

HEALTH CARE IN A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD:

CHAPTER 2

What the COVID-19 Vaccine Roll-out Taught Us About Marketing

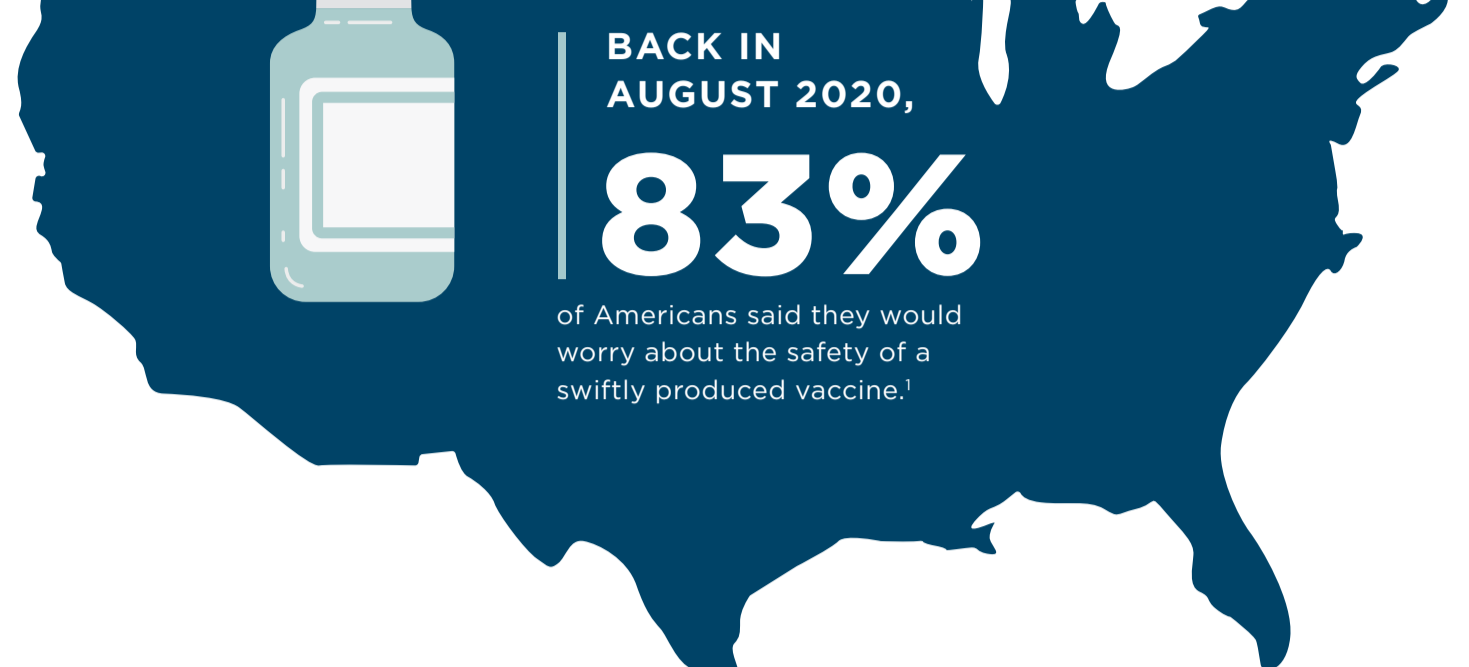
As we eventually look back on the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent vaccine roll-out, there will undoubtedly be lessons learned about crisis response, public health, access, equity and more—but it also taught us a lot about marketing and communications. To start, we're sharing three quick observations and takeaways.

LESSON 1

Branding Matters

When the government announced **Operation Warp Speed**—the program designed to accelerate collaboration in the pharmaceutical industry to deliver a COVID-19 vaccine—it was meant to reassure the public that relief was coming **as soon as possible**.

However, it appears decision-makers underestimated the public's skepticism. Instead, the branding of the program **increased hesitancy and confusion** among stakeholders. Audiences began questioning whether the process was moving too fast or if corners were being cut.



“ The way the message is coming out of Operation Warp Speed creates a lot of chaos and confusion. And it is enabling the anti-vaccine movement. ”

— Dr. Peter Hotez, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine and professor of pediatrics and molecular virology and microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine, June 2020²



Takeaway



Before branding an initiative, consider all that brand must communicate. While no brand can please everyone, focusing too narrowly can unintentionally alienate stakeholders we want to attract.

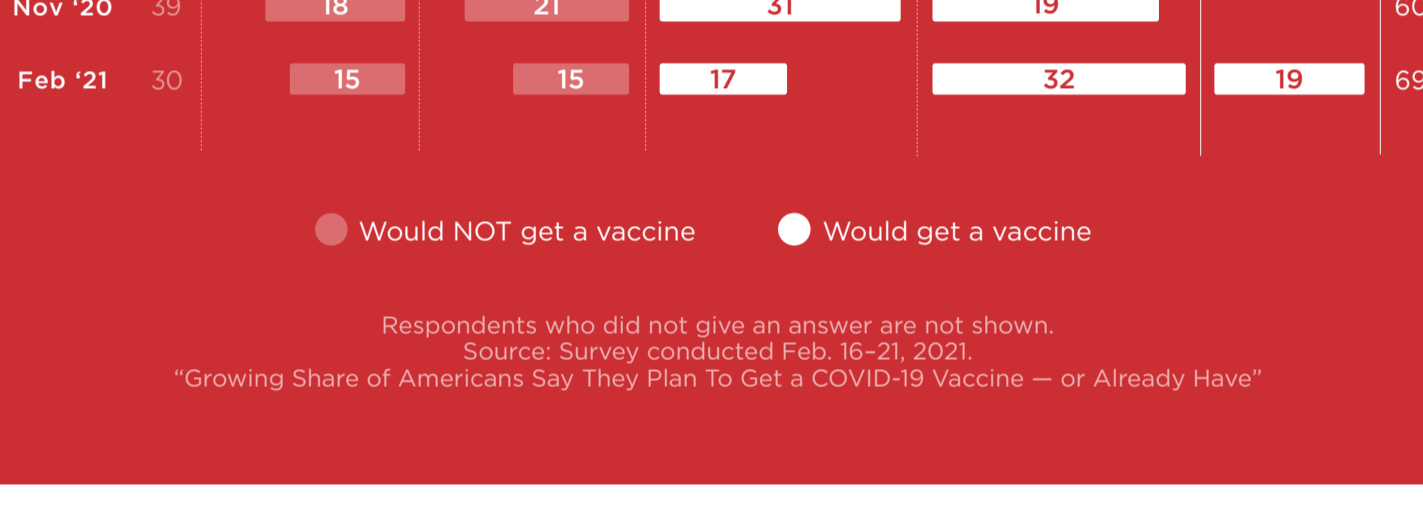
LESSON 2

Information Dispels Fear

As of March 2021—according to PEW Research Center—19% of U.S. adults say they had already received at least one dose of a coronavirus vaccine, and another 50% said they were likely to get vaccinated. That's 69% of the public who planned to get (or already had) a vaccine. Compare that to the 60% who said they planned to get vaccinated in November 2020, or the 51% who expressed intention in September 2020.

OVER TIME, INTENTION TO GET A VACCINE GREW

Percentage of U.S. adults who say, thinking about vaccines to prevent COVID-19, they...



As **access to and information about** the vaccine has become more readily available, consumers are lining up for their shots. As of April 19th, half of US adults have received at least one shot.³ Experts analyzing the data say trust in the vaccine R&D process ties strongly to people's **"attitudes and actions."** In fact, vaccine intent is 75 points higher among those with high trust (vs. low trust).⁴

These changes in intention and behavior come as 50% of Americans now say they are "informed" or "extremely informed" when it comes to COVID-19 vaccine development.⁵ With each passing day, it becomes clearer that transparency and clarity are key, especially within health care. **Audiences can't make a decision about something on which they don't feel informed.** If we want to change that, we must share information, and do so in a way that's accessible.

Takeaway



In all communication efforts, we must dig deeper and determine if audiences are empowered with the information they need to take the action we desire. We have to ensure access to services *and* education, as well as correlating with our audience's mindset or behaviors to appeal to the real drivers of action.

LESSON 3

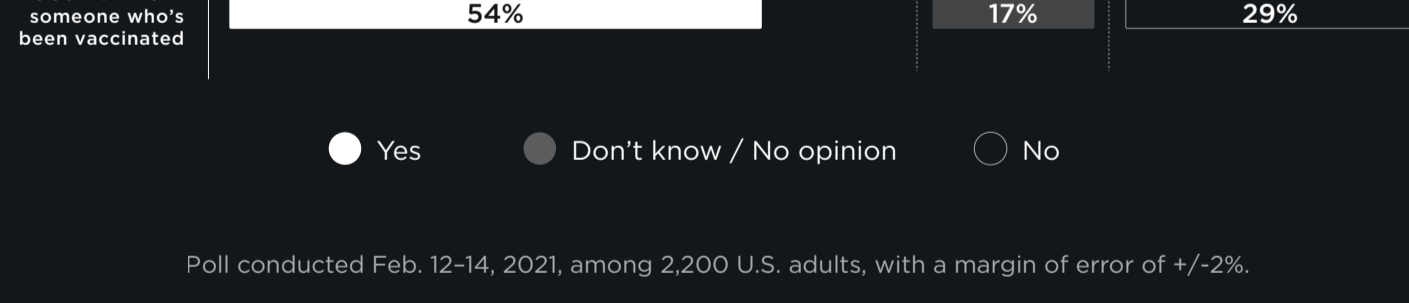
Representation is the Foundation of Trust

As important as trust is, when there are issues, they can compound themselves—as was the case in the early vaccine roll-out.

Initially, vaccinations tended to skew higher in wealthier and less diverse patient populations. With research showing **adults were more likely to get a shot if they knew someone who has been vaccinated**, the gap between those audiences and the general public or less resourced populations widened.

COVID-19 VACCINE WILLINGNESS IS HIGHER AMONG PEOPLE WHO KNOW SOMEONE WHO'S HAD THE SHOT

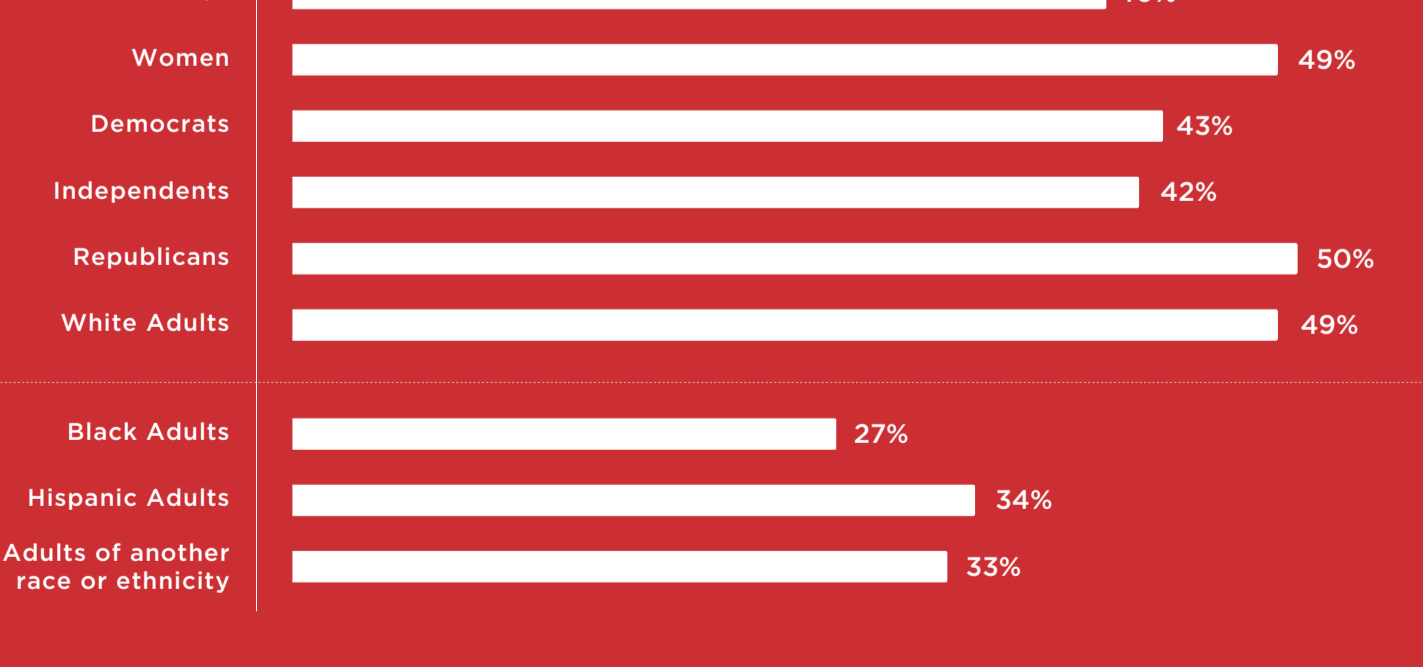
Adults were asked whether they would get a COVID-19 vaccine if one were available to them



This dynamic created a loop in which vaccination comfort continued to rise among White adults, compared to Black or Hispanic adults—or adults making at least \$100,000 per year, compared to those making less than \$50,000 per year. To combat this, campaigns were designed to show individuals across race or ethnicities and income levels receiving the vaccine. **Messaging grew to include both statistics/data and personal stories** of vaccination.

SHARE OF US ADULTS WHO KNOW SOMEONE WHO'S GOTTEN THE COVID-19 VACCINE SKews HIGHER FOR WHITE AND WEALTHIER GROUPS

Share who said they know someone who's had a COVID-19 vaccine



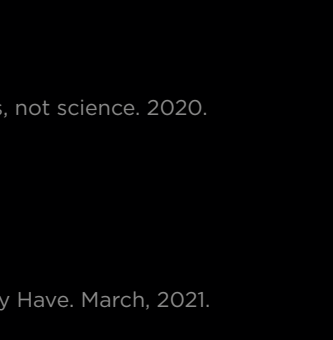
Takeaway



If the audience we're trying to reach can't see themselves reflected in our campaigns, using our products or services, or included in our community—they are less likely to respond. And as a result, we'll lose out.

PERSPECTIVES BY TIERNEY

Connect with Tierney today to learn more about how your brand can empower consumers to navigate the health care landscape. Visit hellotierney.com.



To reach us directly, contact: **Tracey Santilli / tsantilli@tierneyagency.com**

Sources: ¹ Stat News. Poll: Most Americans believe the Covid-19 vaccine approval process is driven by politics, not science. 2020. ² CNN. 'Operation Warp Speed' is fueling vaccine fears, two top experts worry. 2020. ³ AP News. Half of US adults have received at least one COVID-19 shot. 2021. ⁴ Pew Research. Growing Share of Americans Say They Plan To Get a COVID-19 Vaccine – or Already Have. March, 2021. ⁵ Morning Consult. Adults More Likely to Say They'd Get a COVID-19 Shot if They Know Someone Who's Been Vaccinated. 2021.