



Text Message Best Practices

Text messages are different from emails, advertisements, websites, and social media posts. Customers typically read text messages quickly. As a result, effective text messages are often simple, direct, and easy to understand.

Understanding how to structure and write text messages can help businesses communicate more effectively and create stronger results.

1. Communicate the Essentials

Text messages provide limited space to communicate an opportunity.

As a result, businesses should focus on the information customers need most.

Effective text messages typically answer three questions:

- What is the opportunity?
- Why should I care?
- What should I do next?

Examples:

Less Effective:

"Hello everyone. We hope you are having a great week. We wanted to let you know that we are running a promotion this weekend and hope you will stop by."

More Effective:

"Weekend Sale: Save 20% through Sunday."

The goal is not to include more information.

The goal is to communicate the most important information as efficiently as possible.

Why This Matters

Customers should quickly understand the opportunity and the next step.

2. Lead With the Offer

Many businesses make the mistake of building up to the offer.

In most cases, the offer is the reason the customer is reading the message.

Examples:

Less Effective:

"We wanted to share some exciting news with everyone..."

More Effective:

"Early Access: Shop our new collection before it becomes available to the public."

Lead with the information customers care about most.

7. Choose SMS or MMS Intentionally

SMS and MMS are both valuable communication tools, but they are not always interchangeable.

The decision should be based on whether an image improves the customer's understanding of the opportunity.

In many cases, text alone is sufficient.

Examples:

- Appointment reminders
- Event announcements
- Service promotions
- Limited-time offers
- Scheduling opportunities

However, some opportunities benefit from visual communication.

Examples:

- A boutique showcasing a new collection
- A restaurant featuring a seasonal menu item
- A realtor promoting a property listing
- A landscaper highlighting a completed project
- A furniture store announcing new inventory

In these situations, seeing the opportunity may be just as important as reading about it.

Businesses should also consider that MMS messages typically cost more than standard SMS messages.

The goal is not to use images whenever possible.

The goal is to use images when they meaningfully improve communication.

Why This Matters

Every campaign involves decisions about cost, clarity, and effectiveness.

The most effective format is not always the one with the most features.

It is the one that communicates the opportunity most effectively.

3. Edit Ruthlessly

One of the most effective ways to improve a text message is to remove unnecessary words.

Businesses often add introductions, explanations, and extra details that do not help customers understand the opportunity or take action.

Examples:

Before:

"We wanted to let everyone know that we are now accepting appointments for our fall maintenance program and encourage customers to reserve their spot before availability becomes limited."

After:

"Fall Maintenance Appointments Now Available. Reserve Your Spot: [link]"

Before:

"We are excited to announce that our new collection has officially arrived and is now available for purchase."

After:

"New Collection Now Available. Shop Here: [link]"

In many cases, removing unnecessary words makes a message easier to read and easier to understand.

Message length can also affect delivery costs. Longer messages may be divided into multiple message segments, increasing the cost of a campaign.

While businesses should never sacrifice clarity simply to reduce character count, unnecessary words can make messages longer and more expensive without improving communication.

Why This Matters

Text messages have limited space and limited attention.

Every word should help the customer understand the opportunity or take action.

4. Focus on One Primary Message

Many ineffective text messages try to accomplish too much.

A single message may contain multiple offers, multiple announcements, and multiple calls to action.

When customers are presented with too many choices, the message can become more difficult to understand.

Examples:

Less Effective:

"Summer Sale This Weekend! New Product Launch! Referral Program Available! Follow Us on Social Media!"

More Effective:

"Summer Sale: Save 20% Through Sunday. Shop Here: [link]"

Less Effective:

"Appointments Available, New Services Added, Referral Program Launching Soon, and Don't Forget About Our Membership Program."

More Effective:

"Now Booking August Appointments. Reserve Your Spot: [link]"

Each message should have a primary objective.

If everything feels important, customers may struggle to determine what matters most.

Why This Matters

Customers should not have to decide which part of a message deserves their attention.

The message should make that decision for them.

5. Make the Next Step Obvious

A customer may understand the offer and still fail to take action.

Often, the reason is simple: the next step is unclear.

Effective text messages tell customers exactly what to do next.

Examples:

Less Effective:

"Let us know if you're interested."

More Effective:

"Schedule Your Appointment: [link]"

Less Effective:

"Visit our website for more information."

More Effective:

"Shop the Collection: [link]"

Less Effective:

"We still have openings available."

More Effective:

"Reserve Your Spot Here: [link]"

Customers should not have to guess how to respond.

The next step should be simple, specific, and easy to complete.

Why This Matters

The easier it is for customers to take action, the more likely they are to do so.

Effective text messages reduce friction by making the next step obvious.

6. Reduce Friction Whenever Possible

Customers are more likely to take action when the process feels simple.

Every additional step, instruction, or decision can reduce the likelihood of a response.

Effective text messages make it easy for customers to act.

Examples:

Less Effective:

"Visit our website, navigate to the appointments page, and submit a request form."

More Effective:

"Schedule Your Appointment: [link]"

Less Effective:

"Learn more about our available services on our website."

More Effective:

"View Available Services: [link]"

Less Effective:

"Contact our office if you would like additional information."

More Effective:

"Request Information Here: [link]"

The goal is to remove unnecessary obstacles between the customer and the desired action.

Why This Matters

Convenience influences customer behavior.

Businesses often create stronger results when customers can move from interest to action with as little friction as possible.

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In these situations, seeing the opportunity may be just as important as reading about it.

Businesses should also consider that MMS messages cost twice as much as standard SMS messages.

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Why This Matters

Every campaign involves decisions about cost, clarity, and effectiveness.

The most effective format is not always the one with the most features.

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TIP

Before sending a message, remove any words that do not help the customer understand the opportunity or take action.

COMMON MISTAKE

Trying to communicate too much in a single message.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Effective text messages help customers quickly understand:

- The opportunity
- The value
- The next step