Polly — Carnegie Mellon and LUMS's Viral Voice-Message Service That Delivered Job Ads to Low-Literate Callers in Pakistan

Digital Inclusion · Good practice · Pakistan

Quality score: 76/100

Evidence strength: Strong

Summary

Polly let callers on any phone record a message, add a funny voice effect and forward it, then used that viral spread to deliver spoken job ads. From May 2012 it reached 160,000+ people and almost 2.5 million calls; job ads were played 380,000+ times.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Innovation level	4/5
Sustainability (ongoing)	0/1
Evaluation evidence	1/1
Demonstrated reach	1/1
Documented learning	1/1

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

C-NAPSE web research — accessed 2026-11-12

Carnegie Mellon University (Language Technologies Institute) — accessed 2026-11-12

Carnegie Mellon University news release (April 2013) — accessed 2026-11-12

CHI 2013 paper: Job Opportunities through Entertainment — accessed 2026-11-12

EurekAlert! release — accessed 2026-11-12

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