



Healthcare Web 2.0 Innovators

CDC Case Study

Business Drivers

CDC's charter is to protect public health. The agency serves as a resource to mitigate the impact of infectious diseases, environmental health, bioterrorism and others. It fulfills its mission by connecting with people and educating the public; it seeks to partner with people to increase their knowledge of health hazards and how to respond appropriately in the face of threats.



Summary of Web 2.0 Activities

CDC perceives that social networking and other Web 2.0 activities are critical to its mission. According to Janice Nall, National Center for Health Marketing, "You have to be where the people are.. we want CDC content available whenever, wherever and however people want it."

Nall also advises to approach Web 2.0 with your eyes wide open. If you have to, start small and build. Acknowledge uncertainty. Realize that you will make mistakes, but the error of not being there is far greater than making small mistakes when you are on the learning curve.

How CDC Uses Web 2.0

CDC uses Web 2.0 in three key ways: to interact with people, to learn from people and to let people use and share CDC content. CDC learns considerably by interacting with people directly and by observing how they are interacting among each other. They want to prevent misinformation by making their content available wherever and however people are talking about health issues.

Select Web 2.0 Initiatives

- **Podcasting**—podcasting is easy to produce, and it is easy for people to share and access. CDC has produced podcasts on: influenza pandemics, climate change, STD treatment guidelines and bioterrorism.
- **eCards**—eCards are very social, easy to do and produce surprising results. The "cards" enable CDC to understand what is on people's minds. CDC eCards are growing quickly as people send each other reminders for immunizations, annual check-ups, etc.
- **Gaming**—CDC has created several games, most aimed toward younger audiences. There are games involving immunizations, for nutrition and obesity, exercise promotion. Games are an excellent means to engage and educate.
- **Virtual worlds**—CDC has a presence in Second Life. Do not forget to start small and grow.
- **Mobile**—more Americans have mobile phones than wireline phones, and CDC has executed several mobile campaigns, which are very engaging. Most involved sharing via text messages and short codes. In another, people made "personal" public service announcements



Lessons Learned

- Follow the user – know the usage data/trends
- Show how this meets your mission
- Compare resources vs. impact
- Keep security, IT and legal aware of initiatives
- Plan for evaluation
- Conduct research where you can
- Welcome collaboration – partner outside/inside
- Seed social media concepts through training
- Document lessons learned
- Educate leadership on why you must do this
- Create a climate of experimentation

References

Description	Reference
CDC 2.0: Using Social Media to Increase the Impact of CDC's Science	http://www.slideshare.net/forumone/janice-nall/
Government in the Age of YouTube: The Implications of Internet Social Networks to Government	http://www.ec3.org/Pubs/2007_symposium_paper.pdf
CDC on MySpace	http://www.myspace.com/cdc_ehealth
CDC entry in Wikipedia includes excellent links	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centers_for_Disease_Control_and_Prevention
Virtual worlds: Second Life, Whyville	http://secondlife.com - http://www.whyville.net/smmk/nice