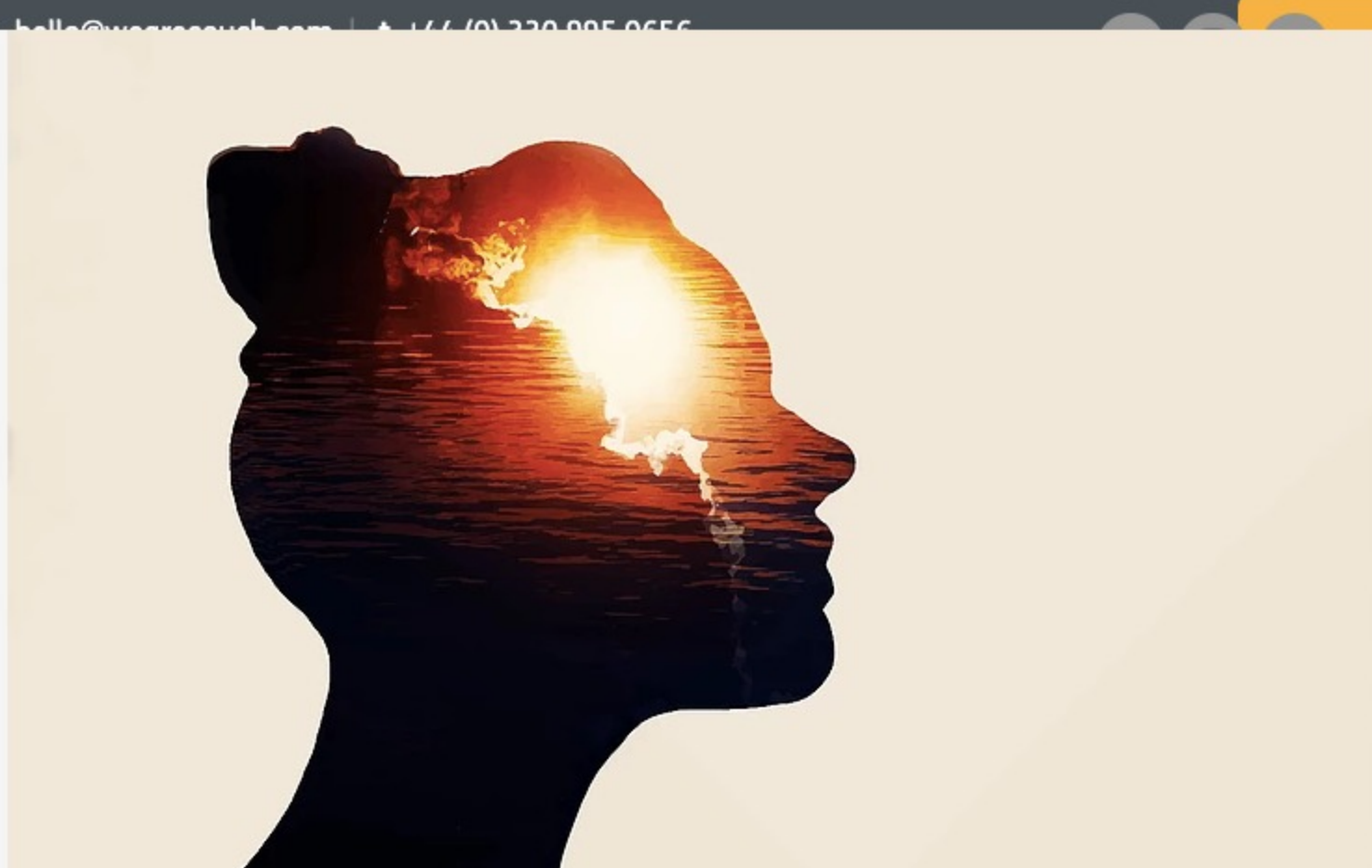COUCH Health ⚑ · Jun 10 · 4 min read

How human insights can improve clinical trial recruitment strategies

Clinical trials are a reliable method of testing new treatments before making them available to the general public. To generate the data needed to determine whether the drugs are safe and effective, it's necessary to conduct double-blind studies with one or more groups of participants. Clinical recruitment strategies are challenging, however, taking the right approach can equip you for success.

Getting buy-in

Before you can even begin searching for clinical trial participants, you need to get buy-in from a range of stakeholders. By the time sponsors reach the trial stage, most have already invested a great deal in the new product and are likely very confident about its chances of success. Clinical trial marketing and advertising that can effectively get enough participants depends on reaching the right audience, in the right way. That's where human insights can help improve engagement in clinical trials.

The beauty of personalisation and clinical trial recruitment strategies

More and more organisations are starting to use data to personalise their marketing processes, especially clinical trial recruitment strategies. By using feedback in combination with wider first-, second- and third-party data and the integration of artificial intelligence (AI), companies are able to enhance their consumers' satisfaction. With the AI market for healthcare expected to exceed $35 billion by 2020, studies show clinical trials are benefiting from the automation by delivering insights faster (and cheaper) than any human-related processes.

Personalised promotions enable sponsors to effectively target subsets of individuals, whether they are current or future clients. In turn, satisfied people become more willing to give feedback, which triggers a chain effect. By delivering messages that resonate with the audience because of insights gathered, marketers can boost the odds of engaging and converting users by appealing directly to their likes, needs, interests and other preferences. You can only do this if you know what those are, however, which makes the collection of these insights critical for success.

The benefits of insights

Sponsors can get valuable insights by identifying what their consumers *say* they are doing and what they actually *are* doing. These enable marketers to not only personalise clinical trial marketing and advertising, but to identify the factors that drive them to choose one treatment or provider over another. This can be pivotal in clinical trial recruitment strategies, because it generates a level of trust between the participant and the research site.

Human insights are incredibly valuable for building competitive advantage, too. In this world of stiff competition between sponsors, study teams need all the advantages they can get to help them stay ahead. Gathering insights from consumers who are potential trial participants can help you tailor both the trial design as well as your clinical trial recruitment strategies to the right audience. With a clearer understanding of what works and what doesn't, the clinical trial marketing and advertising materials will be stronger and will achieve better results for your clinical trial recruitment strategies.

The one activity that will have a profound effect on clinical trial marketing and advertising over the next decade will be the digitisation of people's medical information. This will enable the various medical and related industries, including pharma, to use real-world data in powerful ways. At present, randomised clinical trials compare new treatments with former or standard methods, which means most trials need to increase the number of enrolments to have a control arm. Identifying eligible participants for both active and control arms adds a large amount of time and cost to the process, but the availability of electronic medical history and former trial participation will significantly reduce this.

The development of trust

According to *The Patient Gap*, a report developed from the analysis of three proprietary studies, 6% of healthcare clients hold the belief that biopharma companies are on their side. Most are convinced the companies are developing treatments for commercial gain, above all other reasons. This causes a high level of distrust, which makes engaging with them challenging and getting them to join a clinical trial almost impossible.

Even when a campaign is backed by a large clinical trial marketing and advertising budget, it means little to healthcare if it isn't able to attract the numbers needed for the trial. Since different consumers will have very different reasons for joining a trial, they need to be able to clearly see that your brand understands their challenges and takes note of these throughout the interactions with them.

Building human insights into your clinical trial recruitment strategies

It's important to view the insights you gather through the lens of their impact on participants' lives. Some questions to help you determine the best way to use the data are:

- What is the ideal prospect's level of knowledge about the disease or condition before taking part in the study and do you need to provide education to encourage them to join?
- How long will the study last and how will participation and/or site visits impact peoples' lives?
- How far away are the research sites and how often will participants need to physically attend?

These are some of the important factors in a health seeker's journey, so they need to be the basis of your creative clinical trial recruitment strategies.

Identifying the answers to these questions enables you to address them as potential objections in your approach. This reassures the prospect that their issues have been considered and the company conducting the trials cares about them.

For more information about the increasing importance of clinical trial marketing and advertising, please download our white paper at http://special.wearecouch.com/clinical-trial-marketing-and-advertising.

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