

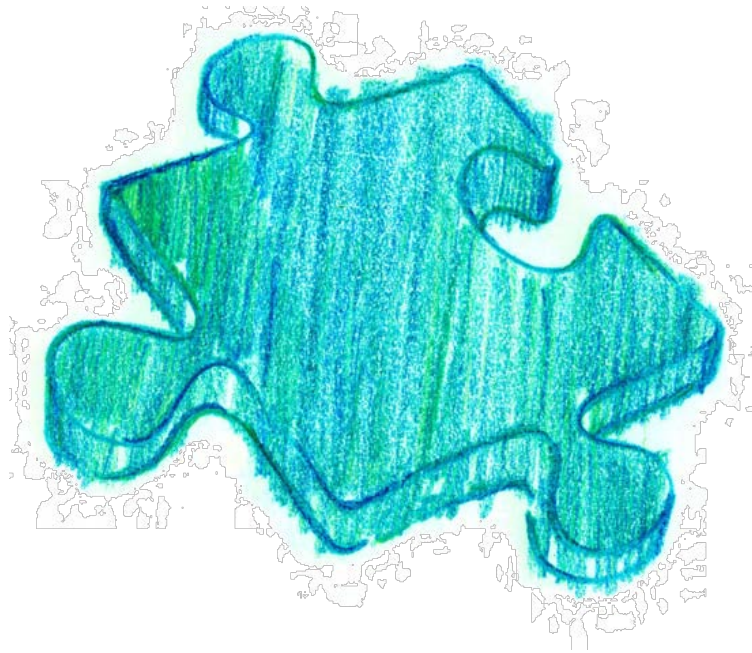
# Implementing a Large Scale Email and Text Messaging Flu Health Education Campaign: Lessons Learned

California  
Immunization Summit

May 5, 2014

**Louba Aaronson, MPH**  
Sr. Quality Improvement Specialist  
Health Net, Inc.

**Michael Fiore**  
Founder and Director  
EPG Technologies



# Disclosure

---

EPG Technologies was financially compensated to help develop and deliver the campaign detailed in this presentation.

# Agenda

---

- ① Background
- ② Issue/Rationale
- ③ Learning objectives
- ④ Targeted population
- ⑤ Project description
- ⑥ Results
- ⑦ Lessons learned

# Background

- ***Health Net***

- Publicly traded managed care organization
- Provides and administers health benefits to ~5.3 million individuals



- ***EPG Technologies***

- California-based company providing health and learning solutions since 2001
- Current partners include non-profit, for-profit, academic and governmental organizations

# Issue

- **Less than half** of U.S. population received flu vaccine in 2012-2013.<sup>1</sup>
- Flu vaccination associated with **lower** flu prevalence, hospitalizations and medical attention.<sup>2</sup>
- Study found text messaging campaign **effective** in increasing flu vaccination rates.<sup>3</sup>

## Sources:

- 1) CDC. Flu vaccination coverage, United States, 2012–13 influenza season. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2013. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/fluview/coverage-1213estimates.htm>.
- 2) CDC. Estimated influenza illnesses and hospitalizations averted by influenza vaccination – United States, 2012-2013 influenza season. MMWR 2013;62:997-1000.
- 3) Stockwell ME, Kharbanda EO, Martinez RA, et al. Effect of a text messaging intervention on influenza vaccination in an urban, low-income pediatric and adolescent population: A randomized control trial. JAMA 2012; 307:1702-1708.

# Rationale

- Health Net was seeking alternative to IVRs due to **low response rate**.
- Text messaging **strengths**:
  - Potential to reach large number of members
  - Cost-effective
  - High touch educational campaign over several weeks
- Partnered with **T2X** to deliver technical elements of the program.

# Learning Objectives

---

- Evaluate member interest in receiving education via text message.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a text messaging campaign to improve health literacy.
- Better understand the technical behaviors/ attitudes of a diverse group of adults.

# Targeted Population



<b>Line of Business</b>	Commercial (HMO, POS, PPO)
<b>States</b>	California Arizona Oregon/Washington
<b>Number outreached via email</b>	> 155,000 adult members ( $\geq 18$ years old)





# Project Description

- Goals:
  - Increase member awareness on the importance of obtaining an annual flu shot.
  - Improve influenza vaccination rates.
- Emails containing educational messages and invitation to enroll in text messaging program.
- Ten-week text messaging campaign.
- Eight topics related to the flu.

# Sample Messaging



Health Net®



## Be Health Wise

*with Health Net*

**Flu season is right around the corner!**

**Getting a flu shot** is one of the most important steps you can take to protect your health and the health of your loved ones. Flu seasons are unpredictable and a mild season can easily be followed up by a more severe flu season the next year. Starting in October at least 20 million Americans will get the flu. Help make sure you and your loved ones are protected.

Health Net also has a great way to help you stay healthy this flu season!

Sign up for **Be Health Wise** to have text messages sent directly to your cell phone.\* These messages will provide you with important information and the latest tips on how to avoid the flu. You'll also learn when antibiotics can help and when they won't.

[Click here to sign up for Be Health Wise](#)

*Want to sign up directly from your phone?* Just text the word **flu** to [424-243-0007](tel:424-243-0007)

AT&T 4G 1:19 PM 90%

[Back](#) +1 (424) 246-8896 [Contact](#)

Health Net - Almost everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine each year. For some groups it is especially important. Text 1 to learn more.

1

Especially important groups: pregnant women, children, people over 65, people with asthma, diabetes, chronic lung disease & more. More at <http://e.t2x.me/who>

Text Message [Send](#)

# Testing and Optimization

## 1. Email Subject Analysis

Email subject	Read rate
Sign Up for Be Health Wise with Health Net	24.2%
Flu Season is Almost Here! Get Health Net's Tips to Avoid Getting Sick	21.4%
Flu Season is Almost Here! Sign Up for Mobile Text Alerts and Tips	26.1%
Protect Yourself and Your Family: Sign Up for Health Net's Tips to Beat the Flu	31.7%

## 2. Effectiveness of Email Sending Partner



Sign Up for Be Health Wise with Health Net Spam x sharepointcopy x

Health Net [behealthwise@hncampaigns.com](mailto:behealthwise@hncampaigns.com) via [sendgrid.me](https://sendgrid.me) Sep 26 (13 days ago) ☆

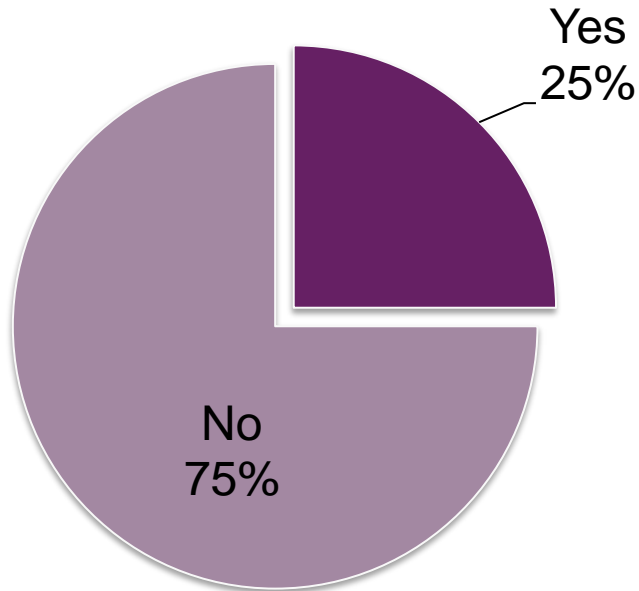
to me ▾

**⚠ Be careful with this message.** Similar messages were used to steal people's personal information. Unless you trust the sender, don't click links or reply with personal information. [Learn more](#)

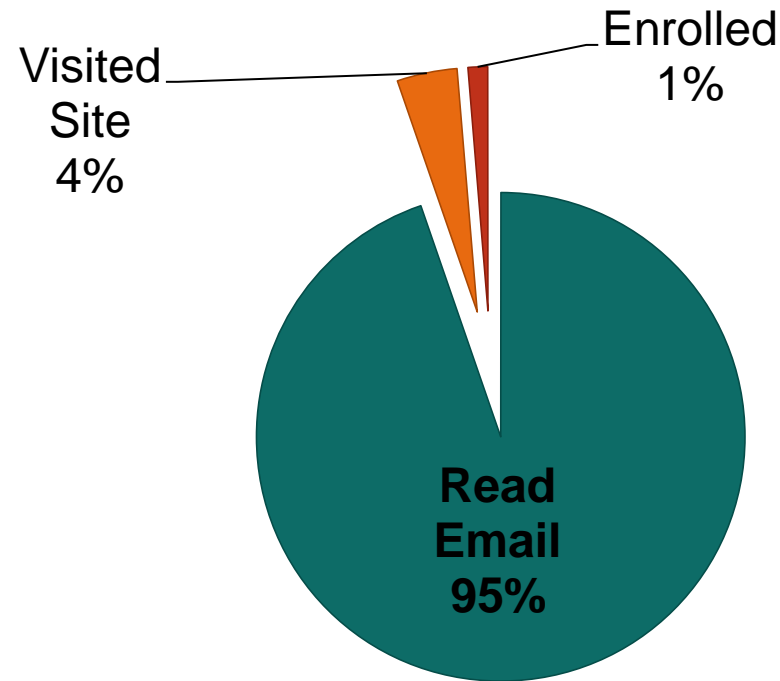
**Flu season is right around the corner!**  
**Getting a flu shot** is one of the most important steps you can take to protect your health and the health of your loved ones.

# Enrollment

## Members Interested in Learning More About the Flu\*



## Conversion of Interested Members



Total Members Receiving Email Invitations = 156,785 Members

\* Based on Email Read Rates

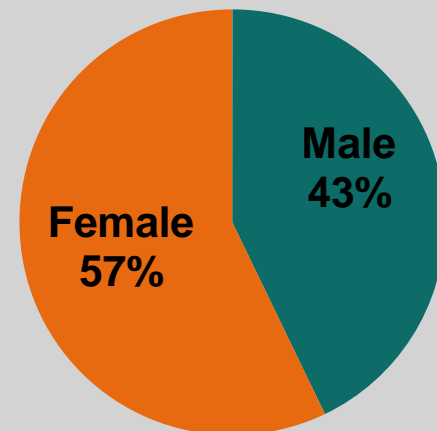
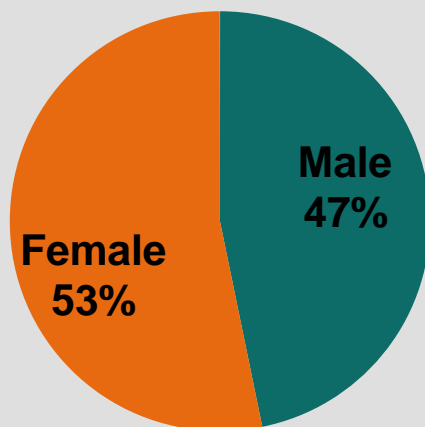
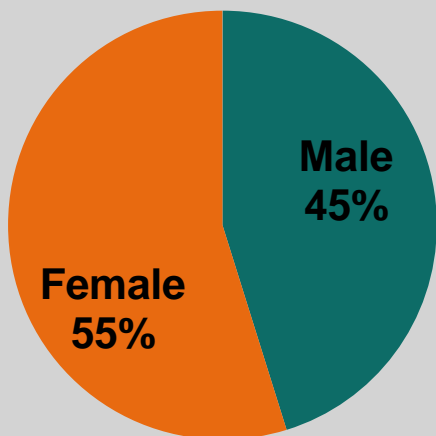
# Demographic Analysis

## Members Invited

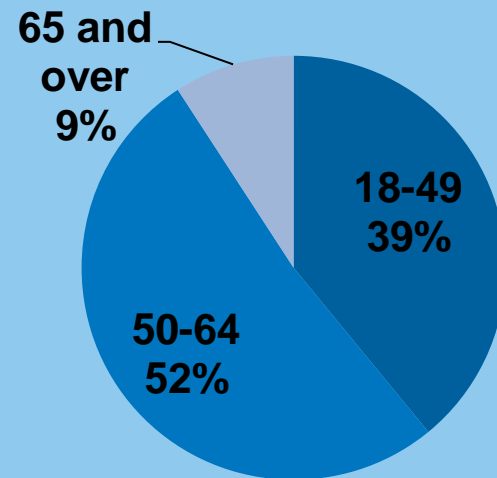
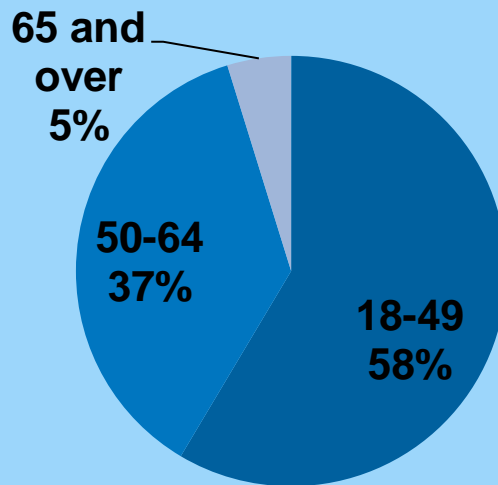
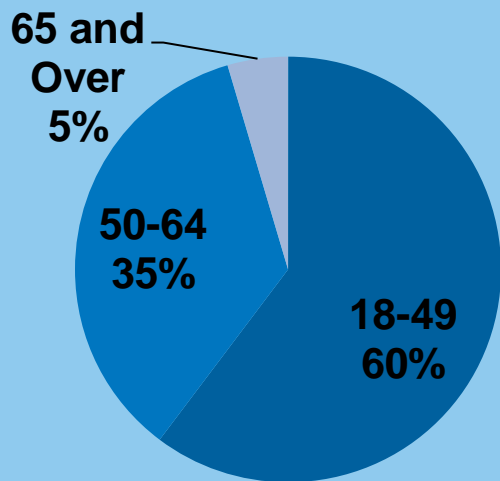
## Members Interested

## Members Enrolled

### Gender



### Age (years old)



# Learning Outcomes

## Change between pre- and post-assessment

Question	Choices	Pre-Score	Post-Score	Change
Is it important to get a flu shot?	Yes = 1, No = 0 <b>1 is best</b>	.87 = 87%	.92 = 92%	<b>+.05 or 5%</b>
Can getting a flu shot cause the flu?	Yes = 0, No = 1 <b>1 is best</b>	.76 = 76%	.90 = 90%	<b>+.14 or 14%</b>
Taking antibiotics can help alleviate flu symptoms?	Strongly Agree = 1, Agree = 2, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 4, Strongly Disagree = 5 <b>5 is best</b>	3.83 = 77%	4.56 = 91%	<b>+.73 or 15%</b>
If you're healthy, you don't need a flu shot every year?	True = 0, False = 1 <b>1 is best</b>	.89 = 89%	.93 = 93%	<b>+.04 or 4%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>.82 or 82%</b>	<b>.92 or 92%</b>	<b>+.10 or 10%</b>

# Lessons Learned

- Email is still a very effective communication tool (overall read rate of 24%).
- 18-49 year olds are more selective when it comes to enrolling in text messaging programs.
- Members want multiple options for receiving health information (60% of interested members indicated they did not sign up because it was a text messaging program).
- Other preferred methods for receiving information include email and mobile app.
- Further research needed with (1) targeted populations and (2) different health topics.

# Looking Forward

- Next time campaign offered: Fall 2014.
- 3 options for receiving information:
  - Text messaging
  - Email + Web
  - Mobile App
- A mobile app is a very important part of this solution since it provides the “*best of both worlds.*”
  - **Push functionality** via mobile app notifications (similar to text messaging but at a much lower cost)
  - **Rich media** and more info (similar to email + web)



# Barriers to Implementation

- **Text Messaging Short Codes (99000)**
  - **Issue:** 3 months to setup and \$10,000 first year (not including the cost of sending/receiving messages).
  - **Solution:** Dedicated Long Codes (123-456-7890) which lowered program text messaging setup to \$1,000.

# Barriers to Implementation

- **Email Support**

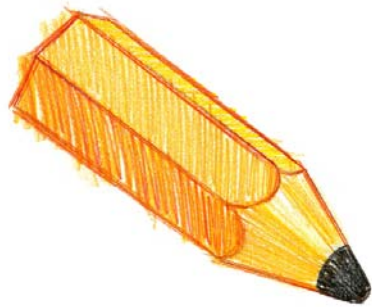
- **Issue:** Sending 150,000 customized emails might not easily be possible inside an organization.
- **Solution:** Set up a dedicated email address with an external email service.

- **Email Optimization**

- **Issue:** Enrollment issues tend to be classified as marketing email so greater concern about being tagged as spam.
- **Solution:** Test extensively against all major email solutions; use an industry leader for relaying email.

Louba Aaronson

[louba.aaronson@healthnet.com](mailto:louba.aaronson@healthnet.com)



Michael Fiore

[michael.fiore@epgtech.net](mailto:michael.fiore@epgtech.net)

# Thank You

