

Truths that can Make Marketing Influenza Vaccine Difficult

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May 13, 2007



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION**



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Objective

- Present a few examples of truths about influenza and influenza vaccine that make increasing vaccination coverage difficult.
- Preview new video: “Why Flu Vaccination Matters”

The 4 P's of Marketing

Product

Price

Placement

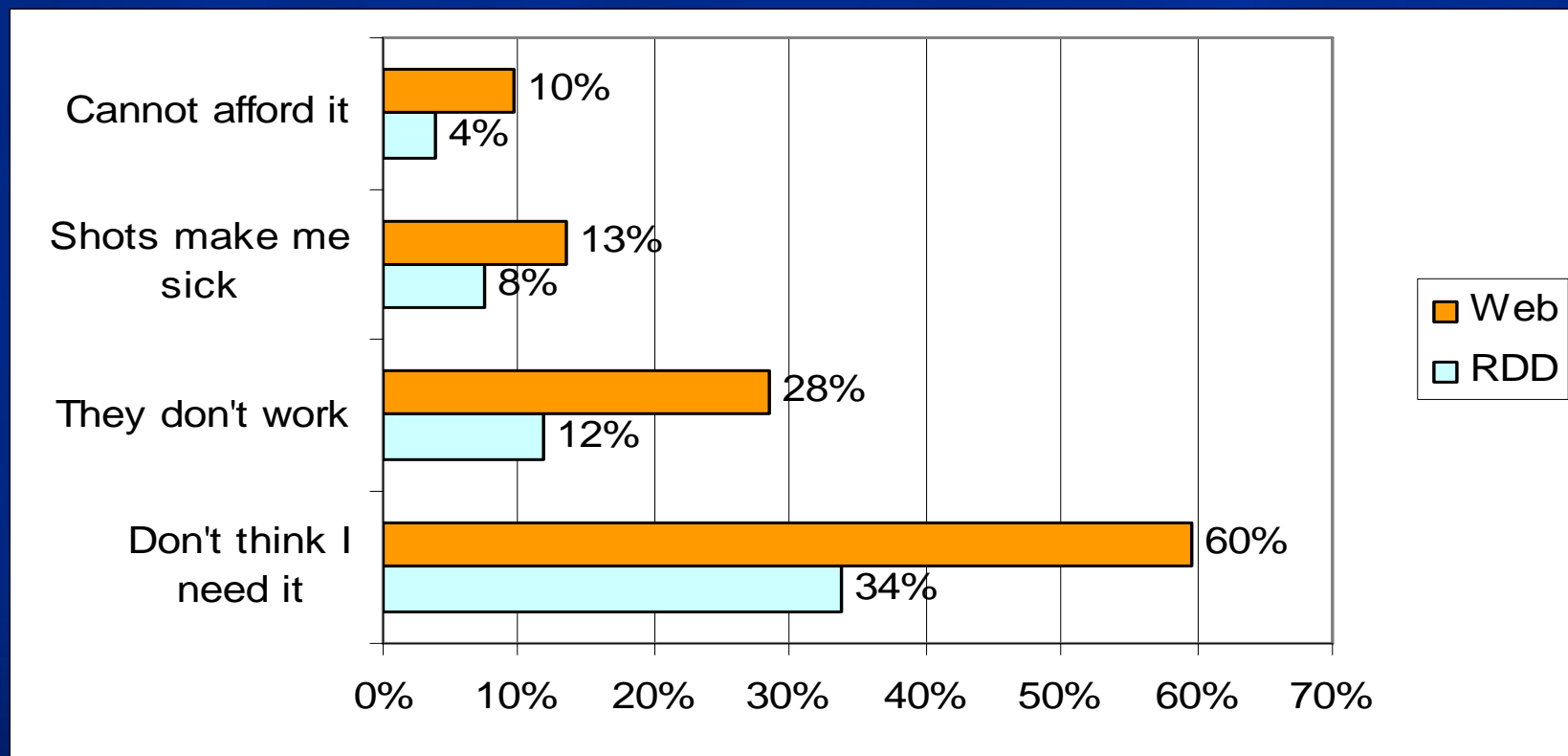
Promotion

Product

- Influenza vaccination
- In order to have a “marketable” product, people must first perceive that they have a genuine need or problem, and that the product meets that need or is a good solution for that problem.

Reasons for Not Getting the Flu Shot– 2006-07 Season

- Most common reasons respondents were not planning to get a seasonal flu vaccine in the 2006-07 season:



Truth: Most people who get influenza will recover in a few days to less than 2 weeks

- **People are not likely to seek vaccination unless they feel “at risk”**
- **Our messages:**
 - **The flu is not the common cold**
 - **Emphasize the dangers of influenza for those at high risk**
 - **Educate those who are not at high risk about other potential “costs” of influenza:**
 - **The risk of spreading flu to those you care about, especially those at high risk for complications**
 - **Missed time at work or school**

Truth: Vaccine strains are not always a good match to circulating viruses

- 2007-08 season
- Our message:
 - Despite a less than optimal match in two of three vaccine components this year, interim data indicate that the vaccine provided substantial protection against the predominant influenza virus – the H3N2 virus – this season.
 - We continue to recommend vaccination

The Headlines:

Flu Vaccine Worst In 10 Years

Flu Shot Just 44% Effective In 'Moderately Severe' 2007-08 Flu Season

(WebMD) This year's flu shot was only 44% effective, a new study suggests - the least effective flu vaccine in a decade.

The findings come from a study of 616 Wisconsin residents who came down with flu-like illnesses during the peak of the flu season. Study findings appear in today's issue of the CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

In good years, flu vaccines are 70% to 90% effective in preventing confirmed cases of flu bad enough to cause a person to seek medical attention. This year's vaccine appears to be the least effective since the 1997-1998 flu season, when the vaccine was about 50% effective.



Truth: Even when we have an optimal match, the vaccine isn't always as effective as we want it to be

- **Elderly persons typically have a diminished immune response to influenza vaccination compared with young healthy adults**
- **Our messages:**
 - **People age 65 and over are at high risk for complications, hospitalizations, and deaths from influenza.**
 - **Influenza can put a halt to your busy lifestyle**
 - **Vaccination is the single best way for everyone, including older adults, to be protected against the flu. It can be very effective at reducing hospitalizations and death in those 65 and over**
 - **By getting vaccinated, you also protect the ones you love**

Price

- **Monetary**
- **Intangibles, such as time or effort**
- **Risks**

Truth: Flu vaccine will not give you the flu, but it can make you feel “yukky”

- Local and systemic symptoms can occur after vaccination
- The body is responding to vaccination
- These symptoms are usually far less “yukky” than influenza

Truth: Issues with flu vaccine impact parental acceptance of other childhood vaccines and vice versa

- **Shared “market”: moms of young children**
- **Negative coverage of flu vaccine effectiveness came up frequently in discussions with parents about the necessity and effectiveness of infant immunizations**
- **Influenza is the only vaccine on the childhood schedule that still contains thimerosal as a preservative**

Placement

- How and where people access influenza vaccines
- 2007-08 survey
 - 14% said vaccine was not offered in a place that was convenient for them
- Truth: Ensuring accessibility is critical, but not enough if the product, price, and promotion aren't right

Promotion

- Advertising, media advocacy, events, etc.
- Research is crucial to determine the most effective and efficient vehicles to reach the target audience and increase demand.
- Promotion is not a “magic bullet” that can make up for problems with the other Ps
- In some cases policy change, not promotion is needed

Truth: Our messages are often mixed and change frequently

- Past messages asking people to “step aside” or wait during shortages and delays
- “Take three”: vaccination, hand washing/cough etiquette, and antivirals
- Changes in recommendations
 - May be confusing
 - May be viewed with skepticism

Video:
**"Why Flu Vaccination
Matters"**

Acknowledgements

- Alan Janssen
- Erin Burns
- Nicole Richardson
- Douglas Jordan
- Janine Cory
- The Academy for Educational Development
- Families Fighting Flu

Thank You!



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