



UCLA researchers leverage Red Oxygen SMS gateway technology in smoking cessation study

Text Messaging Used to Improve Research Methodology and Accurately Report Subject Behavior

AUSTIN, Texas – May 17, 2010 - Red Oxygen, one of the world's leading developers of text messaging software and provider of SMS gateways, has partnered with a team at UCLA to bring a new, more efficient and accurate research methodology to life. By leveraging bulk SMS, or text messaging, Elliot Berkman and his colleagues were able to vastly improve the accuracy of Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) a research method for logging the status of study subjects in real-time throughout each day.

One of the most challenging issues in studies on cigarette smoking is accurately measuring smoking behavior. The most common measure of smoking is self-assessment, which depends critically on participants' abilities to accurately remember and recall their own behavior for the course of a day or several days. To lessen the likelihood of flawed recollection, researchers have turned to hand held devices that participants carry with them to log input when reminded throughout the day. When participants remember to carry the device, this option proves more accurate, but the equipment is costly, software integration is complex and lost or damaged devices often result in lost data.

"As I researched a more convenient way to collect data, one that wouldn't be a burden to the users but would provide accurate responses for our team, it dawned on me that every one of our subjects has a cell phone which they already carry with them throughout the day," said Berkman. "Red Oxygen was the only provider I found that could set me up to efficiently and securely send text messages to my subjects while easily tracking the data."

Until now, text messaging had never before been used to gather data in this way. To demonstrate the utility of this novel method for measuring health behaviors in the real world and in real-time, Berkman sent text messages to cigarette smokers eight times each day for the first twenty-one days of their quitting attempt. His subjects would be asked for three numbers representing how many cigarettes had

been smoked during the time period, what their cravings were like and what their mood was on a set number scale. Participants noted that the process was extremely simple and did not cause a disruption to their daily lives. In fact, many indicated that receiving the text messages helped them to stay on track with their quitting efforts and even requested that the messages be continued after the end of the study.

According to recent studies, there are more than 240 million individuals with SMS-enabled phones in the US alone. Red Oxygen's products allow users to send texts from their email address books directly to mobile phones, with replies being sent back to the sender's inbox. This functionality allowed Berkman's team to easily and automatically send data requests to all the study participants and expediently gather the results via email on a computer.

"Unlike other SMS gateway providers who are focused on providing tools mainly for mass marketing, at Red Oxygen we see many valuable business uses in the immediacy and convenience of text messaging," said Tom Sheahan, CEO of Red Oxygen. "Our customers, like the UCLA Psychology Department, come up with new innovative uses for text messaging every day. We are looking forward to working with Elliot and his team on future research projects."

The results from Berkman's study will be available in August 2010.

About Red Oxygen

Red Oxygen is one of the world's leading developers and distributors of enterprise SMS software and services. Combining the power of email applications, instant messaging clients or CRM applications with the convenience and mobility of text messaging, Red Oxygen's products allow users to send text messages to specific individuals or entire lists. Red Oxygen software is available for Microsoft Outlook, IBM's Lotus Notes, IBM's Sametime, Windows, as well as web based and CRM custom integration. With over 300,000 users worldwide, Red Oxygen's current customer list includes clients such as Pfizer, BMW, Microsoft, Siemens, Panasonic, Deloitte, IBM, Accenture, Frito Lay, Billabong, 3M and others.

Contact

Jen Cadmus
512-934-8350
jen@thedialoglab.com