



An In-Depth Look At Text Message Marketing

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How to Use SMS/Text Message Marketing in Your Business



SMS marketing, also known as text message marketing, is a great way to stay in touch with your customers. The SMS stands for 'short message service.' It means that you send tiny text messages of 160 characters or less to your target market's cellphones with special offers, deals, updates, news and whatever else you think they should know about your business.

You can use SMS marketing in a number of different ways. Most companies use it to increase sales by offering special deals to their customers and branding their business. It increases customer loyalty by keeping you in touch with them. You can also use it to get new customers.

The great thing about SMS marketing is that 80% of all mobile device users have their phones on them at all times. This means that they get your message immediately; it doesn't end up in an email inbox waiting to be seen.

Getting Your List

It's extremely easy to build an SMS subscriber list. Usually, all you have to do is ask. Tell your customers that if they sign up, they'll receive deals and special offers. Most of them will be happy to get them.

You should also use your online presence to get new customers. On your website, blog and social media profiles, let people know that they can get exclusive deals. You can speed up the process by offering a special incentive just for signing up, such as a freebie or discount on your services.

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The Challenge of SMS Marketing

Remember that SMS stands for 'SHORT message service.' As I mentioned, these messages have to be 160 characters. That's not a lot of characters. Just to give you an idea, the paragraph above this one ('You should also use...') is over 200 characters long. Your messages have to be shorter than that!

It takes a bit of skill to craft such a tiny message and also give it some impact. The best way to do this is to focus each message on only one thing. If you've got a special sale and a new product line to tell them about, turn that into two broadcast messages. The best messages contain 3 bits of key information:

- The details of the deal, promotion or sale
- How it benefits them
- What they need to do to get it (the call to action).



One more thing about your messages – don't use text lingo to make it shorter. That looks goofy and unprofessional.

How to Perfect Your Campaign

To do SMS marketing, you have to hire a bulk messaging provider. They'll send out the messages for you cheaply and also track your results. The results are extremely important because they'll help you perfect your campaign.

At first, do some testing to see what works best. For example, try sending out messages at different times of the day or on different days of the week to see what gets the best response. The statistics will tell you how many people opened the message and you can track sales. This will tell you how to refine your campaign.

SMS marketing is a great way for offline businesses to get new customers and retain the old ones. Now that everybody's going mobile with their smartphones, it's an even better way to keep in touch and make sales.

The Impact of SMS on the Mobile Market

SMS, or text message marketing, is basically the same as email marketing but with one key difference – you're marketing to mobile devices instead of PCs. You send your customers text messages on their phones with offers, deals, coupons and news they can use.

SMS has been around for quite a few years and even with all the advances in smartphones and mobile marketing, it's still the most effective way to reach your audience.

A Higher Response Rate

Do people like being marketed to on their phones? It's tough to say from surveys. Whenever a marketing firm asks, they get mixed responses. Some people absolutely love it and take advantage of every deal offered. Others see it as an annoying invasion of privacy and prefer to get messages to their email inbox.



The stats, though, paint a totally different picture. Response rate with mobiles is overwhelmingly higher than that of email. Conversion rates are everything from 10% to 60%, which blows email marketing away. Response is also quick, with almost all text messages being opened within the first 15 seconds of receiving them.

Why the great response? It's because people are always carrying their phones on them. They don't log in once a day and have to battle spam and junk mail to get to your message. It also feels more personal to get messages from the brands you love straight to your phone.

Location-Based Services for Even Higher Response Rate



You get an even higher response rate with location-based marketing. This means using the device's built-in GPS capabilities to make offers. When your customer enters a certain 'zone' defined by you, they get a message offering them a deal. You can tie in your mobile marketing with deals at offline stores.

This works so well because it's just what your customer's looking for at just the right time. In other words, it's a marketer's dream come true. They're looking for a place to buy shoes and the minute they step into the mall, they get a message from

you offering the deal they were hoping for.

SMS Is King of the Heap

We now market to mobile phones that have Internet browsers using Facebook, applications, games, and all the other capabilities the device has to offer. But statistics show that SMS still gets the best results. According to a survey by YouGov and SocialMediadd, 77% of the smartphone users they asked said they preferred SMS even when other marketing avenues were available.

This is probably because it's so simple and people are used to it. It's also a strategy marketers have used for years, so it's a well-worn path, whereas these other methods are still largely uncharted territory.

Why Not SMS?

SMS marketing is cheap and easy compared to other methods. It's something any type of business can use to its advantage. In the same study mentioned above, SocialMediadd reported that only 1 out of 100 of its clients use SMS, where 90% only use email marketing. Why not go where the conversions are higher?

How to Boost Sales with Text Message Marketing

Surveys say that SMS marketing is still a highly effective way to reach your customers and boost your profits. With all the new advances in mobile technology that can engage your customers, a simple 160-character text message still does the trick best. Amazingly, lots of businesses haven't caught on to this easy, cost-effective marketing method.

Any type of business can use text message marketing to boost sales. Here are some of the best practices on how to market effectively with text messages.

Not Too Much, Not Too Little



If you send too many promotional messages, it feels like spam and they'll tune you out. If you don't send enough, your customers forget about you. You have to strike the perfect balance so that you stay on their radar, your offers are timely, and you don't drive them crazy with six messages a day.

What's the perfect balance? It all depends on your market and the offers you're making. In other words, there's no easy answer. However, you can discover this perfect balance by experimenting. If your SMS provider allows you to, segment your list and send identical messages at different frequencies. This is called split-testing and the response from your market will show you how much is just enough.

Experiment with Times of Day

A recent study says that 97% of text message recipients open the message within the first 15 minutes. The rest open within the next hour. People don't bother with yesterday's text messages. Since you're marketing straight to their phones, the time element is critical.

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There are good times and bad times. This goes for times of day as well as days of the week.

Again, the right time all depends on your market and their preferences, and the best way to discover it is to experiment. Send messages at different times of day and segment your list if you can to test it. You'll see a pattern and you can use this data to make the most of your messages.

Set Yourself Apart

Chances are, your customers are signed up on several lists where they're getting SMS messages from several companies. You can really enhance your mobile marketing campaign by offering something unique the others aren't giving them. This takes some creativity, but an easy way to get ideas is to sign up for a few of your competitors' lists. See what types of offers they're sending and figure out a way to make yours different. You don't need to one-up them; just make yours stand out by filling a gap in the market.



Know Your Market

In one important way, text message marketing is no different from any other kind of marketing. You've got to know your customers and the kind of deals they want. No matter how you fine-tune your marketing strategy, it's the strength of your offers that's going to get them to pay attention.

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If you offer exactly what your customers are looking for, your text message marketing campaign can convert at 50% or higher. Study the demographics of your target market and figure out what they're looking for. Then, give the people what they want!

How To "Marry" Mobile Coupons and SMS/Text Messages in Your Business



Here's something that can really help your business get the word out and cut costs – mobile coupons. These aren't coupons that you put in the local paper. They're paperless coupons that folks can use with their smartphones. It's a smarter way to offer discounts on your products or services.

A great way to offer mobile coupons is through SMS (short message service) or 'text message' marketing. This means marketing to your customers through their cell phones rather than their PC email.

SMS marketing is wonderful because people have their cell phones on them always, and this means that marketing to cell phones gives you a much higher open rate. Offering coupons this way allows you to save considerably on printing and advertising costs.

Bulk Messaging Services

It would be really tough to save thousands of emails on your phone and send them all messages, not to mention astronomically expensive. For SMS marketing, businesses use a bulk messaging service. This is a service that handles your messages for you. For a small fee, they'll send your message to thousands or even tens of thousands of subscribers.

Growing Your List

Once you're set up with a bulk message provider, you'll want to gather a list of names. Tell your customers and everybody online who sees your site or social media profile that you're offering special deals to subscribers only. If you want to get subscribers fast, give them an incentive for signing up like a freebie or a discount on your services.

The way that most bulk messaging services work, you give your customers a short code. This is a short phone number (usually 5 digits) that they call and they're instantly signed up. You can also use QR codes, which are the modern-day version of bar codes, which they can scan on their phones and be instantly subscribed.

It's really important to make sure everyone on your list has subscribed voluntarily. Don't buy names from someone else or send messages to anyone who didn't opt in. That's spamming and in many places it's illegal.

Coupons You Don't Have to Clip

There are lots of services online that will make your coupons for you. You sign up with them, enter the details of your offer, and then review the coupon before you download it. Some of these services will not only make the coupons for you but also monitor your statistics to let you know how your mobile coupon campaign is doing.

More people are going mobile, so this is a great way to get them to come to your business. One of the nice things about mobile coupons is also that they don't waste any paper, which means it's also nice for the environment.

Marrying SMS and mobile coupons to your offline business creates a great strategy to advertise your services that's cheap, easy and environmentally friendly.



SMS Marketing – Tips and Best Practices

Even with smartphones and all the nifty things they can do, SMS marketing (also known as text message marketing) is still the most effective way to market to mobiles. It's cheap, easy, and effective for any type of business.

SMS has been around for a long time and marketers have developed guaranteed strategies that work. Here are some tips on making the most of your text message marketing campaign.

Send Coupons

Marketing surveys show that people love getting coupons from their favorite businesses. A coupon can simply be a text message with a code they can use to get the deal. Mixing coupons they can instantly use with other deals and offers is a great way to give your customers what they want and get them into your store.

Call It a Club

Lots of people sign up for lists and get emails sent to their inbox. One little twist you can put on your campaign is to call it an exclusive membership club rather than an email list. This makes it sound cooler and you're not stretching the truth at all – it *is* a membership club full of special deals.



Mix up Your News and Offers

Although you're primarily using your list to offer deals and promotions, it's nice to mix your messages with news, updates, and other content. Give them tips and 'how to' information related to your business. This shows that you're not just selling to them but also a trusted source of information.

