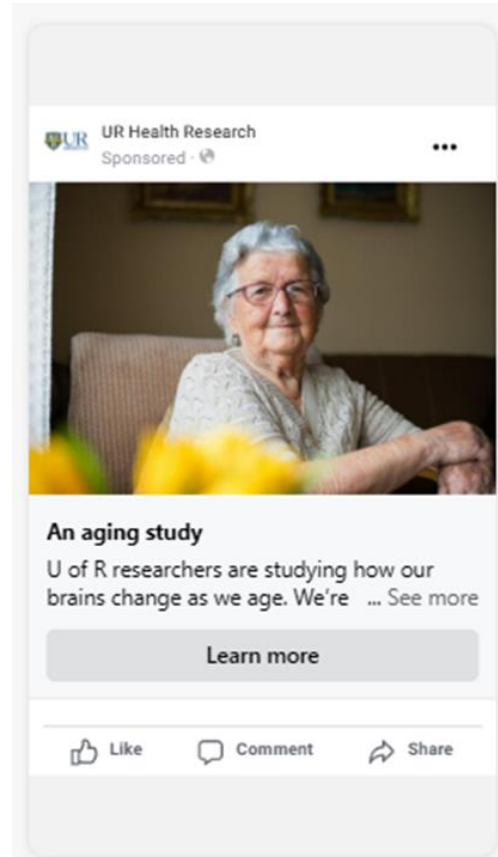
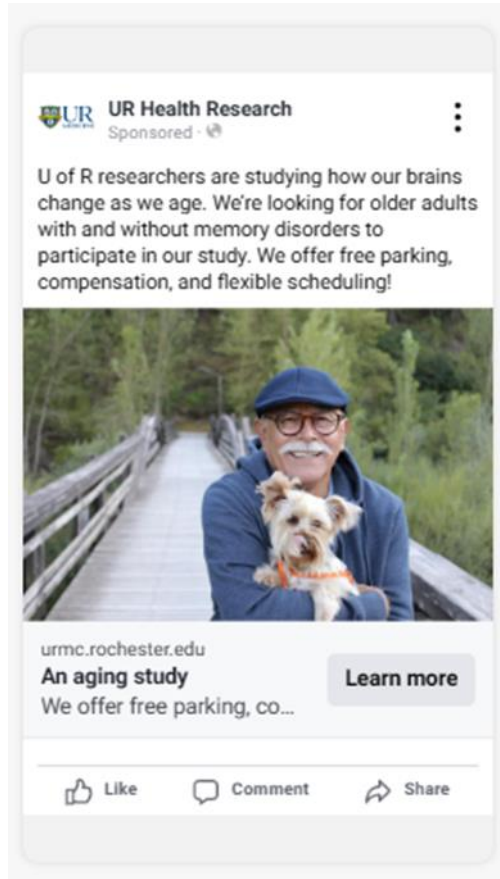
Our current research

The Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences and the Center for Visual Science at the University of Rochester is sponsoring our current research study on information processing. Our ERP (Event Related Potential) study examines brain activity in senior people. We are particularly interested in how the mind processes information and how aging affects such processing. To accomplish this, we invite both healthy elderly and those with neurological conditions to enroll in our research study.

Could Facebook work as a recruitment method?

Would it be cost effective?

\$100 Trial of Facebook Ads Resulted in 80 participants



- Initially received more interest from women than men
- Created a targeted ad set for men only
- This balanced out the gender disparity (but also more expensive)

In about a year: 300+ recruited, less than \$4 per enroll

“...we've been able to recruit more than 300 participants this year thanks to our Facebook campaign. We couldn't be more pleased!”

-Margaret Gardner, research coordinator for Dr. Chapman's Information Processing Lab

Cost Per Enroll Varies Widely Among Research Studies

- Foot Pain from Diabetes (PDPN) - \$1,200 per enroll
- Parkinson's Disease - \$330 per enroll

Tools You Can Use!

CTSI Research Participant Registry

- 16,000+ participants total / 4,700 ages 60+
- CTSI can send out a study flyer to the full list
- Or you can request a list of participants to contact individually

MyChart for Recruitment

- Use EMR data to identify potential subjects
- Send them notifications about your research opportunity (no clinician referral required)

Presentation and In-person Event Opportunities

- Consult with the CTSI Recruitment Unit and/or Community Engagement team to brainstorm ideas and possible partnerships
- CTSI can connect you with URMCC Marketing, which can be a great resource for community events and connections (give a presentation at the Y)
- Contact the Research Help Desk (researchhelp@urmc.rochester.edu)