“Make Healthcare Apps Great Again": The Role of Incentives and Cues in Promoting App Usage

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Abstract: Despite the promise healthcare apps hold in the management of chronic conditions and general health, they face the inherent problem of low usage levels. To address this issue, we propose four app design features based on monetary incentives and informational cues. Partnering with an app company that develops a tracking app for diabetic patients, we deploy different versions of the app mirroring the various schemes to assess their efficacy in driving short-term and long-term usage levels. Results from our field experiment suggest that monetary rewards and past usage information can be used to spur initial usage levels. However, users exposed to the financial schemes do not maintain their usage levels upon the removal of financial incentives, suggesting monetary schemes are not effective in inducing sustained usage behaviors. Results further show that motivated and health conscious users tend to respond more positively to these schemes.

Bio: Dr. Jason Chan is an Assistant Professor of Information & Decision Sciences at the Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota. He holds an interest towards research that has relevant business and policy insights on emerging phenomenon relating Internet platforms and social outcomes, in various areas including healthcare, crime, financial well-being, education, and labor discrimination. In his research, he adopts a variety of quantitative methods including econometric modeling, experiments and technical methods, to extract meaningful relationships that lies within datasets.

His work has been published in top academic journals and conferences such as Management Science, MIS Quarterly, and the International Conference on Information Systems, and has been presented at the National Bureau of Economic Research. His work has also been covered by prominent media outlets, including The Economist, The Washington Post, The Economic Times, NBC News, Newsweek, Forbes, The Daily Beast, and Market Watch. Dr. Chan is a recipient and nominee of several Best Paper Awards in IS conferences and workshops, and has received multiple research grants for his work. He has received the AIS Best Published Paper 2014 (selected by senior editors among top MIS journals), the MISQ Best Paper Award 2014, and is also the winner of the 2015 Nunamaker-Chen Dissertation Award conferred by INFORMS ISS. He serves as a reviewer for multiple top-tier MIS journals, conferences, and has served as Associate Editor at the International Conference of Information Systems (ICIS). He has won the Best Associate Editor Award at the ICIS 2016 for the e-Business and e-Government track.