



Enhanced communication strategy helps CDC prevent illness, raise awareness



Client Situation

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is responsible for providing users with credible, reliable health care information and CDC.gov is the agency's primary online communication channel with its many stakeholder groups. CDC.gov receives over 500-million page views annually and has one of the highest American Customer

Satisfaction Index (ACSI) scores among government websites.

Although CDC.gov is one of the most comprehensive federal government websites, it was only useful to those citizens who came looking for the information. The CDC became aware of a missing link between this hub of information and the citizens who needed it: the agency needed a communication solution that would proactively provide citizens with relevant information without increasing the workload of CDC employees.

Solution

The CDC implemented GovDelivery's Digital Communication Management solution in November 2006 to improve service to citizens and further its mission to promote health and quality of life by preventing and controlling disease, injury, and disability. By the end of 2008, CDC had reached just over 230,000 subscribers and sent 27-million email alerts.

CDC grew its audience reach by collaborating with 13 other government agencies through the GovDelivery Network including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA), the Military Health System and USA.gov. The Network allows CDC to cross-promote its content and enhance information sharing.

Results

Federal agencies look to the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) for insight into how citizens perceive the agency in terms of customer service, information accessibility, and website usability, relative to others in the government sector and in private sector industries. "We've always had fairly decent numbers there [on the ACSI]," says Janice Nall, Director of e-Health Marketing of the CDC which received a score of 81 in the most recent release on January 25, 2011 (aggregated score for all of the Federal Government had plummeted to 65.4). Nall continues, "What we found [was that] our numbers were our highest ever. And the only thing significant that we had changed...the only thing we really can attribute to that increase in user satisfaction are the email updates, and the fact that we have been trying to do a better job refreshing the content."

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was recognized as the 2009 *Annual Excellence in Communications Award* winner. The CDC and its enhanced communication efforts during the H1N1 flu crisis of that year provide an impressive example of how innovation and leadership in proactive government-to-citizen communication can be life saving. The award was presented to Janice Nall for "exponentially increasing stakeholder reach through use of multiple communication channels; sending over 94-million messages to-date and adding an average of 1,262 new subscribers daily (450% increase from the previous average)."

CDC's use of GovDelivery's digital communication solution has grown since receiving the award in March 2010. The total number of subscribers is now more than 658,000 and total emails sent has reached over 195.6 million. The most popular subscription is the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, with a subscriber base of 103,000, and the second most popular topic is Recent Outbreaks and Incidents with 86,000 subscribers.

