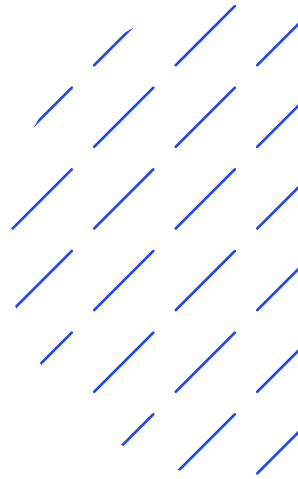


The Ultimate Guide to SMS Marketing



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What is SMS Marketing?

With 3.8 billion smartphone users across the planet and 95% of texts being opened within 3 min, it's easy to see that text has taken over. And local businesses have picked up on it.

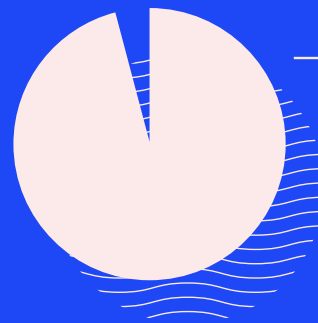
SMS marketing is the practice of using text messages to convert leads and keep customers engaged. As a rule of thumb, text messages are usually 160 characters or less and require prior permission from your customers to send.

These text messages can include a number of multimedia elements such as pictures, videos, GIFs, and links, and senders must abide by their country's rules and regulations, as well as those of the recipient.

Local businesses sometimes worry that SMS marketing software is too complicated to implement or that promotions can frustrate customers and damage their

relationships with them. However, with the right practices and information, SMS marketing can be a huge asset and revenue driver.

Done *correctly*, SMS marketing can actually strengthen relationships by inviting responses. With well-timed messages and relevant content, it feels more intimate than other marketing messages and encourages continued engagement in a way only text can. The key is knowing how to message the right way.



95%

of texts are opened
within 3 minutes.



Bulk messaging vs. SMS marketing

Bulk messaging is the distribution of large numbers of text messages for delivery to mobile phones. It often takes the form of one-way blasts and has traditionally been a less personal form of communication. And if it's intended as marketing, it may not be compliant by local regulations if individuals haven't opted in to receive the messages. SMS marketing, on the other hand, involves sending personalized promotional messages for marketing purposes via text message. It centers around taking an individual approach to each customer.

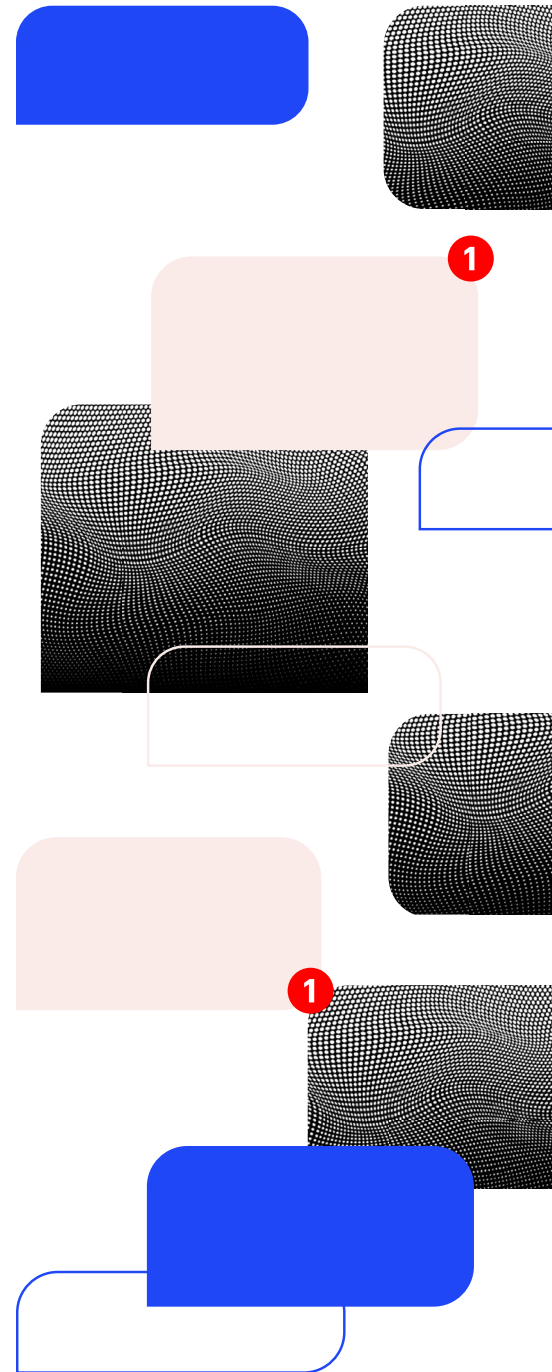
In this guide, we will be focusing on SMS marketing. This will include how to make mass text messages into valuable, personalized communications, encouraging responses and continued conversation.

Transactional text messages vs. promotional text messages

Transactional messages are operational in nature and sent in response to a customer's interaction with your business or service. They may include payment invoices, shipping notifications, and response to support texts initiated by the customer. For example, you might receive delivery notifications from your driver through SMS if you order dinner through an app. These messages pertain specifically to your order's status and are part of the transaction.

Promotional messages communicate promotions. The most obvious example of these are texts that include coupon codes, specials, or discounts. But promotional messages might also include business updates that aren't directly related to a customer's interaction with your business—for example, an announcement about a new location, extended hours, or an upcoming customer event.

You can create SMS marketing campaigns for all of these types of promotional messages. And adhering to promotional best practices is a good decision when in doubt about the nature of your message.



Glossary

SMS marketing has its own set of terms and phrases that are commonly used and easy to understand. In case you are new to this type of marketing, here is a list of some general terms and definitions to help you get started.

SHORT MESSAGE SERVICE (SMS) | Text without media.

MULTI MESSAGING SERVICE (MMS) | Text messages that include pictures, videos, GIFs, links, etc.

SMS KEYWORD | Words or phrases customers text your business to opt-in to text marketing messages from your brand (e.g. “Subscribe”).

CALL TO ACTION (CTA) | The desired action you want your target audience to take after receiving a marketing message; should clearly articulate the next step: reply back, shop our inventory, stop by, give us a call, etc.

CLICK THROUGH RATE (CTR) | Percentage of recipients who click on a link within a text marketing message.

CONVERSION RATE | Percentage of SMS marketing recipients who respond to the CTA.

OPT-IN | (vb) Giving express consent for a business or entity to text you (n) A customer who has opted in.

OPT-OUT RATE/UNSUBSCRIBER RATE | Percentage of subscribers who opt-out of receiving texts from your business.

TELEPHONE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT (TCPA) | A US federal law regulating certain types of phone calls and text messages; other countries often have similar regulations.

QUICK RESPONSE CODE (QR CODE) | An image that users can scan with their mobile cameras that can direct them to your SMS marketing sign-up page. Quick response codes can be printed or displayed digitally, making them ideal for gathering opt-ins in-store, online, or face-to-face.

TEXTING SERVICE SOFTWARE | A messaging platform that typically allows you to manage campaigns, conversations, and opt-ins.

SHORT CODE | A standard 5-6 digit number used to send MMS or SMS messages. Short codes are typically more expensive than long codes (\$500+ per month), take longer to procure, and are typically used for one-way bulk texting.

LONG CODE | A standard 10 digit number used to send SMS and MMS messages or place calls. Long codes are advantageous in SMS marketing because messages look like they are coming from a person and not from an automated system.

PERSONALIZATION VARIABLE | Dynamic fields that pull specific information into SMS marketing messages to tailor them to each contact. Examples include the contact’s first name or the location name where the offer is made available.

With the right tools, SMS marketing can be hugely rewarding for businesses of any type and size. Read on to learn best practices, how to message compliantly, and how to craft the type of copy that gets a response.

Why SMS marketing?

As a consumer yourself, you're aware of just how much consumers are inundated with marketing materials every day. This has consequences, which include desensitization. Research has shown that consumers [aren't as receptive](#) to traditional marketing methods as they used to be.

Local businesses need new methods to contact customers in a way that's personal and provides real value to them. And with our catalyzed digital transformation, consumers expect a modern customer experience with communication that meets them where they are. They expect convenience, personalization, and real connection. That's where text messaging comes in.

Text messages have an open rate of up to [98%](#). On average, [95%](#) of messages are opened within 3 min.

● **Text has a [209% higher response rate](#) than phone, email, or Facebook**

● **[65.6% of consumers](#) think texting makes working with a local business more convenient**

● **Consumers are [twice as likely \(1.8x\)](#) to prefer texting to any other communication method**

● **[40.5% of consumers](#) say they are likely to switch to a different business because they offer text messaging to communicate**

● **[75% of consumers](#) are OK with receiving SMS messages from brands (after they've opted in)**

● **Consumers redeem SMS-delivered coupons [10 times more](#) than other types of coupons**



Text can be your most effective marketing option

You may notice that the majority of consumers still interact with businesses through channels such as phone call or email. That's true. But it's only because they think that's how local businesses are set up to interact. Nearly [67%](#) actually think being able to text businesses would increase convenience.

Think about it: if you're still playing phone tag or emailing, but 98% of your customers check every text the same day you send it, there's a huge opportunity to get ahead by text messaging that far surpasses the potential of any other medium.

The fact of the matter is that local businesses are uniquely positioned to win with SMS marketing. According to the [2021 Local Business Messaging Trends](#) report, local businesses are situated to reach their consumers' text message inboxes more often than major chains and ecommerce players.

Consumers are [21%](#) more likely to opt-in to local businesses' text promotions over major chain or big-box

retailers. And they're [45% more likely](#) to opt-in over online or ecommerce businesses.

Local businesses have an implied trust with consumers that they can use to collect opt-ins and then strengthen with well-timed, personalized promotions. This can lead to higher loyalty, more business, and more revenue.

SMS marketing is also one of the most cost-effective campaigns you can run as a local business. Compared to other digital campaigns, SMS campaigns are extremely low-cost to run, allowing you to engage new leads and increase customer lifetime value at very little cost. Recent data also shows that providing options such as text [directly increases](#) a local business's revenue.

SMS marketing vs. email marketing

Like email campaigning, SMS marketing uses a list of contacts you have created, is trackable, and provides valuable insights into customer behavior. But unlike email campaigning, it reaches customers where they want to be reached instantly.

While the average open rate for emails is [18%](#), engagement is extremely low. On average, email only sees a click-through rate of [2.6%](#). With up to a 98% open rate, text continuously blows email out of the water.

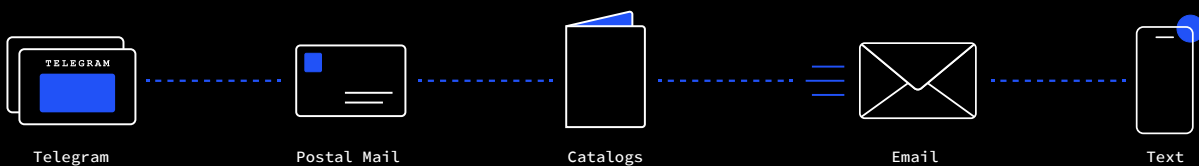
The final reason SMS marketing should be your top marketing choice? It's the future. And it's make or break.

[40.5% of customers](#) report being "likely" or "very likely" to switch to a different business because they offer text messaging to communicate. In terms of communication evolution, people have always gravitated toward two key components—convenience and speed. With these factors in mind, messaging has become the inevitable next step when it comes to connecting with your customers.

	Email	SMS Marketing
Average open rate	18%	98%
Average click through rate	2.6%	19%
Length of content	50-125 words	160 characters
Consumer preferred frequency	Once a week	Once a week

The evolution of customer communication

In a close look at how customer communication has evolved, messaging isn't just a trend—it's imminent.



Growing Your Opt-in List

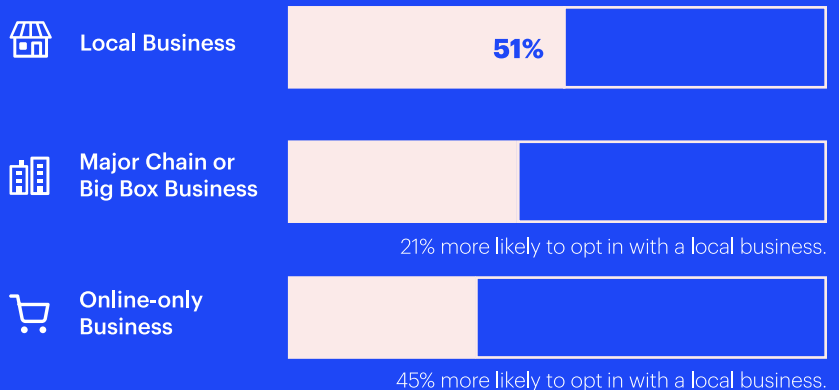


The majority of local businesses find maximizing their marketable SMS list to be the hardest part of SMS marketing. Why? Many organizations are not collecting phone numbers, forgetting to collect explicit consent, or failing to maximize their opportunities to collect opt-ins.

However, local businesses have an unfair advantage. As we mentioned previously, consumers are 21% more likely to opt-in to local businesses' text promotions over major chain or big-box retailers. And they're 45% more likely to opt-in over online or ecommerce businesses.

So how do you turn interactions into opt-ins? The key is to integrate opt-in entry points at **every possible step** of the customer journey. There are a number of touchpoints along your customer journey where collecting an opt-in is natural, and even expected. If you take advantage of them, the list will build itself.

"I'm likely or very likely to opt-in to SMS promotions from..."



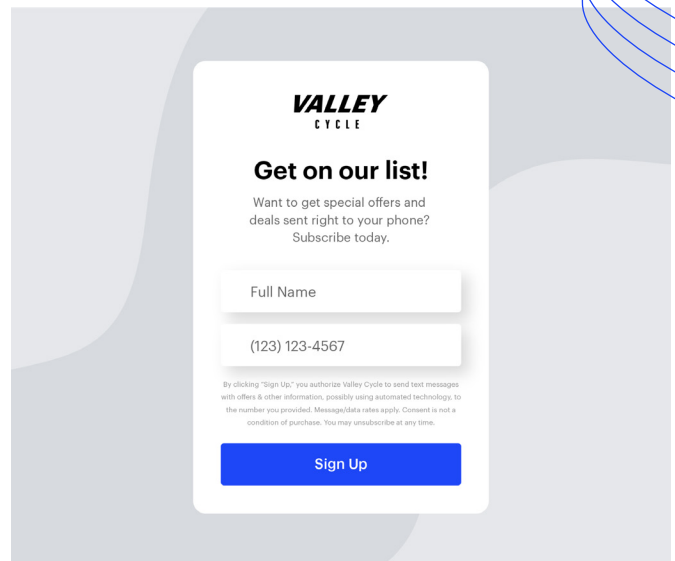
Website touchpoints

Your website is often the first touchpoint to capture a prospect’s attention. It’s also a great way to collect opt-ins from people who haven’t transacted yet and can even serve as a mechanism to convert leads into customers.

01. Online sign-up pages and forms

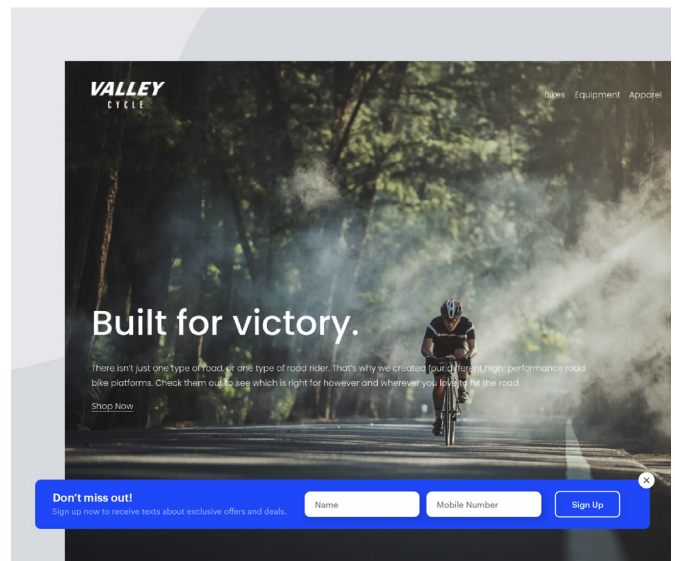
This collection type involves creating landing pages that are dedicated to collecting opt-ins. With this touchpoint, location-specific pages can be generated and shared via URL or QR code.

Remember that not all sign-up pages are created equal. Effective pages provide fields to collect names and phone numbers, use clear legal language to communicate that they’re collecting information for SMS marketing purposes, and should be customized to fit your company’s brand.



02. Website banners, pop-ups, and prompts

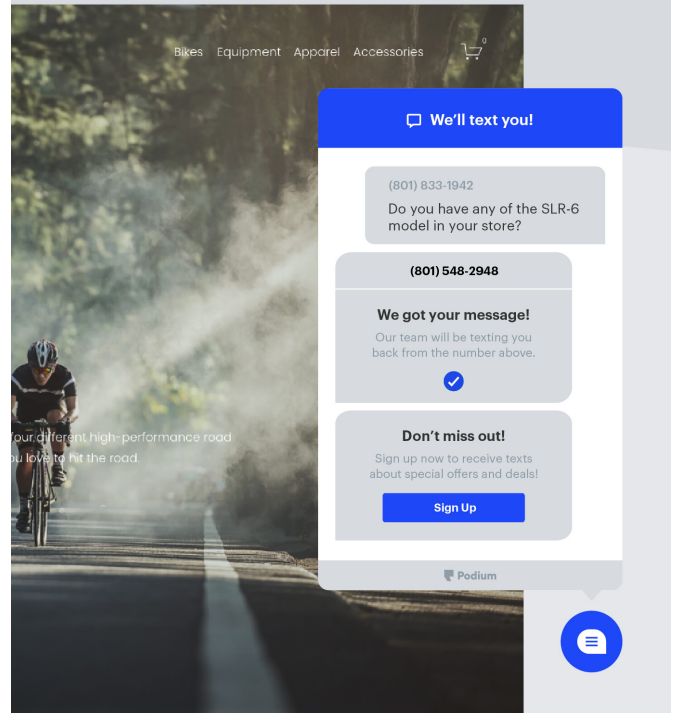
With this collection type, customers opt-in by filling out a banner pop-up that appears on your webpage after a specific time delay.



03. Website chat

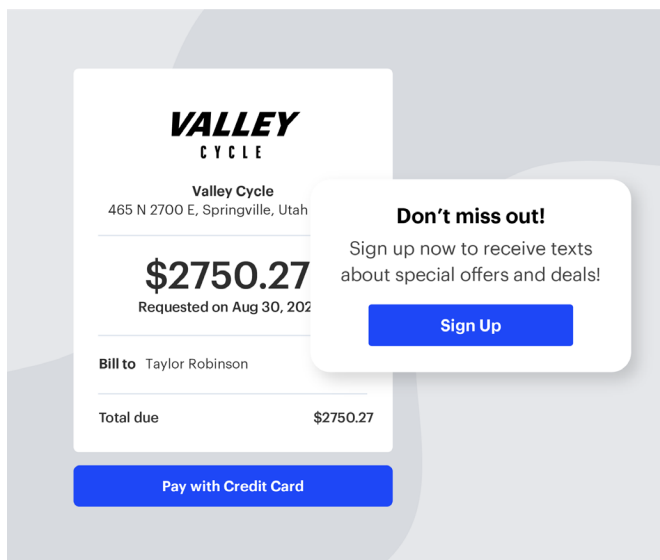
Website chats are tools where website visitors can do things like ask questions, set appointments, and check for availability. They're also opt-in wellsprings.

You can easily leverage your website chat to include an opt-in touchpoint whenever someone leaves an inquiry. This might involve using an embedded lead form or "Contact us" form (with the proper legal consent).



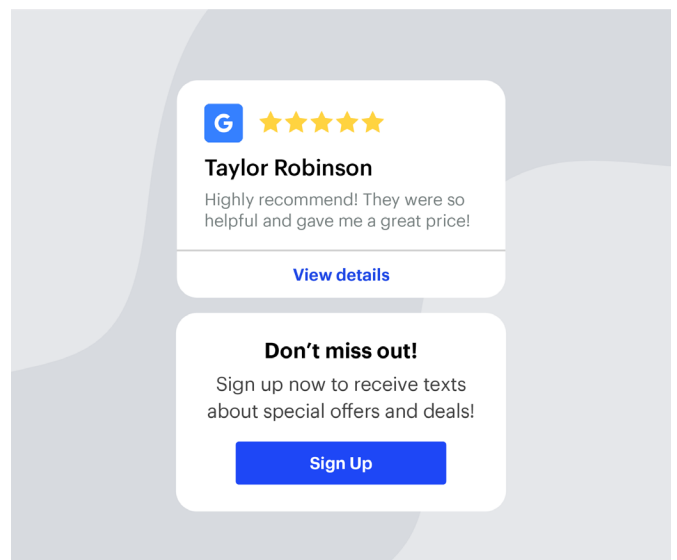
04. Point of sale or transaction

Collecting opt-ins at the point of sale can be a game-changer if you make it easy, like giving the option after someone transacts through an SMS invoice. You might even consider integrating an opt-in point within a check-out cart or a POS system that can collect it.



05. Review

This is the opt-in touchpoint that closes the loop. If you're already leveraging a reputation management solution like Podium Reviews, you can capture the opt-in after a review is sent. People who leave favorable reviews are probably more likely to want to receive future promotions.





Hybrid touchpoints

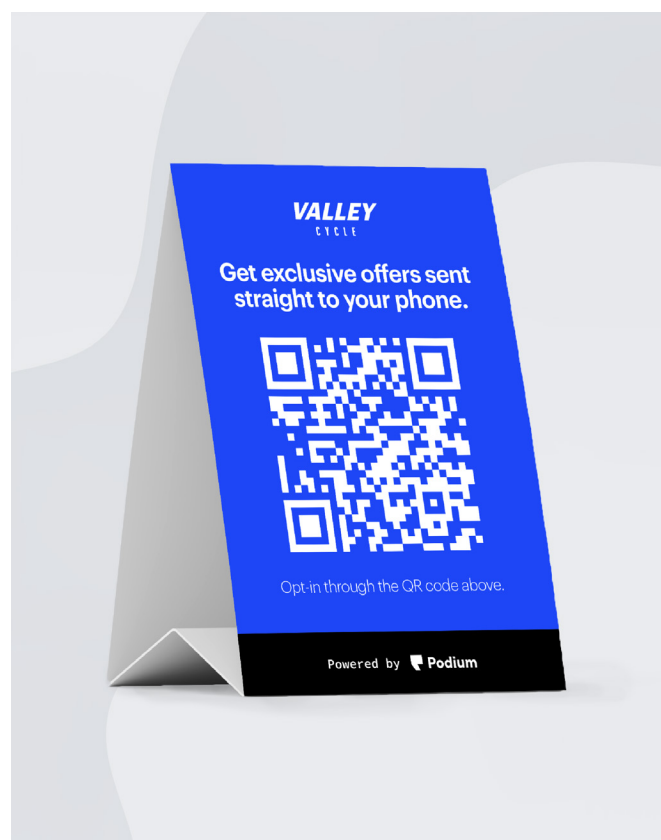
These days, local businesses can conduct their business in-store, online, or face-to-face—even some combination of all three.

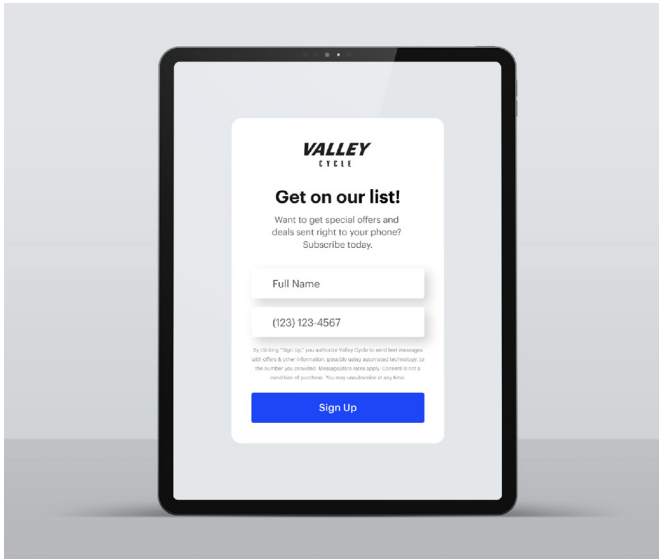
With the right tools, you can gather opt-ins wherever and however you operate. With that in mind, here's a list of out-of-the-box ways you can present your sign-up forms to build your list.

01. URL & QR code

Once you've set up an online sign-up form, you can share it via URL or QR code.

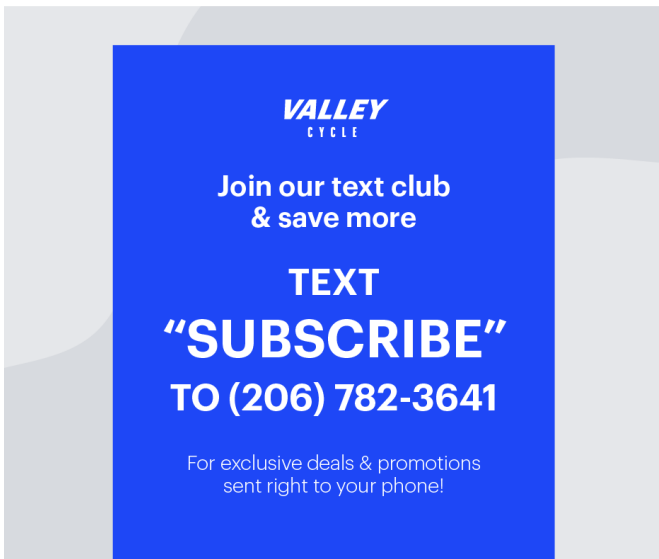
- URLs are a great way to link prospects and customers directly to your sign-up form. They're particularly useful for sharing over social media and converting an existing email marketing list.
- QR codes are a great way to present your sign-up forms on printed (wall signs or table tents) and digital signage (televisions/monitors/tablets that are present in store). You can also present them via product packaging, business cards, stickers, and cash register stands or physical check out locations. With this method, all your customers have to do is scan the QR code with their smartphone camera and get redirected to your opt-in sign up form.





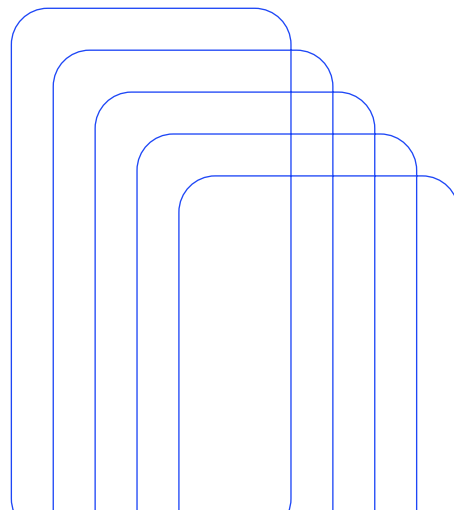
02. Sign-up/opt-in station

An online sign-up form that can be displayed on a tablet, smartphone, computer, or laptop is a great way to collect opt-ins face-to-face. Many businesses find it effective at events, trade shows, and pop-ups. Particularly effective use cases might include a home services business that conducts services at customers' homes or retail stores with lots of foot traffic.



03. Text-to-join "keyword"

Another effective method for collecting opt-ins from prospects and customers is establishing a textable "keyword." This form of opt-in doesn't rely on having an online sign-up page to be set up. But it requires a business to offer a keyword like "Subscribe," which can then be texted to a business's number to opt-in. A textable keyword—much like a QR code—can be printed or displayed digitally alongside the appropriate consent language.



Existing channels

Don't forget—leveraging existing marketing channels to cast a wider net can be an SMS opt-in acquisition strategy gold mine. If you can take advantage of your current marketing channels to reach consumers, you can gather more opt-ins by using the communication strategies customers are already used to.

Email

Many organizations are already doing email marketing and have large email marketing lists. Enter: large opportunity. You can convert your email marketing contacts into SMS marketing opt-ins by sending an email blast prompting people to opt-in to promotional texts. Typically, this is facilitated by a URL link to the online sign-up page, which can live in either the email copy or in your signature.

Social media

Facebook and Instagram are other effective avenues to socialize an online sign-up form. Create a social post with a URL, QR code, or keyword to capture opt-ins through those channels.

Mailers

Who said snail mail and technology were mutually exclusive? Add a QR code graphic or printed keyword to your mailers to engage even your most remote customers.



Hello [Name],

At [Company], we love providing amazing service. That's why we're implementing a new feature to our system that allows us to send you messages that keep you up to date on new promotions and special offers right to your phone!

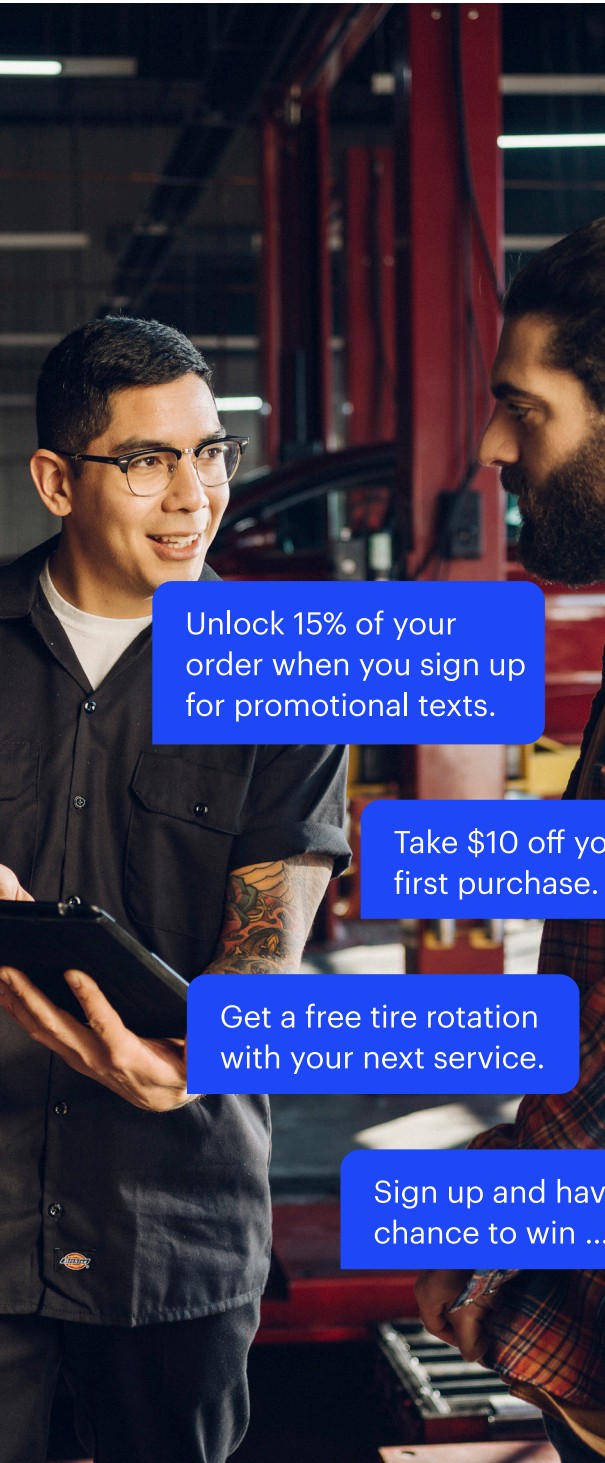
Don't miss out! Click here to opt-in to text message promotions.

Hello [Name],

Thank you for your continued business. Never miss another special promotion! Click here to opt-in to exclusive text promos and save 10% on your next purchase!



TEXT
"SUBSCRIBE"
TO (206) 782-3641



Unlock 15% of your order when you sign up for promotional texts.

Take \$10 off your first purchase.

Get a free tire rotation with your next service.

Sign up and have a chance to win ...

Crafting opt-in sign up forms that convert

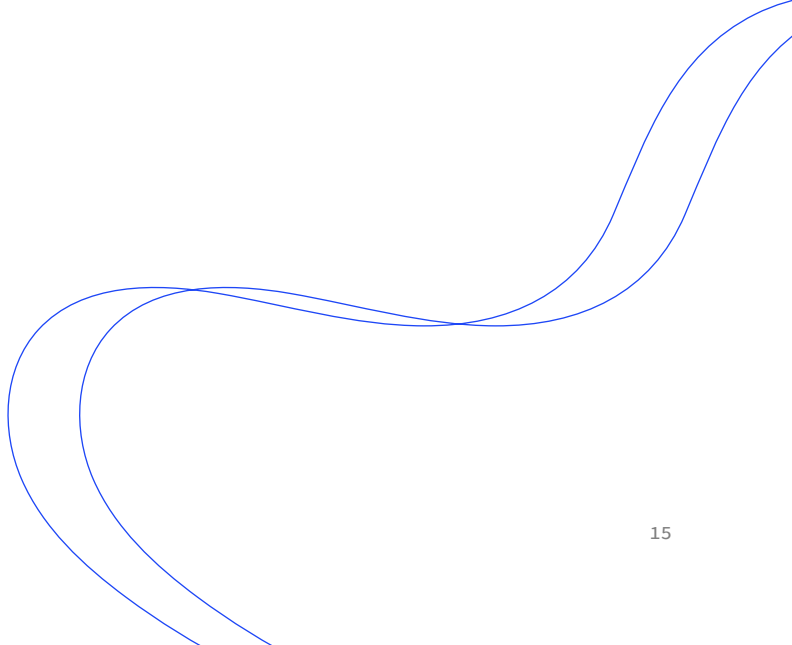
Now that we've covered touchpoints, it's time to optimize conversion from your sign-up forms. Many local businesses find they are able to collect more SMS opt-ins through offers and incentives. The goal is to make these sign-up forms as enticing as possible—providing value up-front in exchange for customers' permission to market to them.

01. Direct incentives

Giving direct incentives involves offering a specific discount or offer if consumers sign up for promotional texts.

02. Contests and giveaways

Contests and giveaways are also excellent ways to create value from the get-go and help customers feel like they're getting the better end of the deal.



Best practices

Before sending your first text, you need to be aware of a few things. Text is more [intimate](#)—even more invasive—than other forms of communication. Text messages appear directly on a person’s phone whether they’re at home, work, asleep, awake, on a date with friends, or sharing a personal moment with family. Because of this, as well as certain applicable regulations, local businesses have an obligation to use messaging ethically, and see better results when they do.

First, some myth busting:

- *SMS marketing always gets businesses in trouble. **False.***
- *SMS marketing laws are too complicated to understand. **False.***
- *SMS marketing is spam. **False.***

How do I message compliantly?

[SMS marketing](#) in a compliant way comes down to being transparent and only messaging people who have “opted-in,” that is, provided prior express consent to the sender. Noncompliance qualifies as spamming, which is poor practice and carries repercussions.

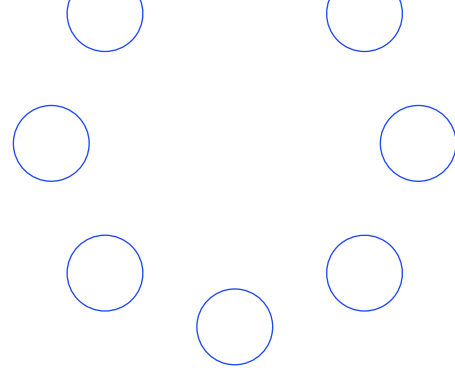
[59% of consumers have been texted by a business that they did not give permission to.](#)

Not only does spamming severely damage customer relationships and trust, but it can also result in hefty fines. Campaigns above a [3% unsubscribe rate](#) also put your textable phone number at risk with carriers. It’s crucial that

you only message contacts who have opted-in to receive promotional messages from your business.

[61% of consumers would unsubscribe from promotional messages from a local business if they received messages they didn’t recall signing up for.](#)

SMS marketing in a compliant way isn’t complicated—you just need to know what to watch out for and put your customers first. Rules and regulations vary according to the specific laws set forth by each state, country or region of the world.



What are the rules?

United States

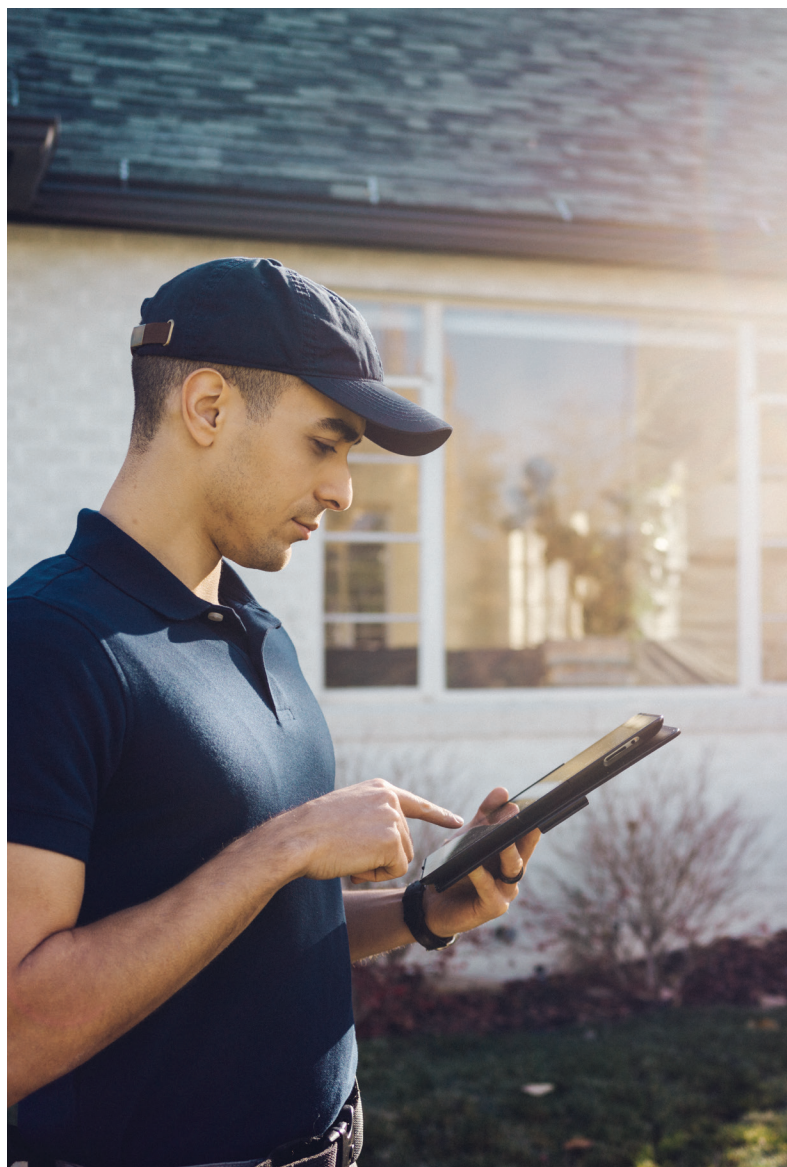
In the United States, compliance involves abiding by the rules set out by the Telephone Consumer Protection Act and other similar regulations. The Telephone Consumer Protection Act, or [TCPA](#), was put in place to protect customers from spam, including unwanted calls and texts.

It's important to remember that laws differ by location and are often changing. How you use a tool or where you're using it can have implications on the laws and regulations that apply. Because of this, you should always consult your own legal counsel.

Some best practices to keep in mind:

- Make sure you have proper consent from each recipient of the message
- Mention your business's name
- Alert the customer about possible messaging fees
- Include the option to opt-out of all future texts
- Honor those opt outs

You can find more guidance on TCPA [here](#).



Creating Great Text Campaigns

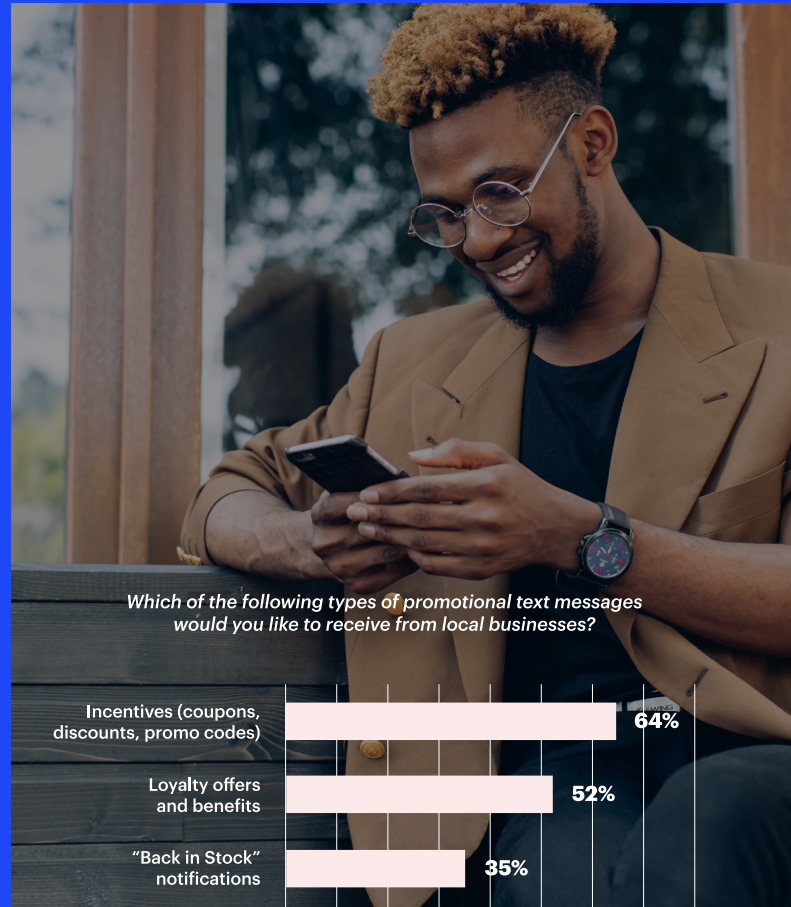
When it comes to SMS marketing, generalized, one-way mass texts won't cut it. Your texts should be so personalized, conversational, and valuable that your customers want to respond.

So what makes a compelling text? According to our research, your customers want interactive texts sent at relevant times with content specifically tailored to their history with you.

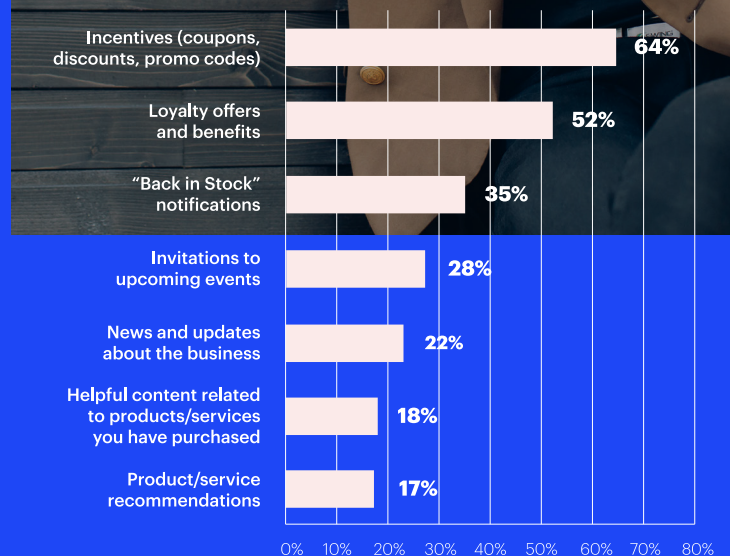
Of the types of promotional messaging content you can send, consumers most want messages with [incentives](#), [loyalty offers](#), and [updates on inventory](#).

And when it comes to messaging media, consumers are loud and clear. Did you know that [over half](#) of your consumers are more likely to engage with multimedia messages? To increase engagement, make your messages interactive by keeping the links, GIFs, and pics (even emojis!) rolling. 🤓👉👉❤️👉👉

[41% of consumers](#) are more likely to engage with text messages that include images, GIFs or videos.



Which of the following types of promotional text messages would you like to receive from local businesses?

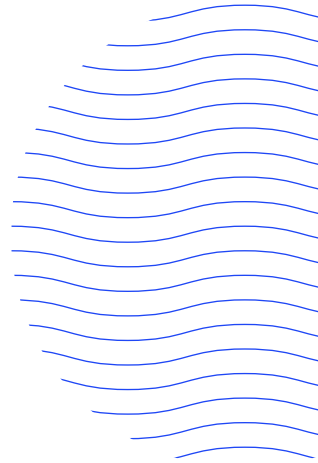


[52% of consumers](#) are more likely to engage with messages that include a link to more information online.

Best practices

Let's get down to brass tacks. As a local business, you want to use SMS marketing to engage new customers, increase customer lifetime value, and drive more revenue. You **don't** want to run afoul of applicable laws and regulations and damage relationships.

The real goal is to give your texts the feel and value of one-to-one interactions. There are a few specific practices you can keep in mind to achieve this.



Do

✔ Address customers by name.

Just because it's not 1:1 doesn't mean it shouldn't sound like it. Use your messaging system to address each customer by name. As we mentioned, using a customer's name in business conversation is crucial for human sound and feel.

✔ Identify yourself and your business.

Identifying the sender of your promotions makes your messages feel authentic and humanlike. In fact, [50% of consumers](#) are more likely to respond to a text message from a business if they introduce themselves.

✔ Use conversational language.

One of the biggest turn-offs with marketing messages today is that businesses sound like they're shouting, "BUY NOW!" "OFFER ENDS TODAY!" To appeal to your customers, keep messages light-hearted, short, and conversational—just like you're talking to a friend.

✔ Include a CTA.

If you miss the CTA, you miss the point of SMS marketing. Messages should include a direct call to action such as "reply back to message to get 10% off your next order!", "check out our new inventory!", "schedule an appointment!" or "stop by!".

✔ Drive urgency.

Nobody enjoys feeling as if they're about to miss out on a great opportunity. That's what makes driving urgency such a powerful tool to boost conversion. This can be done by communicating the duration of your promotion—how long an offer will last—or by creating scarcity, "only ten left in stock!".

Don't

✘ Use slang.

While slang (dang, freakin', lit) certainly increases casual feel, it risks unprofessionalism and misunderstandings with your customers. You should also avoid wordplay, superfluous words, and anything that could be misleading.

✘ Forget to identify yourself.

Figure out how to do this creatively with each successive message so it doesn't get old. You might try versions such as, "This is Stella at Oak & Table!" "We're so excited that you loved your Oak & Table dining set." "Hoping to see you at Oak & Table soon!"

✘ Send long messages.

Whenever possible, your messages should be 160 characters or less. Messages above 240 characters risk being split by carriers and sent out of order making your promotion unclear and confusing.

✘ Create friction.

Your goal should always be to reduce friction in your messages, or make it as easy as possible for a recipient to take action. If you send out an SMS campaign announcing a new product, link out to that product information page. If you want your customers to schedule an appointment, insert a link to the scheduler.

✘ Use long links.

Don't let your links eat up the valuable space in your messages. You can use third-party link shorteners or purchase an SMS marketing system that includes a native link shortener so customers can engage with you conveniently.



Common use cases

SMS marketing has a variety of use cases that can revolutionize the way you engage with your customers and drive revenue. Here are some of the most popular use cases and examples of how to use them in ways that convert.

01. Direct incentives

This use case includes coupons, deals, and offers to promote certain products or services. It's the most popular type of campaign SMS marketing.

Hi David, this is Maddy from Fremont Home Furnishings! Thanks for your continued business, take 20% off your next purchase with code SAVE20! Shop our selection: <https://c.podium.co/abc123>

02. Contests and giveaways

This use case is designed to generate interest for new products and services.

Hey Kayla! We have brand new inventory of the 2021 Ford Bronco, but they won't last for long! Text our showroom and we'll schedule you for a test drive!
—Brian, Ford of Shoreline

03. Events

Event promotions are intended to generate interest or drive traffic towards a physical or virtual event.

Hi Sarah, this is Doug from Pro Cycle Studio! Join tonight's webinar @ 6PM where we will have an open Q&A on our new line of commuter bikes. Here's the link to watch: <https://c.podium.co/abc123>

04. Seasonal

Seasonal promotions are promos associated with the changing seasons and can account for anything around anticipated problems, wants, actions, etc.

Spring is in the air, which means so are allergies! From itchy eyes, to coughing, and sneezing. Green Lake Urgent Care is here for you. Walk-in or check-in online: <https://c.podium.co/abc123>

05. Holiday

Holiday promos include promotions associated with a particular holiday or event like a birthday and often account for anticipated behaviors and purchases.

Hi Stacy—we are running low on our Black Friday inventory! Make sure to get your order in now to take advantage of these once a year prices! Shop selection: <https://c.podium.co/abc123>

06. Referral

Messages with this use case require individuals to refer someone to be eligible for a promotional offer.

Summer is around the corner, Alex! Let the light in and keep the heat out with window tint. We're offering \$50 off all tinting services when you refer a friend to LA Auto Salon. Reply to this text with any questions!

07. Reminders

Messages with this use case include notifications and alerts designed to remind customers of an upcoming service or appointment.

Hi Sam, this is Rick from Arty's Window & Gutter. Looked at the calendar and notices that you're due for a gutter cleaning. Let's find a time to get that taken care of. Here's a link to our schedule: <https://c.podium.co/abc123>

08. Educational

Texts of this category provide insights, tips, and advice on products and services.

Beauty Tip of the Week: With summer approaching, remember to incorporate a broad-spectrum sunscreen to your daily routine and prevent UVA & UVB rays from prematurely aging your skin. Worried it's too late? I'd be happy to get your free skin consultation booked today.
—Ashley at Pampered Day Spa

09. General business updates

These texts communicate important changes in business operations.

Hi there, Lin! Just wanted to send a quick update to let you know that we are now open every Mon – Sat from 10AM to 8PM. Have any questions? Reply to this text and we'll get back to you shortly.

10. Back in stock

These messages inform customers when their favorite products are back in store.

Hey Gina! All your favorite smoothie mixes are back in stock and going fast! Click the link to buy 12 for just \$22 today only!

8 great texts to send today

After all is said and done, what’s the fastest way to learn how to craft compelling SMS messages? Seeing the best of the best in action.

To that end, here are eight texts and threads we love and why we think they work particularly well.

01 Pinki Palm

Pinki Palm does a nice job including an expiration date, personalizing their message, and encouraging specific questions that lead to a transaction. Their textable payment link makes this conversation even more worthwhile for Sadie who can purchase and pay in the most convenient way possible!

Hi Sadie, hope you love your Pinki Palm sheets as much as we do! ❤️ Take 40% off your next set through Fri—on us. Text if you have questions about our inventory!

Do you still have the Kensington silk pillow set in blue?

Sure do—they’re going fast! Shall we send them your way?

Yes please!

Great! They’ll arrive Thursday. Here’s the link to pay!

 **Payment Request of \$45.00**
<https://pdm.pay.com/4573ah3>

Hi Jack! This is Aly with Kegan Insurance! Our webinar for your new home and auto policy will begin this evening at 6:00 MST. Use code 7221 for a chance to win 6 months free!

Sweet! Btw, when is my policy renewal?

October 2nd!

02 Kegan Insurance

Kegan Insurance masters human feel by telling Jack the specific employee who is texting him and offering relevant info along with a promo to encourage attendance. It’s clear they’ve established a reputation of responsiveness as Jack feels confident that he will receive a response to his individual question.

Belon Auto: Hi Sunny, it's been 2 months since your last oil change. Here's 20% off if you come in before this Friday, June 5th! Hope to see you soon!

Can I come in tomorrow afternoon?

Sure! Can we put you down for 2:30?

04

Sam's Cycling

Sam's Cycling addresses Rachel by name and identifies themselves immediately. They also take their anniversary as an opportunity to benefit Rachel and encourage conversation with "feel free to text any questions!" How can she resist responding? 🤔

Hey Rachel, it's Sam's Cycling. Celebrate our 8 year anniversary by taking 20% off your purchase. Visit <http://www.tc.pdm.com/123>. Feel free to text any questions!

Are the bikes included?

Sure are! Are you looking at one in particular?

FARMON TAX SERVICES: April 15th is almost here. Join us tonight for an info session on preparing your taxes as a new home buyer at our Main St. location. Show this message for a free drink.

Thx! Will you be doing this again?

Yes, we do free financial planning sessions every month. You can see the calendar on our website!

03

Belon Auto

Belon Auto does well sending a relevant promo at the right time, making this message a useful one for Sunny and encouraging an appointment. Better yet, Belon Auto has this promotion saved to send during slow weeks to boost traffic with a clear end date when it's most advantageous for them.

05

Farmon Tax Services

Farmon Tax leans into last-minute impulses well with this message, peaking interest with a relevant event and free drink. They do a nice job of engaging their client by sending her directly to their website! 🙌

Happy 4th, Cameron! We're offering \$40 off your next purchase when you refer a friend to LB Carpeting. Text any questions!

Sweet, can I refer my grandparents?

Of course, we'd love to have them!

07

Taf & Sons

This thread is the perfect example of sending the right promo at the right time. Taf & Sons anticipates their customers' needs for the upcoming winter season and sends a relevant promotion. By sending a link to pay, they secure the appointment and sale with Tyler. 🙌

Happy Birthday, Ryan! Please take 50% off your next perfume purchase at Boulio with the link below! (Offer ends 10/1)

 **Campaign Offer**
<https://pdm.offer.com/123>

06

LB Carpeting

LB Carpeting uses SMS marketing to employ an effective referral campaign, encouraging Cameron to respond with their inclusivity and sweet deal! 🍬

Hi Tyler, it's Taf & Sons. We're offering 20% off snow tires today through Saturday in our store! Are you interested?

You read my mind!
I need some bad!

Here's the link to pay for your tires today! Have a great day!

 **Payment Request of \$245.00**
<https://pdm.pay.com/4573ah3>

08

Boulio Beauty

Boulio does everything right here, accounting for Ryan's date of birthday and purchase history along with including a link and end date for the offer. With such a hefty discount that's relevant to her purchasing tendencies, Ryan is likely to click!

Increasing SMS Engagement

Another best practice involves segmenting your customer base—that is, grouping your customer records into lists that share an attribute or characteristic(s) that aligns well to specific targeted messages. Even a little segmentation can increase customer loyalty, decrease your opt-out rate, and significantly increase revenue.

According to recent research, segmented campaigns boast open rates 14% higher than non-segmented campaigns and 101% more clicks. They significantly lower bounce rates, unsubscribes, and reporting incidences.

Segmentation is also a crucial aspect of personalization. And there's nothing consumers are craving more than personalization. According to Forbes, 70% of millennials are frustrated with brands sending irrelevant emails, let alone text messages.

This frustration and desire for a personalized experience has serious ramifications, and *opportunity*, for local businesses. 80% of consumers are more likely to purchase from a brand who tailors their experiences for them. And 91% of consumers are more likely to patronize brands that provide offers and recommendations relevant to them.

It's really quite simple. If you want to keep your opt-ins happy and earn more business, you have to segment. And that starts with tracking key characteristics. With the right solutions in place, getting started doesn't have to be hard.



Behavioral vs. demographic

The purpose of segmentation is to create smaller lists of customers based on criteria you can easily document. There are [several different](#) customer segmentation models you can use, including:

- *Behavioral segmentation (tendencies and frequent actions, feature/product use)*
- *Demographic segmentation (age, gender, income)*
- *Geographic segmentation (country, state, city)*
- *Psychographic segmentation (personality, values, interests)*
- *Technographic segmentation (mobile vs. desktop use, apps)*

The variables you use depend on your business, the promotions you're running, and a number of other factors you probably know but just haven't thought through. But regardless of your industry, the characteristics you want to track usually fall into one of two buckets: behavioral or demographic.

Behavioral segmentation involves categorizing your customers according to their behavior. The most popular way to segment is according to purchase history. Perhaps you've noticed that customers who have spent in the past year are more likely to come into your jewelry store for a Mother's Day gift. Or that customers who come in on Labor Day are likely to make repeat purchases for Black Friday.

All of these can be used to your advantage in planning your campaigns. Other key behaviors to track include website history, customer journey, frequent actions, and product use.

Some common, high-impact examples of behavioral segmentation in campaigns might include using:

- *Purchase or review recency as an indicator of positive engagement with your brand*
- *Response to past sales as an indicator of interest in similar sales*
- *Type of item or service purchased as an indicator of interest in similar offerings*



Demographic segmentation is less subject to change and involves elements such as age, gender, and income. For example, it might be important to note that a certain group of patients are looking for denture packages over whitening packages. Or that your younger buyers are more likely to purchase from your Malibu boat collection than your Mastercraft.

If you have multiple locations, you always want to perform geographic segmentation as well. Consider which locations are performing best and what products consumers in each location gravitate toward.

Some common examples of useful demographic/ geographic segmentation in campaigns might include using:

- *Home location (e.g. zip code) to inform subscribers about upcoming events*
- *Weather events in a specific location to customize messages or offers*
- *Knowledge of whether the household has children to offer a family package*
- *Birthdate to share a special offer that feels personal*



Questions to get started

- What are my customer segmentation goals?
- Who are my best customers? What do they look like?
What are key characteristics of repeat customers?
- What specials or promotions do I expect would be more enticing to them?
- What was one of my customer’s most recent interactions with me?
- What was the nature of that interaction? (Did they come in store? Did they make a transaction? Did they leave a review? Was it positive or negative?)

Whatever you’re noticing, don’t overcomplicate it as you’re getting started. One of the most common mistakes local businesses make with segmentation is to go overboard in terms of categorizing. This can lead to extremely small segments that don’t result in more engagement, or attempts to segment based on qualities that can’t be easily categorized. As you’re learning what works, start with 1-2 things that you can easily identify and build more robust segmentation as your list grows and you begin to understand which messages get the most attention from your customers.

For example, Sam wants to be sent a promo message with a special discount relevant to his (1) **last purchase** (2) during **his birthday month**, addressed specifically to him.

Happy Birthday Sam! Get 20% off your next tune up at Portland Cyclery by using the link below.



Campaign Offer
<https://pdm.offer.com/123>

When sending texts, it’s important to think about segmentation in tandem with personalization variables, such as customers’ names. You should always anticipate customer wants and needs by considering the following:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Location
- Last purchase
- Previous feedback
- Website journey
- Seasons and holidays

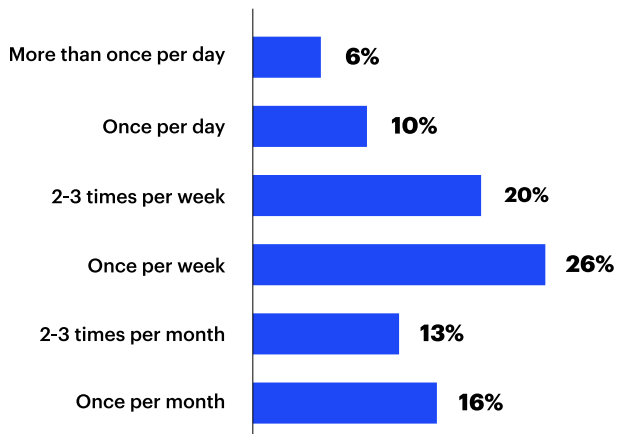
To make this easier, tie your texting service software in with your CRM database. With the right templates, your messages can sound and [feel personalized](#) with very little effort on your part.

Dividing your customers into buckets for promotions and messaging takes time and research, but it’s well worth the effort. As you adjust and analyze accordingly, you’ll be able to send the right message, every time.

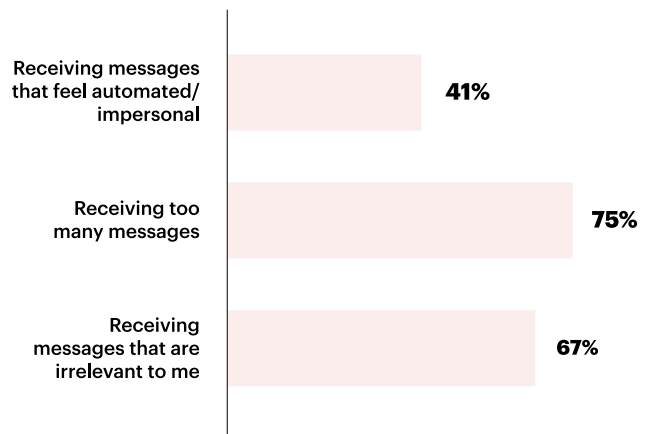
What are the best times to send a campaign?

Customers want to hear from you more often than you might think. [Over 60%](#) actually want to hear from you at least once a week. However, going above this limit can lead to unsubscribes.

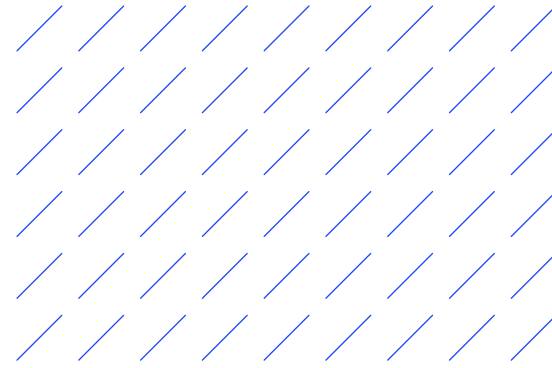
How often would you like to receive promotional text messages from local businesses after opting into their promotional text message list?



Which of the following scenarios would cause you to unsubscribe from promotional messages from a local business?



The day and time a message is sent can significantly impact your SMS marketing performance. And it varies across industries. Generally speaking, message revenue is usually higher for texts sent in the afternoon (after 1pm) than it is in the morning (before 9am). Campaign messages also have significantly higher click-through rates in the evening and afternoon.



Because businesses are different, it's important to test what works best for your specific segmentations. Your younger, higher earning customers are likely working and might prefer to receive texts at the end of the workday or during their lunch hour, when they have time to take a break. Your older customers might be early birds and want to see your offers before they make plans for the day.



When scheduling your campaigns, it's also important to remember locations and relevant time zone differences. Your customers in Canberra, Australia definitely don't want to receive a promotional text at four in the morning though it's one in the afternoon for your customers in Dallas, Texas.

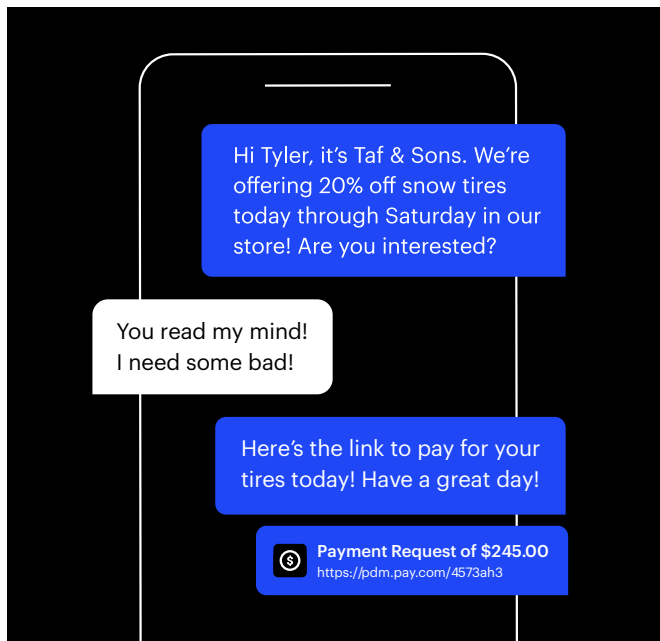
It might seem simple, but carefully accounting for locations and times can make all the difference in the success of your campaign.

The specific intentions of your campaign also have an impact on when you send. For best results for an event, such as an opening party or webinar, the best time to send a promotion is the day of. Promotions for flash sales are also usually effective day of.

Whatever you're promoting, remember that your texts should always contain start and end dates. For sales, end dates are deal drivers. For events, clearly designated dates and times (especially if the event is going to occur again) are a must.

Developing a campaign content calendar

When it comes to running successful campaigns, timing is everything. Sending a promotion for a discount on snow tires right before winter hits can lead to a payment in seconds. And sending a late promotion for a holiday product at 8am on the Wednesday after Christmas can fall pretty flat.



While improving campaign performance takes analysis and some experimentation, a simple and fail-proof way to boost your numbers is to create a content calendar that allows you to send the right message at the right time, every time.

An SMS marketing content calendar is an organizational asset that features dates and times, target audiences and segments, and links to be included in the messages. It also

includes campaign copy and creative assets (photos, GIFs, attachments, etc.).

Creating an SMS marketing content calendar has significant benefits for you and your employees. It allows you to save time by planning ahead and anticipating what content you will be distributing in the future. It also helps you stay organized, create a workback schedule to hit deadlines, and plan more tailored messages (as well as follow up) for specific audiences.

This asset is particularly crucial to properly spacing out campaign activity—especially when it comes to using automated campaigns. When you have messages going out automatically, it's vital to have your timing and content perfected to a T in order to execute well when the time comes and avoid costly mistakes.

Content calendars also encourage team alignment in providing team-wide visibility into SMS marketing strategy and execution. With your team, you prepare content in advance and coordinate across the board, including obtaining needed links, creative, approvals, and promo codes.

Lastly, with this asset, you can take advantage of relevant moments including holidays, events, and promotions. You can also track what works and continually refine your SMS marketing strategy. Well-designed calendars can help you identify patterns—like which days, times, offers, and frequencies work best for which audiences. They allow you to look back on past activities to borrow from past ideas or campaigns.

How to create an SMS marketing calendar

So how do you do it? It's really quite simple. You can start small with a basic spreadsheet, or make SMS part of an existing business calendar. For most local businesses, the ideal calendar is not complicated and may build on your existing promotional schedule.

01. Identify relevant events, holidays, and seasons.

In doing so, you might consider leveraging SMS for current promotions you're running through other channels.

02. Determine specific promotions and offers to run.

If you're having a hard time getting started, pay attention to what promotions and offers your competitors are running and at what times—especially which ones seem to be the most successful.

03. Identify your target audiences.

Promotions are not effective at the same times and for the same customers across the board. Each customer has a personal history with you that needs careful analysis. If you cater correctly, you can reap huge rewards.

04. Start crafting your campaign copy.

While you should do this in advance, don't hesitate to make changes as the dates approach. Sometimes changes are even necessary to accommodate for current events and changing climates.

05. Review with relevant team members.

As always, the most important part of making a calendar is to be aligned across the board. Make sure everyone has a voice and start building your campaigns and scheduling in advance.

→ To get started, [download this easy template!](#)

Should I respond to SMS marketing replies?

It's important to remember that successful SMS marketing goes way beyond "blasts." Consumers don't want to be bombarded with one-way messages. And unlike email, they're far more likely to reply to text-based marketing when it's done right. They want real conversations.

The more human feel your communications carry, the more effective they will be. One-way messages feel like a bot. They're impersonal and unengaging. The magic of SMS marketing is its ability to feel more human and convenient than any other communication channel. Two-way messages, done well, feel like a real conversation. And that's where the money is.

If you look at the stats, your customers are craving conversations. [24% of consumers](#) are already conversing—having a two-way, real conversation—with local businesses via text message. And of those who aren't, [56%](#) want the ability to do so. Your customers crave connection—and that includes the encouragement to converse with you one on one.

[74% of consumers report that they would be more likely to text with a local business if they knew a real person was going to receive and respond to their message.](#)



Your customers expect fast replies

According to a Google report, taking [more than 20 minutes](#) to reply to a text can be considered rude. And while customers certainly give businesses more wiggle room than they do friends and family, they still have high expectations for your response time—especially if their question is pressing.

The most important thing is to set response time expectations and keep them. If you have a pledge to reply in 10 or even 30 min, make good on that pledge. However, it's always helpful to err on the side of giving your employees more time.

It's also important to consider the nature of the text and it's time sensitivity. A question about a sale or an appointment happening in the next hour might need a <5 min response while a question on inventory might have a bit more leeway. Whatever the question, businesses should never take more than a working day to respond.

An SMS marketing solution + automation = speed

In order to do this, local businesses need an SMS marketing solution that allows them to effectively manage responses. For local businesses, this involves effectively routing conversations to representatives on the ground, customer service teams, and reception or service areas.

For multi-location businesses, it includes mapping conversations to the right locations for responses so no time is lost.

Keep in mind that you also want to engage customers regardless of when they contact you. When it comes to things like confirming appointments and offering updates, messages feel more human when sent between 9-5 (when employees would normally be working).

With the right SMS marketing solution, many businesses successfully use automated messaging features specifically for after-hours communication. You might consider actively sending texts during business hours and using automated messages when leads engage with you after-hours. An after-hours automated text might look something like this:

“Thank you for contacting Belview Tires. These messages are not regularly monitored on weekends & evenings. We will reply during business hours. We appreciate your business!”

With the right technology, you can also respond automatically to FAQs. As the conversation continues, if the consumer asks a question that requires live assistance, the platform can trigger an employee to respond back. This can save a huge amount of time for you and your employees while allowing you to keep your reputation of always responding to your customers.

Measuring and Scaling SMS Marketing Performance



Measuring the ROI of your SMS marketing channel

Successful campaigns aren't created overnight. When it comes to optimizing your SMS marketing channel, experimentation is the name of the game. Being able to measure and communicate the ROI of any marketing investment is important for marketers and business owners alike. But in order to properly test, you need to understand key metrics of performance and external reporting.

Below are the parameters to assess the performance of your SMS marketing efforts.

Click-through rate

Click through rate, or CTR, is the percentage of recipients who've taken action to click on a link embedded within an SMS marketing message. This is an important metric to measure as it serves as an indicator of how people are interacting and engaging with your messages.

Response rate

Response rate measures how many recipients respond to a campaign. You can calculate this by dividing the number of responses by the total number of possible responses.

Unsubscribe/opt-out rate

Regardless of how compelling or targeted your SMS campaigns are, you're likely to see a handful of opt-outs with each campaign message. Unsubscribe or opt-out rate measures the percentage of users who've opted-out of receiving future SMS promotions after receiving a campaign. You are looking to keep opt-out rates below 5%.

Conversion rate

Conversion rate measures the percentage of users who complete the desired action specified in your message. This can be measured by dividing the number of recipients who have taken that action by the total number of recipients who have received that campaign message.

Attributable revenue

This is the revenue you are able to track to specific campaigns.

External reporting

UTM

UTM, or [Urchin Tracking Module](#), is a code that can be attached to any URL to generate Google Analytics data for digital campaigns. Specific to Google Analytics, UTM helps track the progress of the campaign on all online platforms. If you use Google Analytics, consider including SMS marketing links with this code just as you would with any other campaign link. Link shorteners or text marketing software that shortens links for you will help ensure the link does not appear too long in your text.

When tracking the success of your campaigns, you also want to pay attention to your list growth rate. This measures how fast your opt-in list is growing and how well you're acquiring new subscribers and retaining them consistently. This rate can be determined on a weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis.

After you calculate how much a customer spends on your product after a campaign, you can start to determine the lifetime value of each customer. This is helpful in spelling out the ROI of your campaigns and the value of each subscriber.

You also want to keep track of your list size. This measures the total number of customers who've opted in to your messages. Pay special attention to which opt-in touchpoints are gaining the most traction and at what times. For multi-location businesses, track which locations are seeing the most collections and implement their methods across the board (if applicable).

Other helpful metrics to track can include coupon redemptions, referrals (if you're running a referral campaign), and recovered revenue from abandoned carts.



Improving performance

As we mentioned, what makes a campaign successful varies according to business model, industry, and target audiences. Careful testing is key in learning what works best for you.

That being said, taking the actionable steps in this guide are proven ways to improve performance across the board and give your numbers a boost.



- Collect quality opt-ins
- Segment effectively
- Craft compelling copy
- Use automations and send SMS campaigns at the right times
- Message compliantly
- Reply to messages quickly and with valuable information
- Work according to an effective campaign content calendar
- Use an SMS marketing platform

As you work to increase performance, refer back to this list and the information in this guide to see what you might be missing or where you can optimize further. With simple steps, you can turn your campaigns into high-performance converting machines.

Refining and testing

Testing is a good way to build confidence around the effectiveness of your SMS marketing messages as you are learning. In summary, this is done by running two (or more) variations of a promotion to see which performs better. By running tests for your SMS marketing channel, you can learn which campaigns are most effective and know which ones to invest in to maximize ROI.

There are many excellent guides available on how to conduct true A/B tests—[even if you're not a mathematician](#). True statistically significant testing requires an established subscriber list or relatively large samples, which are often a barrier if you're new to SMS marketing. But if you're learning how to effectively message on SMS, even small tests can be a useful exercise to build your confidence in the channel and pinpoint some effective messages.

Regardless of whether you're engaging in true A/B testing or testing a small subscriber group to get comfortable with SMS as a channel, you first want to define a clear test goal. Or rather, ask yourself—what exactly do you want to test?

Wording

It's important to use language that resonates with your specific audience. For SMS marketing, where messages tend to have shorter character counts, every piece of copy matters. Take the time to be deliberate in your word choice, abbreviations, and use of capital and lowercase letters.

Call to action

Try using different versions of your CTA within your marketing messages and see which drives more subscribers to take action. Make sure to consider including CTAs that can be tracked by your text messaging platform—including, “click on this link” or “reply back to this message.”

Length

While the rule of thumb is to keep messages short and concise, there are some marketing use cases that lend themselves to longer messages, like educational promotions about specific products and services.

Layout

This refers to how you format your marketing messages, including line breaks and how you structure the content of your message.

Multimedia content

Some promotional types can be improved upon by embellishing your messages with images or GIFs. A good example of this includes new product launches where an image can be a powerful way to clearly communicate what you're offering.

Offer

Experiment with different offers and incentives in your messages and see which performs best.

Send time

Test out different times during the day or days of the week to run your messages.

For effective testing as a beginner, you should choose a single variable on the list above to test. To start, prepare two or more versions of your marketing message so that you're clear with the differences between each of the relevant components.

Then, define your target audience for testing and create a sample of recipients. Be sure that the recipients who receive your test are similar and random so you don't draw the wrong conclusions. And, keep in mind: if you're testing with a small audience, your results with a broader audience may vary quite a bit from the test.

Once you have developed some variants to test and selected your test groups, it's time to craft your SMS marketing campaign and begin testing.

Bottom line: for faster learning and more return on your effort, you can perform small experiments with SMS promotions, establish which ones work best, and then send them out to a larger audience, subscriber list, or segment.



Creating and implementing automated campaigns

SMS marketing automation is the practice of establishing predefined rules to trigger personalized SMS messages based on specific actions customers take—or don't take—using SMS marketing automation software.

You might send an automated text to welcome someone who signs up to receive your promotional messages, offer similar product recommendations after a customer has purchased from your site, or thank a customer who left you a 5-star review.

Implementing automations can be extremely effective in leveraging software and technology to take on repetitive, manual tasks and consequently free up time and resources. These resources can then be redirected towards more valuable tasks such as responding to customer inquiries and questions.

SMS marketing automation software can also be used to help customers learn more about your business, products, and services. It can encourage them to keep coming back or remind them why they bought from you in the first place. Using automated workflows can be extremely effective for lead nurturing and ultimately drive sales from potential customers and existing ones.

By streamlining and automating SMS marketing tasks, local businesses can significantly increase operational efficiency and grow revenue faster.

Automation terms and definitions

Many local businesses don't understand what marketing automation is. If that's you, no sweat! This section is all about defining common SMS marketing automation terms.

SMS automation

A single text message or series of text messages set to a contact based on a specific trigger.

Campaign

Any promotional or transactional content sent to an audience/segment that's created and measured by an SMS marketing platform, including automations.

Workflow

The specific configuration of settings, schedule, and content for automated SMS marketing messages.

Delay

The period of time between a trigger event and a send.

Queue

A batch of contacts who have met an automation's criteria and are waiting to receive the next email in a series.

Trigger

The event that starts an automation single message or message series (ex: someone opts-in to receive promotional text messages or has left a review).

Why you should automate your SMS marketing strategy

There are a number of reasons you should automate your SMS marketing strategy. Most of them involve significantly expanding your reach, scaling your strategy, and doing more with less.

01. Boost customer engagement

Customer engagement is the [ongoing, value-driven, emotional relationship](#) between your customers and your business. When you provide a positive customer experience, your customer becomes more engaged. And highly engaged customers purchase more and advocate more for your brand.

By significantly improving your customer experience, automation boosts your customer engagement, leading to free marketing for you and higher revenue.

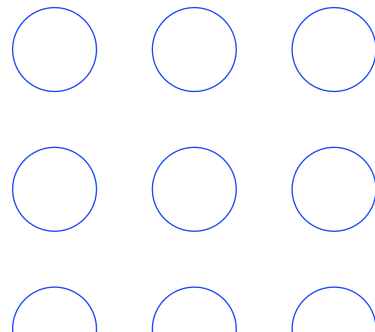


02. Make the most of your marketing resources

These days, marketers feel pressure to do more with less. To keep up with a fluctuating marketplace, businesses need to generate more leads, grow revenue, and close deals faster.

Automation frees up marketers' busy schedules with automated tasks so they can focus on more strategic work. It allows you to get more done and reach more people with the finite resources you have available.

For local businesses, this means less time spent on tedious and repetitive manual tasks (i.e., manually sending out repeat campaigns). Now you can redirect your time to higher value activities and more important priorities, like creating new SMS marketing promotions.



03. Improve your customer retention rate

As you know, it's much easier and more cost effective to sell to an existing customer than convert a new one. With automation, you can stay in touch better than ever before.

Schedule your messages so that your customers don't go too long without hearing from you—and be sure the copy is relevant to maximize its impact.

Bad Example:

Hey there—need new sheets?
Check out Pinki Palm online!

Good Example:

Hi Sadie, hope you love your Pinki Palm sheets as much as we do! ❤️ Take 40% off your next set through Fri—on us. Text with any questions about inventory!

04. Scale your marketing strategy

Sending out an SMS series manually is limited by your staff size and the resources you have available to dedicate to it. It can also be difficult to stay on schedule if your customer base has suddenly doubled or tripled in size.

Sending automated SMS campaigns allows you to scale your marketing efforts. With the right tools, you can send a message every time someone opts into receiving promotional text messages via an online sign-up form. There's no need to ensure that a staff member is available to do it.

With SMS marketing automation, customers automatically integrate with your system as soon as they perform any actions that you track. Their behavior tells your system what to send them without any additional demands on your limited resources.



Single vs. series automations

There are two main types of SMS marketing automations - single message and message series.

Single message automations are all about sending a single message after a trigger event occurs. (i.e., someone opts-in to receive promotional texts or someone leaves a 5 star review.)

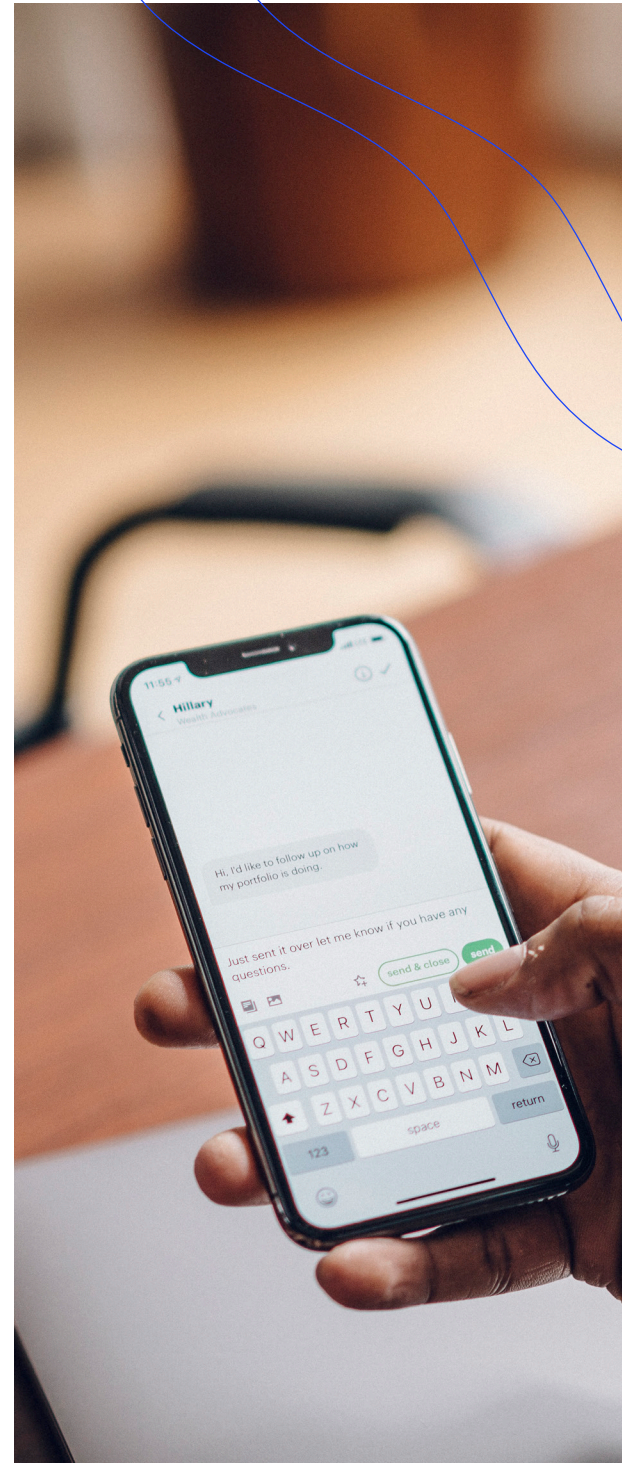
Message series automations progressively develop relationships with leads through nurture messages, connect them with your business and product, and then strike when a lead is ready to convert.

Automation use cases

There are many effective use cases for automation, starting with the welcome message. This is automatically sent after a subscriber opts-in to text message promotions to welcome them to your business, provide a friendly greeting, and share some information about your SMS marketing channel using your brand's voice.

Typically, customers who have just opted-in to SMS promotions are highly engaged at this point in the customer journey. You can take advantage of this opportunity by offering mobile-exclusive offers as part of your welcome message.

Additional use cases include post-purchase messages, review invites, appointment reminders and scheduling, abandoned cart reminders, and after-hours responses.





☀ Chapter 6

Choosing an SMS Marketing Solution

As you know, SMS marketing successfully means balancing a lot of moving parts. Local businesses have to effectively route conversations to representatives on the ground, customer service teams, and reception or service areas.

They have to configure automations, send responses, and keep up individual threads—all while making sure no messages slip through the cracks. For multi-location businesses, teams also have to map conversations to the right locations for responses.

All of this can be quite challenging for any team to take on—especially if they're having to juggle multiple platforms to do it.

That's why messaging successfully starts with choosing the right messaging platform for your business. But how do you decide? Here are a number of key factors to look for, starting with simplicity of implementation.

Your messaging solution checklist

01. Ease of implementation/set-up.

Your messaging platform should be easy to set-up and simple to use, presenting all tools and features in a way that is easily digestible. It's also going to be important that you take the time to evaluate what resources your technology provider offers to help you get started.

02. Compliance.

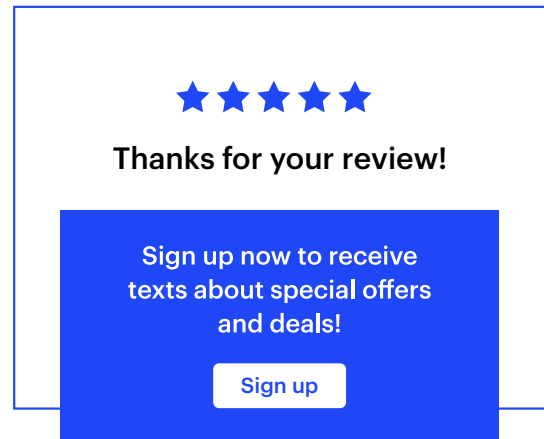
Your platform should make it a breeze to conduct SMS marketing in a compliant way. It will be important that your platform make it easy for you to not only develop sign-up forms that follow industry regulations, but also manage contacts who have unsubscribed from your SMS marketing messages.

03. Integration with your existing tech stack.

When you choose a platform, you don't want to add another tool to your stack of technological solutions. You want to find a platform that integrates perfectly with your existing tools, such as CRM's, reviews tools, website forms, and other databases.

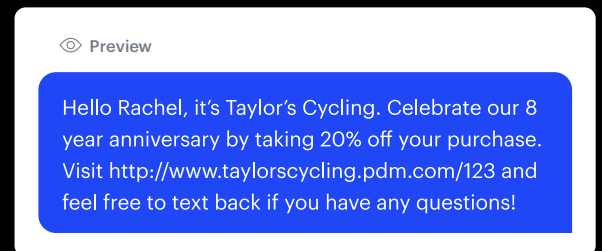
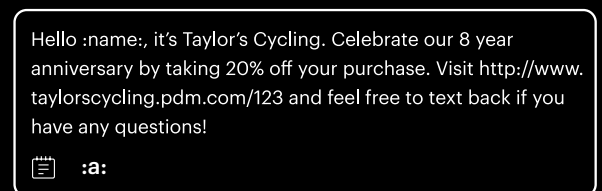
04. Opt-in collection.

Your platform should help to maximize opt-in opportunities, allowing every customer interaction to be an on-ramp for you to grow an engaged, compliant SMS database. The right platform makes it simple to upload existing opt-in lists and collect new opt-ins at a variety of existing touchpoints, including via website chat, after leaving a review, or while making a payment.



05. Creative support.

When you purchase a platform, you don't have to do all the work yourself. Your platform should include campaign templates as well as the ability to personalize messages with variables such as a customer's name, location, purchase history, etc.



06. Targeted/segmented campaigns.

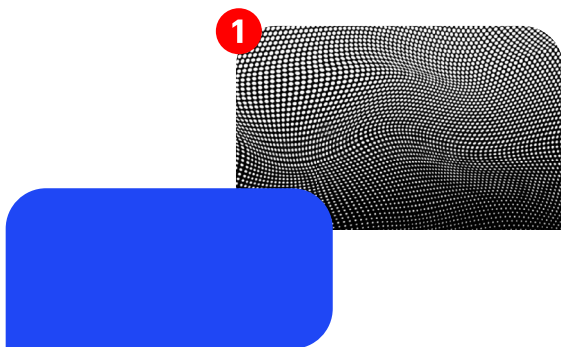
Your platform should also allow you to easily segment customers so that you can send targeted messages to specific audiences or everyone at once.

07. SMS marketing automation.

The right messaging solution should also make it easy to automate personalized messages and create complex triggers. The ability to track multiple two-way conversations and allow customers to answer automated messages with more than letters or numbers is a make or break.

08. 2-way conversations.

Remember—successful SMS marketing means no more one-way blasts. The right platform provides a comprehensive customer conversation platform, powering a convenient, complete thread with each customer in a single inbox.



09. Reporting.

Measuring ROI is extremely important for marketers, allowing you to track and measure the outcome of your campaign so you can refine and improve for the future. Your solution should provide pre-built dashboards that surface digestible insights on unsubscribes, click rates, transactions, and more.

→ Results from Podium Campaigns

- Total Subscribers = 2,898
- Click/Open Rate = 5.72%
- Total Clicks = 166
- Response Rate = 1.52%
- Total Responses = 44
- Cars Sold = 8

10. Campaign management.

Finally, a high-quality platform makes it easy for businesses to manage responses at the location level. It's purpose-built to field the needs of local business and provides ready message routing as well as a campaign specific inbox.

Learn more about what to look for at [Podium Campaigns](#).