

Using Social Media to Enhance Study Recruitment: How Facebook and Twitter May Engage Vulnerable Populations

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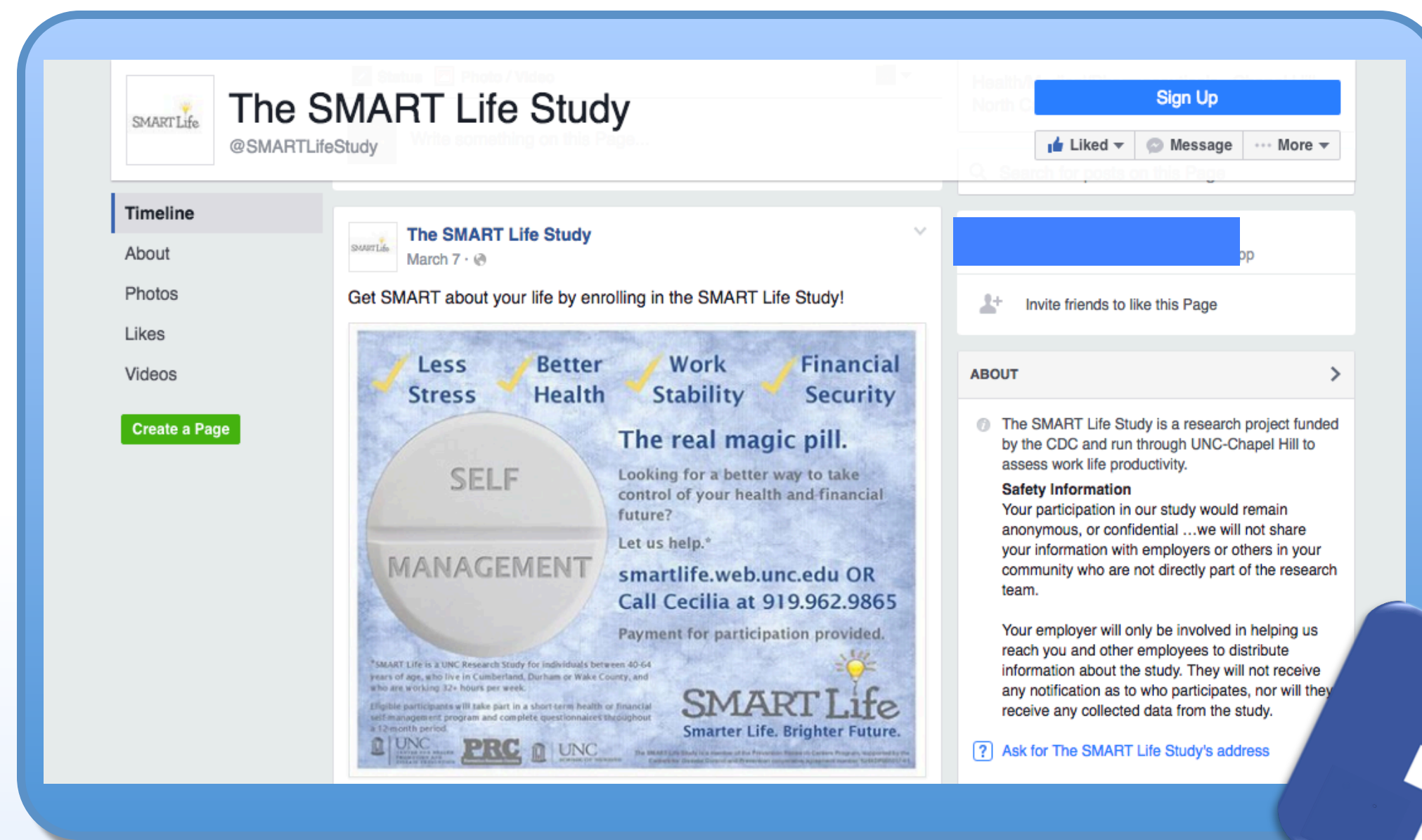
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SMART Life

INTRODUCTION

- According to the United Nations Specialized Agency for Information and Communication Technologies, 40.6% of the world population currently uses the internet.
- As of 2015, 1.01 billion users accessed Facebook everyday, and 320 million people were on Twitter.
- Over half of lower-income and/or ethnic/racial minority populations currently use social media.
- We explored the effectiveness of using social media platforms to recruit middle-aged adults of lower-socioeconomic status to a randomized controlled trial testing the work and health-related outcomes of the Chronic Disease Self-management Program.



- ✓ To date, 65 people have liked the SMART Life Facebook page.
- ✓ After rolling-out a two-day targeted Facebook advertisement; the study team saw the following results:
 - 1, 539 people saw the Facebook ad, including 1,051 females and 484 males.
 - 1, 414 of these individuals lived in North Carolina.
 - The sample reached included 461 people between 35-44 years old, 695 between between 45-54 years old, and 473 55+ years old.
 - The campaign cost \$52.68 and resulted in 35 page likes.

#smartlifestudy

- ✓ The SMART Life Twitter page has 11 followers and 3 likes:
 - The majority of followers are events and business owners from the target communities.
- ✓ The team follows 46 businesses, media outlets, and leaders from the target communities.
 - We re-tweet posts from those we follow.
 - We also tweet at our partners to both build relationships and catch the eyes of their many followers.
- ✓ The team has posted a total of 28 tweets, including a mix of text only, text with website link, and text and image messages.



ONGOING LESSONS LEARNED...

- After consulting with experts in social media advertising, 7 people representing diverse gender and racial groups identified “social media” as the place they first heard about the SMART Life Study.
- Of these 7 respondents, 3 learned of the study through a Facebook advertisement, and 3 viewed the study Facebook page.
- In comparison, over 650 respondents first learned about the study through their workplace, the majority through a listserv message.
- Social media did not prove to be an effective tool when recruiting lower-income, middle-aged adults to the SMART Life Study.
- Further studies are needed to assess the results of additional social media recruitment efforts.