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Analysis of Factors Contributing to a Facebook Presence

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Introduction

Individuals living with a disability may have trouble finding the resources they need when living in rural communities. Offering another way to develop and access these resources would help many (Rural Policy Institute Research, 2009). Through today's technology, online communities can help bring people with disabilities from rural areas together (Dobransky, 2006). There are many factors that go into building and maintaining an online community.

I looked at Facebook as a platform for engaging people with disabilities in developing health promotion content. I observed how followers and reactions changed through various interventions based on post type (e.g. text, link, photo, video), boosts, and boosts with follow up. Followers are people who "liked" the page, and therefore see the posts. Post boosts are paid advertisement through Facebook, that share specific content with an audience beyond the pages followers. Boosts with follow-up were a staff based intervention, where individuals who had reacted to a specific post were invited to the Facebook page. Reactions occur on individual posts (e.g. "liking" a post). Increased reactions lead to an increase in the number of people reached.

Hypotheses

- Posts with photos would lead to more reactions and followers.
- Paying for boosted posts would lead to more reactions and followers than postings without boosts.

Purpose

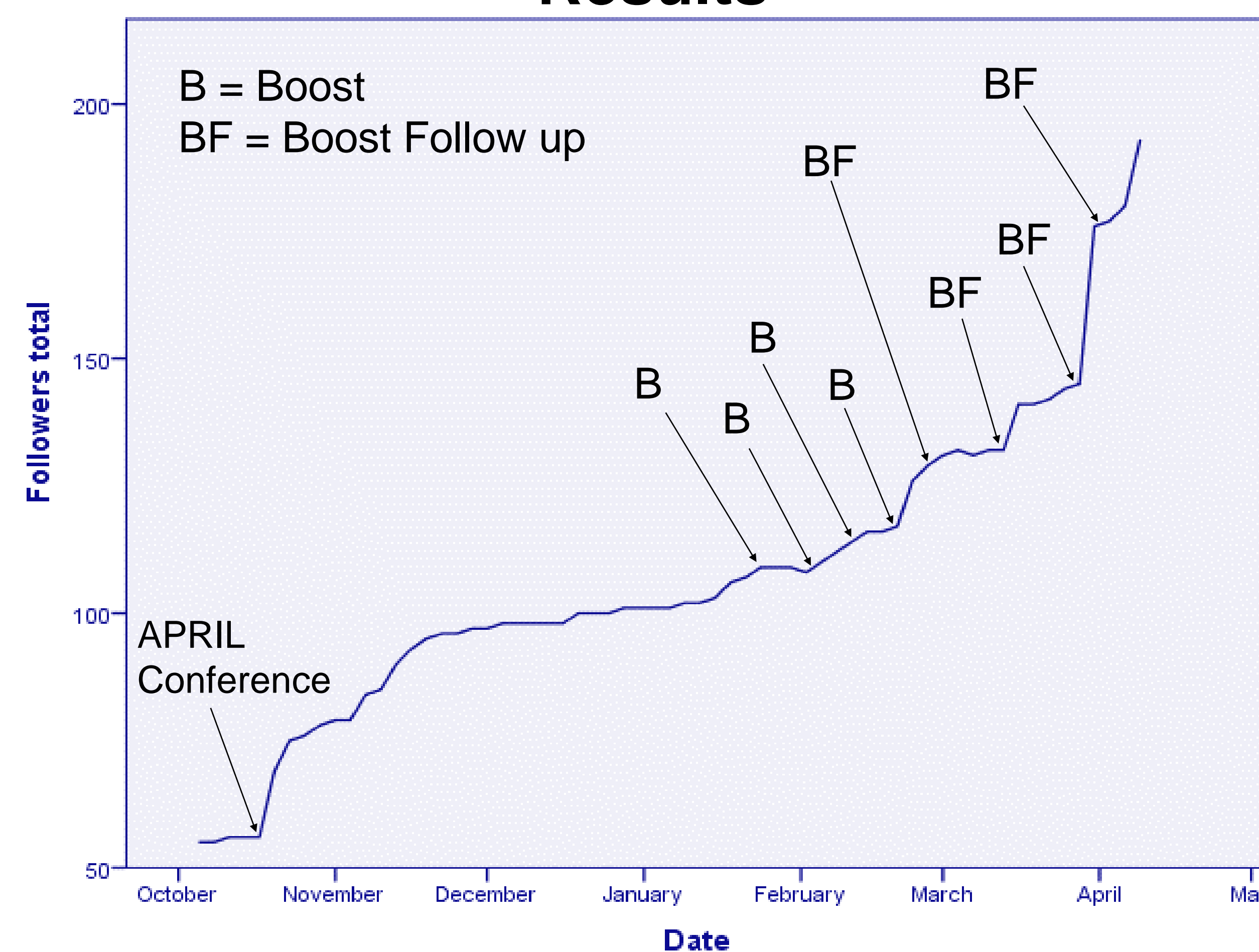
- The purpose of this study was to observe the effects of alternative interventions (e.g., conferences & boosts) upon a Facebook followers.

Methods

- The participants included followers or people who liked the Healthy Community Living Facebook page from October, 2016 through April, 2017.
- Outcome measures included the number of followers and reactions to posts.
- Interventions included post type (e.g., text, link, photos video) boost, boosts with follow-up and conferences.
- Data was analyzed descriptively.

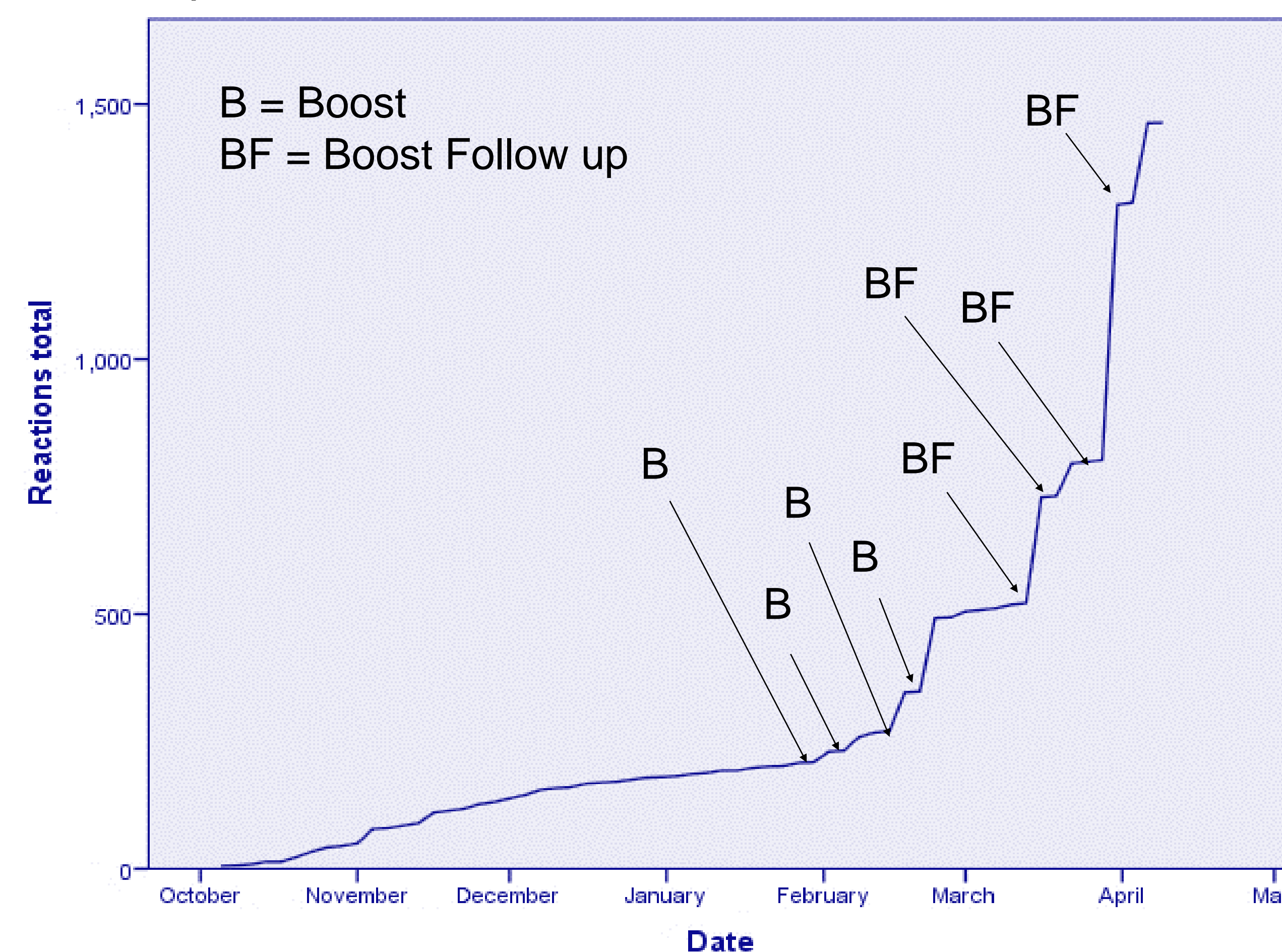


Results



Followers Added

Type of Post	Mean	N	Standard Deviation
Text	4	5	5.385
Link	1.14	7	0.690
Photo	1.83	36	3.094
Video	.25	4	0.500
Boost	2.75	4	4.272
Boost with follow up	11.00	4	13.760



Example post

The boosted post below had 498 reactions, 8 comments, 34 shares, and a total reach of 9,566 people.

"This man is using his mouth to hold his brush while painting on a canvas. What activities do you do? Are there specialized tools or methods you use to do them? Thanks Quantum Rehab for sharing this picture with our project! Please remember to share your pictures at: You have the power to share your story."

<https://www.flickr.com/groups/healthycommunityliving>



Discussion

Facebook can be used as a tool for spreading information, media, and can provide resources for non-profit organizations such as those who serve people with disabilities. An effective Facebook presence can create a community of members who access and share important health information.

This study demonstrated boosting posts leads to many more reactions, but not necessarily followers. A much larger increase in followers comes from following up with people who react to the posts and inviting them to like the page.

Knowing how to increase social media followers can increase an organization's reach and lead to increased community support. The results of this study, provide an example of how to start and grow an online community for nonprofit organizations and research projects.

Literature Cited

- Dobransky, K., & Hargittai, E. (2006). The disability divide in internet access and use. *Information, Communication & Society*,9(3), 313-334. doi:10.1080/13691180600751298
- Rural Policy Research Institute. (2009). The state of human services in rural America. *Perspectives*,5, 3-6. Retrieved from <http://www.rupri.org/Forms/PerspectivesWinter09.pdf>

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