



THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE

SMS Marketing GUIDE

In this expert-written SMS marketing guide, you'll learn everything you need to know about the importance of SMS marketing, all the reasons to get started, and advanced techniques to maximize your marketing results.

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1 Basics of SMS Marketing

Despite all the ongoing advancements in technology and communication, the deceptively simple text message remains an impressively powerful tool for digital marketers, regardless of scale or company size.

The key is learning how to harness and leverage the advantages of SMS in a way that your competition may have missed or overlooked.

Basics of SMS Marketing

While it may be true that anyone with a cellphone has a fundamental working understanding of how to send and receive a text message to another individual, the dynamics and complexities involved with successful SMS marketing are another matter altogether. There are many moving pieces behind the scenes before you receive a text message from your favorite retailer or online brand.

It can all feel somewhat overwhelming, particularly if you've never attempted to manage a larger scale marketing campaign from start to finish, or if you've never even considered including text messages as an integral component to your overall marketing strategy. That is where this step-by-step guide to SMS marketing comes into play.

THIS GUIDE IS INTENDED FOR



Startups



Online Brands



E-commerce Stores



Small and Medium-Sized Businesses (SMBs)



Nonprofit Organizations and Agencies



Anyone Who Wants to Reach and Engage with Customers



Marketing Departments of Larger Corporations and Organizations

BY READING THIS GUIDE, YOU CAN EXPECT TO LEARN:

- ▶ What SMS marketing is and how it works
- ▶ The different types of text messages and how to use them
- ▶ The ins and outs of building a contact list
- ▶ Legal requirements for opt-in and opt-out
- ▶ Steps involved in creating a successful campaign
- ▶ Segmenting and targeting
- ▶ Campaign automation
- ▶ How to analyze the data from your campaign
- ▶ And more...



How Does SMS Marketing Works?

SMS stands for “short message service” and it is what most people would simply call text messaging or texting. It is the most basic form of text-based messaging on mobile devices and it has been around for decades. SMS text messaging is distinct from more “app” and “service” based messengers like Facebook Messenger, Google Hangouts, iMessage, and WhatsApp Messenger.

At its most fundamental level, SMS marketing consists of 5 main steps:

- 1** What SMS marketing is and how it works
- 2** User opts into receiving these messages
- 3** Company sends relevant messages to users on the list
- 4** User receives, reads, and interacts with the text message
- 5** Company benefits from this interaction in some way

For each step along the way, a company running an SMS marketing campaign can encounter potential challenges and difficulties. These may include:

- ▶ Dealing with “normal sender” problems
- ▶ Managing and maintaining a contact list
- ▶ Sending messages to inactive numbers
- ▶ Tracking and confirming successful delivery of messages
- ▶ Split-testing message copy for optimal results

- ▶ Encountering blocked sending routes
- ▶ Optimizing and segmenting lists
- ▶ Overpaying for message delivery
- ▶ Struggling with poor conversion performance

There are business tools available, like SMSEdge, that can address and solve key issues like those listed above and more. In order to utilize SMS marketing effectively, you will need to use software that has been designed specifically for SMS marketing purposes.

This is no different than when you approach any other form of digital marketing. Software will allow you to curate and segment your lists, draft your messages, develop your strategy, and ultimately send out those text messages in bulk. The cost to send the text messages will vary based on recipients and other parameters, but it is typically very inexpensive. The messages are delivered through an SMS gateway.

Going further, there are opportunities to explore two-way communication, leverage short codes and keywords, segment with dedicated numbers, and more. SMS marketing can be remarkably simple and straightforward, but with tools and software such as SMSEdge you also have the added advantage of being able to employ more advanced techniques.

Key Advantages

MASSIVE REACH



An estimated 80 percent of all mobile subscribers worldwide use SMS, literally representing more than 3.5 billion active users. SMS is the most widely used service all around the world and for good reason.

Because of its simplicity and lightweight nature, and because it does not require a smartphone or Wi-Fi, text messaging is much more prevalent, accessible, and can reach a far larger user base. The average American sends and receives an estimated 2,819 text messages per month.



INSTANT AND OPEN

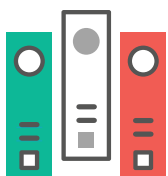
The cell phone is a remarkably personal device, and one that is never too far out of reach. Users may not always be at their computers, but they are much more likely to have their phones on their person. Similarly, users are far more likely to check new incoming text messages than they are to respond to notifications for inbound emails.

With open rates of 98 percent, SMS marketing messages are almost universally read and acknowledged by their recipients. The average email open rate, by comparison, is estimated to be somewhere in the 25 percent range. With email marketing, messages can very easily get caught and marked as spam, never to be read or acknowledged.



PERSONAL CONNECTION

Because of the character limit on each individual text message, this form of communication is succinct by design. It creates a personal communication channel between companies and their customers, continually boosting brand awareness and loyalty (so the company and its products or service are always at the forefront), as well as sparking engagement with keenly positioned calls to action.

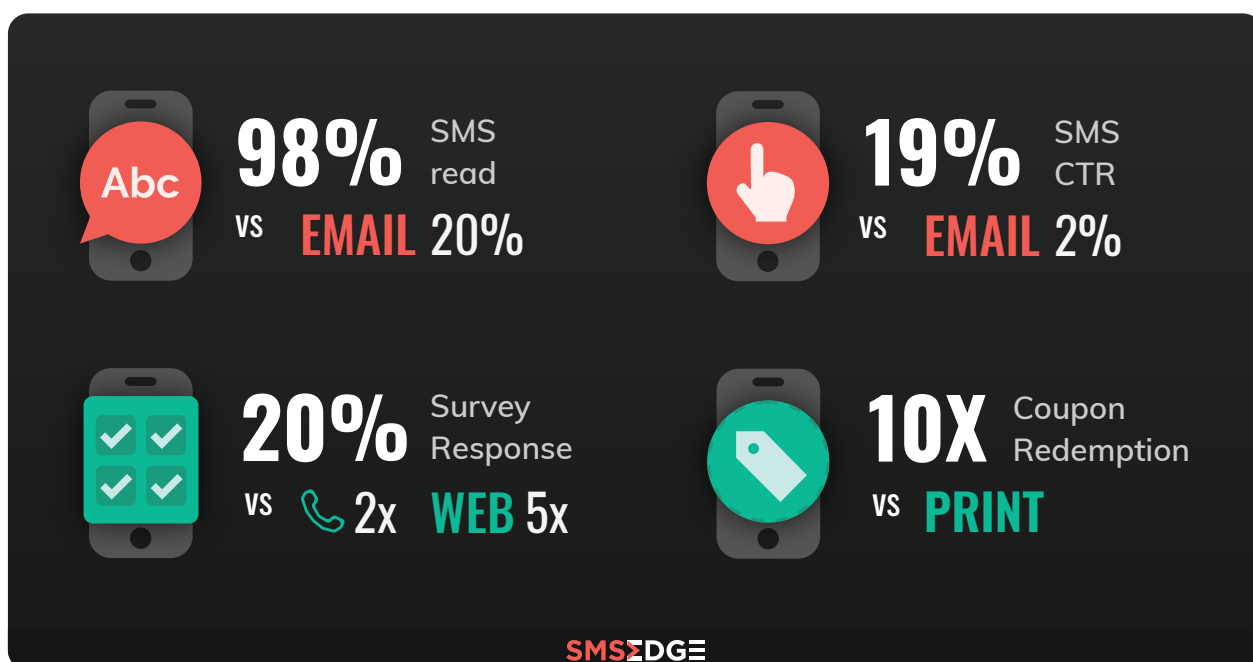


ENGAGEMENT RATES

Engagement rates are perhaps one of the greatest advantages that SMS marketing has over other forms of marketing. Response rates are as high as eight times that of email.

In addition, while click-through rates (CTR) on social media platforms are typically less than 1 percent, and the typical CTR for a Google AdWords campaign is barely 2 percent, the SMS marketing click-through rate can be as high as 36 percent.

Users not only read your text messages; they are far more engaged with them than with any other form of marketing communication. They want to hear what you have to say. This is why SMS marketing should play a key role in your overall marketing strategy.







2 Types of SMS Marketing

SMS marketing campaigns fall under a number of broad categories. Your business may use any or all of these types of messages, depending on the goals you are trying to achieve.

Types of SMS Marketing



Broadcast



Giveaways



Targeted



Transactional



Coupons



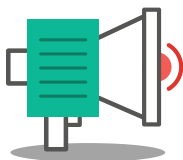
One-Time Password

While it may be true that anyone with a cellphone has a fundamental working understanding of how to send and receive a text message to another individual, the dynamics and complexities involved with successful SMS marketing are another matter altogether. There are many moving pieces behind the scenes before you receive a text message from your favorite retailer or online brand.

It can all feel somewhat overwhelming, particularly if you've never attempted to manage a larger scale marketing campaign from start to finish, or if you've never even considered including text messages as an integral component to your overall marketing strategy. That is where this step-by-step guide to SMS marketing comes into play.



Broadcast



These types of text messages are sent out to everyone who has opted into your list. (We'll be discussing the opt-in process later in this guide) The message content should be of interest to everyone.

Also known as bulk campaigns, broadcast messages might be used to inform customers about promotional deals, special offers, holidays and special events. The message is typically sent out to the entire subscriber base at the same time, or as close to the same time as possible.

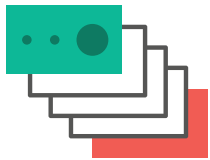
Targeted



Targeted messages are exactly that: targeted. They are not sent out to the entire list of subscribers all at once. Instead, the targeting can be based on a number of possible factors.

For instance, you may create segmented lists from your larger main list. Members who subscribe to a premium service may belong to one segmented list, while customers who pay for a lower-tier service may belong to a different list. You can also create lists based on product category or interest, particularly if your business sells a variety of items or services. Beyond segmented lists, you can also set up targeted SMS campaigns based on individual shopping habits.

Coupons & Giveaways



Coupons and other offers can be sent out as part of bulk or targeted campaigns, and are often single-use. You can induce a sense of urgency with time-dependent discounts, like telling customers they must use the promo code within the next 12 hours or while supplies last.

Giveaways and contests are another way to encourage greater engagement from customers.

1

The SMS campaign can be used to promote a giveaway or contest, directing users to a contest page for more details and to enter.

2

The campaign itself can be utilized for list building purposes. Customers see advertisements and promotions on other channels, such as social media or traditional advertising. They must then text a keyword to a number to enter the contest, thus opting into your list at the same time.





3 Goal Setting

Goal setting is an integral part of any business, and your SMS marketing campaigns are no different. Before you start setting up your first campaign, it is essential to have a clear vision of what exactly it is you are trying to achieve.



Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)



Key performance indicators, or KPIs for short, are a measurable value that you can use to gauge your relative success or failure at achieving the objectives you set out for your business. If you attain 100 percent success on your KPIs, then it should automatically be assumed that your objectives have been fully met.

The two most important aspects of KPIs are that they are:

1

Specifically relevant to the larger goals of your business, particularly as they pertain to your company vision

2

Quantitatively measurable and trackable over time

Business decisions need to be data-driven, so in regards to your SMS campaigns, you need to start from a place of measurable data. With tools like SMSEdge, you have access not only to real-time reporting, but also real-time optimization so you can achieve the highest campaign performance possible.

In addition, due to the instantaneous nature of text messages, marketing and analytics must be equally nimble and agile, which is why software like SMSEdge is essential. As the data comes in from your split-tested copy, click-through rates, conversion rates, sales volume, and other pertinent data, you'll know right away what is working and what isn't. However, you will need to start with clear-cut KPIs, so you know what to look for and how to track it.

Brand Building vs. Measurable ROI

As a simplified generalization, the goals that you set for your SMS campaigns will fall under two broad categories. You are either:



Brand Building

Working to improve brand awareness, increase engagement, and develop stronger connections with your customers and subscribers



Measurable ROI

Working to boost sales of your products or services through a variety of promotions, including sales, discount codes, limited time offers, and other deals

While it may be tempting to focus the entirety of your efforts on the latter, that could be putting the proverbial cart before the horse. Building goodwill with your following can lead to greater brand loyalty with an increase in sales not just in the short-term, but over a much longer time horizon. Of course, tracking leads and sales will always be important as well.

Examples of goals related to BRAND BUILDING:

- ▶ Attract at least 5,000 entries in a Memorial Day giveaway
- ▶ Gain 2,000 more followers on Twitter
- ▶ Achieve a 75% completion rate for full user profiles on your e-commerce site

To achieve any of the example goals listed above, you may incentivize users. The chance to win a great prize is obvious for the first, but you may choose to incentivize the others with coupon codes for having followed your profile on Twitter or having completely filled out the user profile on your website.

Remember that when setting these goals, even if they're not directly sales-related, you need to assign actual numbers that can then be tracked and analyzed. Saying that you want "more" customers to complete their user profiles isn't helpful. How much more?

Examples of goals related to MEASURABLE ROI:

- ▶ Generate \$125,000 in additional revenue in March
- ▶ Increase per-order values by 25 percent YOY
- ▶ Receive 2,000 pre-orders for upcoming product XYZ

Remember that increasing sales may be tracked as a dollar value, but that is not the only metric that you can use as a key performance indicator. Consider what is most important, as well as what is more easily tracked.

This is where having tools that integrate with one another well can be incredibly useful, including your customer relationship management (CRM) solution, e-commerce store platform, payment processor, and SMS campaign manager.



Build Your Approach Around Your Goals

Depending on whether you are currently more interested in building positive goodwill toward your brand or are looking to increase sales of a particular product line, for example, the approach that you take with your SMS campaign will differ considerably.

In either case, allow your decisions to be data-driven and in real time. You need access to the right metrics and analytics in as close to real time as possible. This will allow you to learn and improve upon your measurable results, segmenting your customers into the appropriate sales funnels, for instance, to maximize your return on investment.





4 List Building

Building your list and generating contacts is the next major step in developing your SMS marketing campaign. From there onward, you will also need to optimize and segment your list in order to generate maximum profit and benefit.



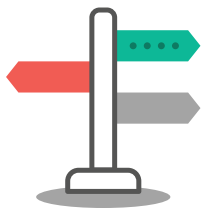
Mobile Keywords

A mobile keyword is a single term, ideally as short as possible, that you encourage users to send to a shortcode.

From: Example

Text 'PROMO' to 12345 to get the latest deals sent to your phone.

When the user does this, they have effectively opted into your mobile list. PROMO is the mobile keyword and 12345 is the shortcode, with the latter typically being a 5 or 6 digit number. This is the most common way to build your list.



ONLINE AND OFFLINE PROMOTION

Potential subscribers must know about both your mobile keyword and your shortcode in order to opt in. Promoting these two critical pieces of information can happen both online and offline.

Some strategies may include:

- ▶ Advertise on social media
- ▶ Feature prominently on your website
- ▶ Send a message to your email list
- ▶ Run influencer marketing campaigns
- ▶ Promote as a coupon code

- ▶ Utilize as a contest/giveaway entry method
- ▶ Include on printed materials like brochures and flyers
- ▶ Display signage in-store and at events

Notes:

You will need to register for a shortcode in order to run any of these campaigns. A number of providers offer that service, much like domain registration for websites. In addition, just like website domains, many shortcodes are already being used. These shortcodes can also be shared under certain circumstances.

In the United States, the U.S. Short Code Administration is the governing body. Generally speaking, when you use SMS software like SMSEdge, the tools are already in place for acquiring or leasing a shortcode you can use for your campaigns. These companies, which usually also function as SMS aggregators, can also handle the possibly more complex process of short code provisioning.

You can also check registries and directories to see what shortcodes are already being used by other companies.

Account Information

In addition to mobile keywords, another tactic for growing your mobile database is to ask customers to add their mobile numbers to their online profiles under account information.

It's important to note, however, that while this provides you with their phone number, they haven't necessarily opted into receiving text messages from you. This needs to be made explicit, to comply with regulations.

Legal Regulations

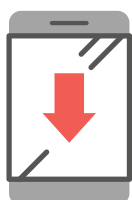
Particularly as it pertains to building your list, it's important to be aware of any legal regulations that govern how text message marketing can operate. These regulations can vary from country to country, so be aware of any rules not only in the country where you are based, but also where your customers and subscribers are located.



OPT-IN

In the United States and in most other parts of the world, you are not allowed to send any marketing communications via text message (SMS) to someone until they have provided specific consent to receiving these messages. The consent must be in writing, and the records of the consent -- including time, date and location -- must be maintained.

What this means is that while you may be able to access third-party lists for sending marketing materials via email or phone call, you cannot do this with SMS. The user must opt-in first.



OPT-OUT

Similarly, subscribers must have an easy and obvious way to unsubscribe from your list. The most common method, and the one used by the vast majority of companies, is to send a text message informing the user that they can text the word STOP in reply to opt out of SMS marketing messages. These instructions can be sent as a separate text message or they can be included at the end of one of your marketing messages.

If a customer asks to opt out through other official means – e.g. via email or online chat – you must also honor this request. You must then send a confirmation message to indicate that the opt-out request has been received and completed. “You have opted out and will not receive additional messages” or some variation should be included in the confirmation message.

Common Challenges

Some challenges you may encounter while building and maintaining your list may include:



Invalid Contacts

When phone numbers are added to the list, but are not actually valid recipients of your SMS marketing messages.



Active Number Validation

Validating new and existing contacts to ensure that they are still correct and in service.



List Optimization

Creating and managing targeted lists based on a number of possible criteria, including nature of response (click, lead or sale).



Reducing Costs

Choosing the best SMS gateway and route to deliver your messages in the most cost-efficient way possible.



Optimizing Delivery and Reach

Deciding on the best routes for the fastest and most reliable delivery with the least number of potential errors or failed attempts, all while maximizing click-through rate.



Common Challenges

Many, if not all of these challenges can be swiftly and suitably overcome when you utilize a robust SMS marketing platform. The system can automatically seek out and remove invalid contacts, for example.

In the case of SMSEdge, artificial intelligence is leveraged as part of a proprietary scoring algorithm. The system can then intelligently split test routes, ads, offers and lists, choosing from over 50 different communication providers to find the best possible path, thus optimizing delivery and reducing costs.

Notes:

By default, the normal sender ID that a recipient sees is the long reference number generated by the SMS gateway. It indicates who is sending the message, just as the recipient would see when you receive a personal SMS message.

This reference number can be replaced with custom text upon request. A common usage is to replace the sender ID with the company name. However, this type of change is not allowed in the United States and in South Africa due to the mobile network provider policies in these countries.

Segmenting Your List

Building a sizable list is a major priority, but it is equally important to optimize and segment the list to maximize your return on investment (ROI) as well. This achieves two critical goals.

First, you are not overwhelming your subscribers with too many messages that they may feel are irrelevant. Second, you are reducing your overall costs as you are not paying to send messages to recipients who are unlikely to open, engage, and convert on them.

List management, including segmenting your list into as many sub-lists as you desire, can be accomplished through your SMS marketing software.

Possible criteria you may utilize when segmenting your list:

- ▶ Country and other location information
- ▶ Expressed interest in particular product categories
- ▶ Drip and sales funnel directed
- ▶ Nature of response, having clicked on a previous message, resulted in a lead, or generated a sale
- ▶ Customer lifetime value (CLV) estimate
- ▶ Current customer status, like premium subscriber vs. free user
- ▶ Split-testing message copy styles
- ▶ Pre-campaign performance level
- ▶ Typical time of engagement to optimize delivery window

Segmenting Your List

Every mobile number has its own unique tracking, so you can know exactly how each individual recipient responded (or didn't respond) to your message.

Segmented lists are not mutually exclusive and can have considerable overlap. In this way, any given subscriber can be included as part of several sub-lists based on the criteria they satisfy. This is an ongoing process based on the insight you can glean from campaign performance analytics.



5 Campaign Building

SMS marketing, just like any other marketing exercise, is always a work in progress. It's an ongoing project, so you'll need to build some campaigns in order to grow your list, just as you'll leverage your growing list in future campaigns. It's continuously cyclical in nature. With that in mind, there are several steps to campaign building that you'll need to follow.



Goals and Targeting

As discussed in Section 3, the goals that you set for your campaign will also dictate the direction your campaign will take. It is important to be clear in your objectives at this point, setting goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. You need to be able to compare the performance of the campaign against these goals in a quantitative manner.

For instance, “Increase sales” is not a specific enough goal. As you build your campaign, be specific about what you want to accomplish. “Generate 500 sales of Product X within 7 days of launching campaign” is a much better goal. And with that goal in mind, you can target your campaign at users who are most likely to convert on the offer to fulfill your objective.

Similarly, a “Thanksgiving” promotion in November makes perfect sense when targeting the US market, but it would not make nearly as much sense when targeting the Canadian market. Canada celebrates Thanksgiving in October. You could still push the same sale, but you’d need to reposition the promotion with different wording for the Canadian demographic.



Split-Testing and Pre-Test Campaigns

Many marketing platforms, including those designed to facilitate SMS marketing, will usually have a configuration option in place that allows for split-testing. Each campaign represents a learning opportunity, as you can test what works best and what doesn't work quite so well.

This is true, both from the perspective of a post-mortem, taking that data and applying the insights to future campaigns, as well as during the campaign itself. A great feature of SMSEdge, for instance, is that it allows for real-time optimization with campaign split-testing. You can run two versions of the campaign, and as the data starts coming in and the trend is revealed, you can adjust the split such that the more successful version is used moving forward.

Even further to this point is the notion of pre-test campaigns. Before you launch the main campaign, you can split-test a much smaller subset of users, including the delivery channel or pipeline. With that data, you can then decide how best to optimize the main campaign.



Split-Testing and Pre-Test Campaigns



AD COPY

Unlike most other mediums, SMS marketing ad copy is confined to the 160-character limit for a single SMS message. Even though messages can be split and delivered, a single, to-the-point message has a much higher chance of success.

Remember that the 160 characters must also accommodate the required “reply STOP to opt out” (or similar) message at the end, so you will need to cull down your ad copy accordingly and be very strategic about what is and is not included.

SMSEdge

With SMSEdge, the ad copy can also be split tested and further personalized to a customer’s name or other identifying parameters; if you take this route, you’ll need to ensure that even longer entries - like if a customer has a longer name - will still fit within the confines of 160 characters.



Split-Testing and Pre-Test Campaigns



PROVIDE VALUE TO CUSTOMERS

For any given campaign, regardless of your ultimate objective, you must consider the value of the message from the customer's perspective. How is this message relevant? How does it benefit the recipients?

Ideas for providing value to your customers:

- ▶ Providing customers with exclusive early information
- ▶ Offering enticing coupons exclusive to SMS subscribers
- ▶ Informing customers about upcoming deals and specials
- ▶ Inviting customers to be among the first to purchase a new product

Split-Testing and Pre-Test Campaigns



LINKS OR PROMO CODES

Tracking the results of your campaign is critical for future optimization, and while the system can give you some information about delivery rates and open rates, you also want to know about click rates and conversion rates. For this, you can choose to either embed a clickable link (a feature supported by SMSEdge) or include a unique promo code.

As you're limited to just 160 characters, understandably you should not be using the full URL for the clickable link.

You could set up your own short URL at your own domain (companyname.com/offer). This could then redirect to the actual offer page, but it also means that the URL could be shared outside of your campaign and this could skew your reporting numbers.

SMSEdge


With SMSEdge, you can automatically have all your links shortened and optimized for tracking.

The shortened link can then be embedded in your messages with a unique code to track each and every SMS.

NEW LANDING URL

Name:

URL:

Shortcodes: 

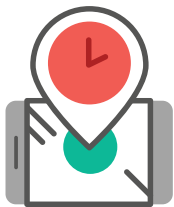
☐ Advanced Settings

☐ Subscribe to Push Notifications

Delivery Optimization

In addition to split-testing your campaign for ad copy and embedded links, it is also crucially important to optimize for delivery. Great ad copy doesn't mean anything if the message can't be reliably delivered, received, and read by the target audience. This goes beyond selecting the right pathways too.

Two key factors to consider here are:



TIME OF DELIVERY

Consider the time zones where your customers are located. While it might be noon in Los Angeles, it could be 4 in the morning in Hong Kong. Customers will not react kindly to receiving text messages at inconvenient times, particularly if these notifications wake them up in the middle of the night. This is where segmenting your list also comes into play.

As a general rule of thumb, never schedule messages to be sent outside of regular business hours. There may be some exceptions, of course, but that is a good rule to follow. From there, you can further split test and optimize for day of the week and time of day for optimal receipt, open, click, and conversion rates.



FREQUENCY OF DELIVERY

Send too many messages in too short of a timeframe, and the recipient will likely opt-out of receiving any future messages. Send too few messages across too long of a timeframe, and your brand may easily be forgotten or overlooked by your customers. You'd also be missing out on many potential opportunities.

For most campaigns, unless they relate to a specific event across a short time window, you will want to find a healthy medium. About once a week is a good rough guideline to follow, but your individual circumstances can certainly vary.



Campaign Automation

Manual split-testing for factors like ad copy and delivery time is important. However, it can also be time-consuming and may not necessarily be completely appropriate or necessary under all situations. When utilizing SMS marketing software, you'll also want to take advantage of campaign automation tools and options.



Drip Campaigns

Starting with a welcome text message, you may have a set campaign where messages are sent to a recipient in a specific sequence over a prescribed period of time.



Triggers

After someone has opted into your list, particularly if it is tied to a customer profile or account, messages and campaigns may be triggered by any number of events. These might include abandoned cart situations or recommending one product because they recently purchased a related product.



Funnels

Much like the drip campaigns describe above, sales funnels are a valued and popular component to SMS marketing strategies.



Segmentation

Based on the response you may receive from a subscriber, and based on any subsequent account activity, you may choose to automatically segment users in different sub-lists.

By utilizing dynamic parameters and pixel tracking, you can accurately tag each number within the acquisition funnel, from click to lead to sale. This data can then be further analyzed and taken into account as you move forward with more SMS marketing campaigns, as well as other active marketing efforts.



6 Analytics

Alongside growing your list and building your campaigns, analyzing your metrics is also an ongoing activity. Even so, because you will have set up distinct campaigns with specific objectives in mind, it is always prudent to perform a post-mortem to gauge the relative success of that campaign.

ROI Reports

It always boils down to dollars and cents, and that is why you need to utilize your SMS marketing software to generate reports revealing your return on investment (ROI). This is true whether your goal was to increase sales of a particular product, increase the number of followers on your Facebook page, or anything in between.

The simplest calculation for ROI is:

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} \text{\$} & \div & \text{👉} & = & \text{\$👉} \\ \text{Total Cost to} & & \text{Number of Desired} & & \text{Cost} \\ \text{Run Campaign} & & \text{Actions Taken} & & \text{per Action} \end{array}$$

In other words, if you spent \$1,000 on the campaign, and based on your tracking analytics a total of 50 sales were made, then your effective cost per action (eCPA) is \$20. If you made more than an average of \$20 profit on those sales, then you came out ahead. And whether or not you came out ahead, the particulars of the campaign can always be improved for future iterations.

This goes back to split-testing and segmentation. By digging deeper into more detailed reports, you can uncover the dynamics that resulted in better ROI than other parameters. Maybe sending message copy A to users in Western Europe on Tuesdays performed significantly better than sending message copy B to users in Eastern Europe on Thursdays.



Opt-in and Opt-Out Rates

In addition to the straight return on investment for each campaign, it is also important to look at the metrics relating to opt-in and opt-out rates over the same period. In the case of the latter, a dramatic spike in opt-out rates might indicate that the most recent campaign was not only received poorly, but also pushed users to the point where they wanted to unsubscribe.

As you run other promotional campaigns in an effort to grow your list, like on social media or even in print, be mindful of the direct and indirect impact these endeavors have on your opt-in, opt-out, and net opt-in rates too.



Leveraging Graphs and Charts

Be sure to take advantage of the depth and breadth of analytics made available to you through your SMS marketing platform. The more specific you can get about what parameters are most successful, the better you'll be able to craft and optimize future campaigns.

Some characteristics and metrics you will want to monitor include:

- ▶ Open rates
- ▶ Time of opening
- ▶ CTR by country
- ▶ CPC by country
- ▶ CPA by country

With many of these metrics, it is much easier to visualize the data with appropriate graphs and charts. While you will still want to inspect the actual data in table or spreadsheet form, the visual nature of graphs can give you a sense of what's working well (and what isn't).

Coupled with the ROI reports described above, the data revealed through various other reports can really help you hone your campaigns such that you focus your energy on what actually moves the needle. The Pareto principle applies: 80 percent of your gains will come from 20 percent of your customers.



Cost Effective Pricing

Taking the shotgun approach to text message marketing is a wasted effort. You cannot and should not blast your marketing message to the masses in a completely indiscriminate manner. This is also true in terms of message delivery.

The goal is to maximize successful delivery for optimal cost. Put another way, you need to be mindful of the cost per message sent, and as you run your campaign, you can begin to calculate your cost per action taken as well. Leveraging the technologies available to you via your SMS marketing platform can automate and optimize this process for you.

With a proprietary scoring algorithm and patented artificial intelligence solutions, SMSEdge provides powerful routing technology that delivers unparalleled global reach by split testing and then selecting the best communication partner. This reduces costs and increases delivery, in real time.



7 Conclusion

As with any other form of marketing, SMS marketing can either be simple or complicated, depending on your strategy, goals, understanding and choice of software. Some companies only utilize text messages for transactional SMS, informing customers of order details and shipping updates, while others utilize SMS marketing to promote new products or special deals.

Conclusion

Several key concepts were discussed in this guide that can apply to a broad range of businesses and applications, as they pertain to SMS marketing. These include:

- 1 Clearly define your goals and objectives for each campaign
- 2 Be aware of and strictly follow any regulations governing SMS marketing in regions where you operate and where your customers/subscribers may be located. This includes opt-in and opt-out legislation
- 3 Utilize individual tracking URLs on each message whenever possible
- 4 Track everything as much as possible
- 5 Leverage AI routing technologies to maximize delivery and minimize cost
- 6 Optimize campaigns continually with pre-campaigns and split-testing
- 7 Perform a post-mortem after each campaign to identify key positive (and negative) factors
- 8 Company benefits from this interaction in some way

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