Reviewer's report

Title: Breast Cancer Awareness - The effect of the October campaign on Internet search activity

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Reviewer: Jennifer Vidrine

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This manuscript describes the results of a study that examined the effects of the annual October breast cancer awareness campaign on Internet search activity between 2004 and 2009. Internet search activity during the same time period associated with prostate and lung cancer awareness campaigns was examined as a comparison point. Google Insights for Search was used to measure Internet search activity. Results indicated that levels of online search activity related to breast cancer were significantly higher in October compared to all other months of the year. Furthermore, increases in search activity following the October campaign were significantly greater than increases in search activity related to lung and prostate cancer during lung and prostate cancer awareness campaigns, respectively. The authors concluded that the annual breast cancer awareness is effective in stimulating Internet search activity related to breast cancer.

Evaluating the impact of the annual breast cancer awareness campaign on Internet search activity is an important research topic. The analyses are straightforward and comparison of the data with search data associated with lung and prostate cancer awareness campaigns provides meaningful comparison points. As currently presented, however, the Introduction and Discussion are underdeveloped and the potential of the paper to make a meaningful contribution to the literature is questionable.

Major Comments:

1. The introduction lacks a clear statement about the rationale for examining the association between the BCAM campaign and Internet search activity. Is an increase in search activity associated with the campaign hypothesized to increase the uptake of screening and prevention behaviors? Have previous data indicated that increased search activity is associated with behavior?

2. It is not clear if the search activity data examined were limited to the US or were worldwide. This should be clarified.

3. The Conclusion section indicates that accessing information online influences opinion and motivates offline activity, yet no supporting references are provided. This discussion point should be elaborated upon.

4. The manuscript does not describe how the BCAM campaign has dramatically greater financial support than all other cancer awareness campaigns.
5. The finding that Internet search activity has not increased in response to lung and prostate cancer awareness campaigns merits further discussion. This phenomenon may be attributable to the fact that screening tests are not readily available or affordable (lung cancer), or that the utility of routine screening is questionable (prostate cancer).

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.