



Targeting Young Donors with Educational Video Content

Original Session at ADRP Annual Conference 2024

Original Speakers: Elyssa Hurley, MEDIC Regional Blood Center

In the ever-evolving landscape of blood donation, one organization is taking a bold step to engage the next generation of lifesavers. Founded in 1958 by Dr. Carl Nelson, MD, this East Tennessee-based blood center is embracing the power of social media to educate and inspire young donors.

The challenge? Meeting the younger generation where they already are – online. In a world overflowing with information, this blood center has recognized the need to create content that not only educates but also resonates with youth who are eager to make a positive impact.

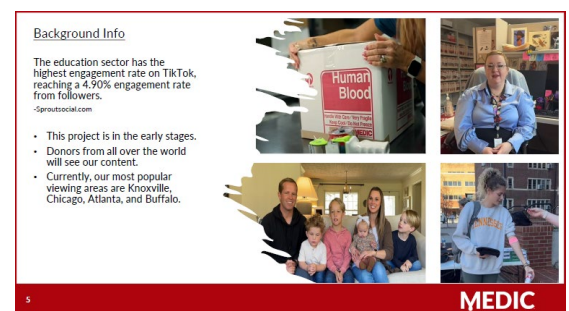
Their strategy? Harnessing the potential of short-form video content across platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, and Facebook. By focusing on topics such as blood myths, fun facts, and the science behind blood donation, they're transforming complex medical information into bite-sized, engaging content.

The results are promising. Since launching their project in November 2023, they've seen a steady increase in young donor turnout. Despite challenges like severe winter weather in January, the center has maintained an upward trend, with young donors accounting for 15% of registered donors by April 2024.

But it's not just about the numbers. The project has yielded valuable insights into content creation and audience engagement. Short, punchy videos under 15 seconds have proven most effective, especially when featuring donor events or using popular audio and hashtags. Accessibility features like high contrast and short captions have also boosted engagement.

Interestingly, while most TikTok followers are over 30, the majority of viewers fall into the 18-24 age bracket. This suggests that the content is successfully reaching its target audience, even if they're not always converting to followers.

The journey hasn't been without its challenges. As a niche industry, creating content for blood donation requires navigating sensitive topics and overcoming initial resistance from staff. However, the team has learned to let the public champion their cause and have discovered that students respond well to familiar faces in videos.



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Topics of Focus

- Blood myths
- Fun facts
- Equipment info
- How donated blood is used
- How we process and test blood
- Diseases that can be treated with blood products
- Reference lab
- New donor eligibility
- Reply to questions

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Perhaps most importantly, this project has revealed the power of data-driven strategies. By closely monitoring engagement rates, viewership patterns, and donor turnout, the blood center has been able to refine its approach continuously.

As we look to the future, the potential impact of this initiative is clear. By educating young people about the importance of blood donation through engaging, accessible content, we're not just increasing donor

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numbers – we're cultivating a generation of informed, committed lifesavers.

In an age where social media often gets a bad rap, it's refreshing to see it being used as a force for good. This blood center's innovative approach serves as a blueprint for other organizations looking to connect with young audiences and make a real difference in their communities.

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