



2025

THE MARKETER'S GUIDE TO CLINICAL TRIAL SUCCESS

How life sciences marketers can optimize acquisition, retention, and collaboration to best attract and engage potential trial candidates.

The clinical trial market is continuing its impressive growth. Valued at \$27 billion in 2024, the U.S. clinical trial market size is now projected to surpass \$41 billion by 2033, according to a recent **report** by Nova One Advisor.

While the expansion of the **pharma** and **biotech** industries in recent years has certainly been a primary reason for this growth, other factors have also contributed: increasing health challenges around the globe; advances in digital health technologies; an increased focus on patient needs and diversity; and evolving regulatory guidelines.

To ensure clinical trial success, today's marketers need to be especially focused on three primary trial components and strategies:

- **Acquisition:** acquiring the requisite number of suitable participants
- **Retention:** ensuring the participants continue throughout the trial's duration
- **Collaboration:** partnering with experienced organizations to improve acquisition, retention, and the overall trial experience





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PARTICIPANT ACQUISITION

Acquiring participants for clinical trials involves: finding suitable candidates based on the trial's specific criteria, providing the candidates with comprehensive information on the trial details, and obtaining informed consent.

Acquisition for clinical trials, however, can be challenging. **85%** of clinical trials fail to recruit enough patients, while **80%** are delayed due to other factors such as participant dropouts, according to Parexel. In addition, the **Tufts Center for the Study of Drug Development** reports that while **89%** of clinical trials do eventually meet their enrollment goals, extending the acquisition process can result in the trials taking twice as long as expected (due to challenges in recruitment and retention).

Specific acquisition challenges include:

- Lack of awareness — many potential participants are unaware of clinical trials (and the benefits they might offer)
- Accessibility — getting to the trial site can pose problems for many potential participants; challenges can include travel time commitment, a lack of transportation choices, etc.
- Eligibility criteria — the pool of participants may be limited due to narrow trial criteria
- Diversity challenges — ensuring the pool of participants is diverse enough to provide representative results
- Regulatory hurdles — regulations can hinder trial recruitment

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PARTICIPANT ACQUISITION

In order to overcome these challenges, when sourcing candidates for trials, be sure to take advantage of various proven recruitment methods, which can include:

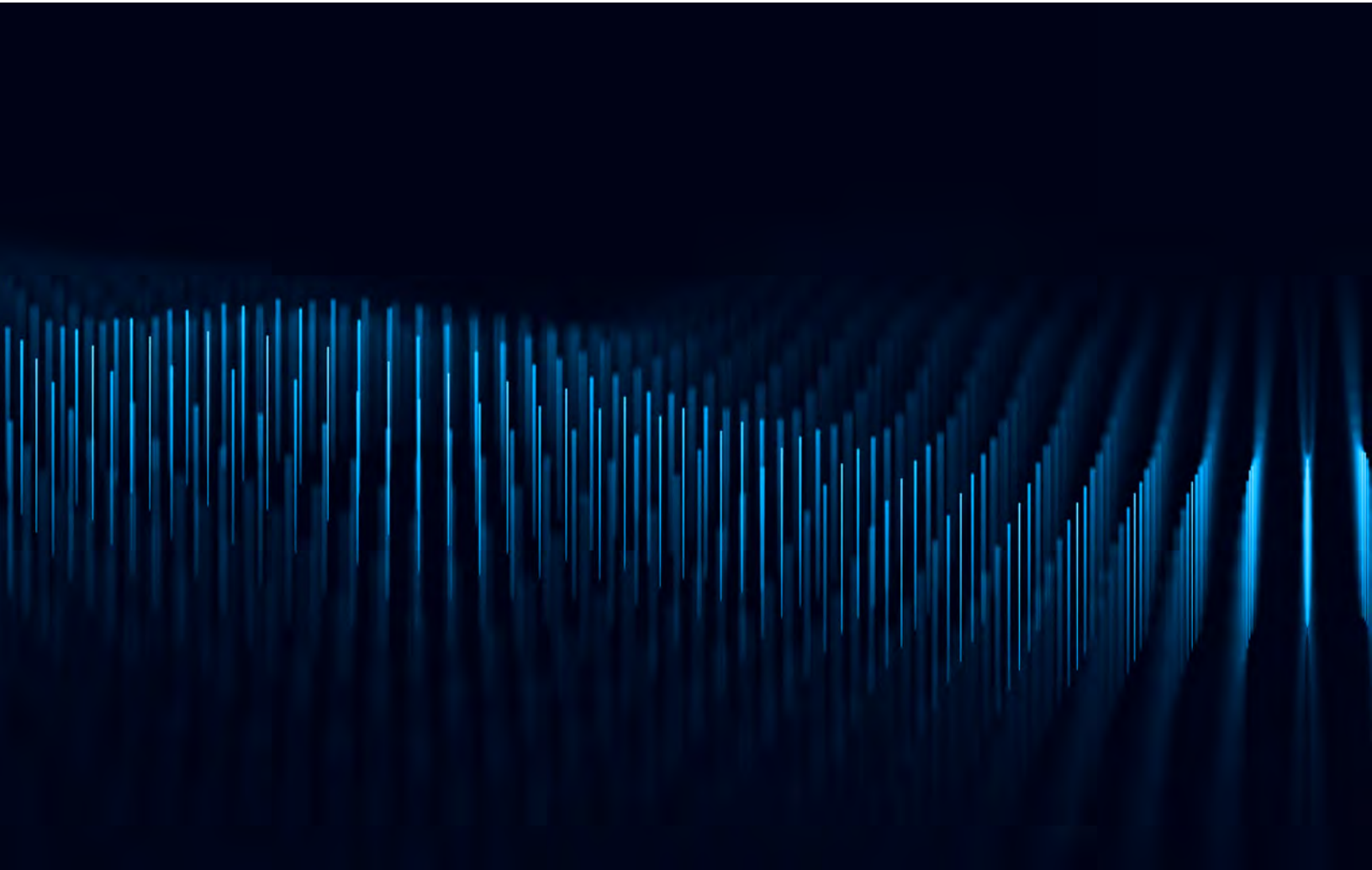
- **Direct mail and emails**
- Advertising — via social media, printed flyers, online ads, and other channels
- Community outreach — events such as health fairs are an ideal place to connect with potential participants
- Digital health technologies — wearable devices, smartphone apps, and electronic health records (EHRs) can help in identifying potential participants
- Recruitment lists/databases — lists of people who have previously expressed an interest in participating in research

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PARTICIPANT RETENTION

Retention of participants is critical, of course, because it will ensure that the trial reaches its planned conclusion and generates valuable data. Plus, high retention helps ensure the reliability of the final study results and that the results are truly representative of the intended population. High retention rates also maintain a study's statistical vigor — better enabling researchers to detect a treatment's effects.

Poor participant retention, on the other hand, can have serious consequences, including: delays in the trial's timing, increased project costs, and a negative effect on the study's overall success.



02 PARTICIPANT RETENTION

How, then, do you keep participants enrolled — and actively involved — in a clinical trial from beginning to end? How do you minimize patient dropouts, maintain engagement, and ensure participants complete the study as planned?

Addressing withdrawal challenges requires building trust and support with participants, as well as integrating custom approaches when necessary. Consider the following actions to take to boost participant retention:

- **Minimize the burden to participants:** Decrease the number of required visits, allow for flexible scheduling, and don't hesitate to rely on telemedicine when available; reimburse participants for time and/or travel expenses; and address any concerns as early as possible.
- **Build relationships:** Help participants overcome any obstacles they might encounter throughout the study; build a rapport with participants — send birthday messages or cards, for example; and train staff to be understanding of participants' needs.
- **Enhance engagement:** Be sure to explain all the components of the study up front; personalize communications with participants; provide regular updates on the study's progress; use surveys to garner feedback; and use digital tools for visit/appointment reminders, progress tracking, and communications.



03 COLLABORATING FOR SUCCESS

Collaboration among stakeholders can help drive a trial's success and improve patient outcomes. Whether the partnership involves a contract research organization, patient organization, a university, or a governmental organization, the goals are the same: improve recruitment, overcome retention challenges, and increase the chances of a successful trial.

Here are several advantages that an **experienced partner** can bring to the table as you recruit — and strive to retain — clinical trial participants (keep in mind that not all partners offer all services):

Specialized expertise — taking on various tasks that might not be in your organization's wheelhouse, from creative and **marketing communications** to kitting and fulfillment, will free you up to focus on other trial components that are more central to your operation

Flexibility, scalability — the ability to quickly scale up or down, depending upon your needs, enabling the trial to proceed seamlessly and at a rapid pace



03 COLLABORATING FOR SUCCESS

Study design — assistance in developing study protocols and study design, plus sample size calculations and overall study logistics

Patient recruitment and diversity — developing and implementing strategies for recruiting and enrolling patients, including ensuring participant diversity to reduce bias. Increasing diversity in trials is one of the top trends in the market today, as sponsors and regulatory agencies push for ethnically diverse patient populations to improve the final clinical data. Seventy-three percent of organizations engaged in clinical trials will very likely outsource patient-recruitment activities in the next two years, according to a recent **trends report** from Thermo Fisher Scientific. That number rises to **80%** for small/mid-size companies.

Data management and statistical analysis — data collection, validation, and analysis to ensure integrity and accuracy of the data

Regulatory compliance, reporting — helping clinical trials comply with regulations and guidelines, including GCP

Faster time to market — eliminating roadblocks accelerates speed to market, delivering time efficiencies and cutting costs





RRD offers a global team of life sciences experts with decades of industry experience. We can partner with you on your organization's clinical trials — delivering creative execution services, omnichannel outreach communications, fulfillment, kitting, and much more. RRD's solutions drive accuracy, speed, and cost efficiencies at every step of the clinical trial process.

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