



# Apply the Science of Narrative to Reach Your Underserved Audiences.



**Given the inequitable impacts of our current crisis, it's more important than ever that we communicate with vulnerable populations.**

- ✓ Older Adults
- ✓ Low Income People
- ✓ Lower Literacy Adults
- ✓ People Of Color
- ✓ The Uninsured
- ✓ Caregivers

## How do we reach these audiences when in-person contact isn't possible?

We've learned it's not just a question of finding people online — we also need to build lasting relationships to sustain their engagement attention over time. In our work building message frameworks to recruit 340k+ older adults to health programs, we've learned several lessons

that can help with this challenge. We applied the science of narrative to engage regular people in the fight to end a major disease and have tested health-related messages with diverse populations 55 and over.

## Here's what we've learned through our work with clients focused on aging and health:

- ▲ When communicating directly with **older adults on any topic, or communicating about ending disease:**
  - △ **Minimize the number of steps involved**
  - △ **Simplify visual complexity as much as possible**
  - △ **Provide all necessary knowledge and resources about each step in the process** (e.g., *if asking for sensitive information, let people know why*)
  - △ **Put credible people out front with affiliations to well-known institutions.**
  - △ **Craft language for the “head and heart”**
- ▲ Make sure to include **lower-literacy populations in your communications.** Forty-three percent of adult Americans are “lower literacy,” according to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy. Improving the accessibility of your comms for these readers improves access for everyone.
- ▲ Think about moving from a transactional to relational to transformational dynamic with your audiences. Be prepared to build trust over time, so that when your audience is ready to take action, you're ready and waiting.
- ▲ Despite its challenges, Facebook remains the most successful platform for reaching older adults — **46% of Americans 65 and older use the platform regularly.**
- ▲ Older adults see themselves as younger than they may appear to others. Whatever the age demographic of your target audience, use photos of people at a younger age than you might have expected.
- ▲ Scientists and researchers can be compelling storytellers. **Consider putting them at the front and center of your messages.**
- ▲ Coronavirus is scary. Language can help us overcome our fears and confront the challenge. Read more about language that can help bring people into health programs [here](#). Some highlights:
  - △ **Adopt clarity and transparency to achieve trust.**
  - △ **Emphasize action and create a sense of momentum.**
  - △ **Use language that cues hope and optimism.**

## Some areas where we can help:

- ▲ Creating clear, credible content that older adults will turn to, over and over again, to stay informed about complex topics.
- ▲ Making sure your online communications meet the needs of the 43% of adults who are “lower literacy,” according to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy.
- ▲ Optimizing strategies for Facebook, which remains the platform most heavily used among older adults.
- ▲ Developing content based on narrative strategy specifically designed to attract people into health programs.
- ▲ Developing, testing, and refining messages targeted to hard-to-reach populations, particularly communities of color
- ▲ Increasing conversion rates by researching how actual users navigate your site and understanding what they need and want but aren't getting.

## Insights in Action

### SMALL EDITS, BIG IMPACT

Simple adjustments, like foregrounding logos from highly-respected institutional partners, helped increase home page conversions for Banner Alzheimer's Institute's Alzheimer's Prevention Registry to 20-40%.

### TRUST BUILDS OVER TIME

Ongoing communication through email with list members helps move relationships from transactional to transformational. By building trust with our audience over time, we achieved a sign-up rate of 27% for an at-home genotyping program.

### SMARTER TOGETHER

Bringing together experts and foregrounding their work, Provoc gave the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations new visibility and traction with online audiences through a bright new brand identity and revitalized web presence.

**For more information on how Provoc can help you meet the challenges of this moment, please contact us today.**

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