



Summary of rules and etiquette for today's Text Message Marketer



A Mobile Marketing White Paper provided by ProTexting.com

Is texting the new email?

Have you noticed how whenever someone needs to reach you right away, they will send you a text message. It's almost like email is a last resort. With email, we are bombarded with so much spam; even the best filters don't catch everything. And many of us are managing several email accounts to manage social media, our professional lives and our personal lives. What is so intriguing about text messaging is that it is a direct conversation between the sender and the person receiving the message. With text messaging your customers know you must have something important to say to them!

Why Texting?

For the last fifteen years, we've been focusing on building our email lists. Email was the most effective way to reach customers, and it still holds true today. But things have changed. Email is no longer the fastest, smartest or best way to reach anyone. Email has really slowed down. Now it is time to start collecting mobile phone numbers. In the US alone, nearly 300 million people use mobile phones and that number is growing. Text messaging is the only sure communication tool that has the power to reach mostly everyone! When you want to be sure people will read something, send it by text!

Mobile Marketing: How will you build your mobile community?

Text messaging is the most direct way to stay in touch with your customers. Text messaging is a very personal method of communication because you can reach your customers no matter where they are or what they are doing. To build the most successful mobile marketing campaign possible, you must focus on collecting mobile numbers. People are often reluctant to give out their personal phone numbers. The question is how will you get these numbers from your clients and customers? Always keep in mind; you are really building your own mobile community. Text messaging is one of the most effective communication tools available to businesses today. And yet, good judgment should be exercised when using texting as a marketing tool. Bottom Line: does your customer want to hear from you in such a personal way?

Text Etiquette: Should your business have a policy about text messaging?

With more businesses using text messaging as a primary communication tool, should you have an official policy about using text messaging for marketing? We don't want text messaging to be abused in the same way that email is used as a marketing tool. We don't want to see text messaging fall into a black hole of spam. We help clients to be as effective as possible when using text messaging as a marketing tool and can offers three simple guidelines.

First, is your message appropriate to send by text? Hirings & firings, serious business discussions, romantic spats and breakups, and even marriage proposals are best handled in face-to-face encounters. Personal texts shouldn't be sent during work hours and for the most part work-related texts shouldn't be sent after hours unless an urgent situation is developing. Sending texts to employees after hours may make your employees feel as though they are on an electronic leash. If it is an emergency situation, then the text is most welcome, but don't text if it is routine communication that is best handled during office hours.

Second, always consider your target audience i.e., the recipient of your text message and ask are they in a time in place where they will want to receive your message? Are they in a place where they can respond to your message? Is your message critical enough that you need a rapid response? Make it clear that a reply is not always needed. The last thing you want to do is to put someone in the position of having to text you repeatedly while they are in the company of other people, at a social event or a private club. Let them know they can respond to your text message with a phone call.

Third, is your message important enough to text? If you text what is only ordinary and mundane, you will lose your audience, and they might even take your messages for granted and ignore them. Your text message should be important enough to either benefit or inform your recipient.

Best Practices in mobile marketing: *does your customer want to hear from you in such a personal way?*

Texas-based Cavender's Boot City and Cavender's Western Outfitters was aware of just how personal it is to send someone a text message, so they rolled out their mobile marketing program slowly and strategically. A lot of thought was put into making their text messages as relevant and as timely as possible. Text messages are only sent when it is particularly important to that customer, and usually only one or two messages are sent in a month. Great care is taken to show respect to the customer who has entrusted them with their mobile number. The message might be about a special celebrity event at a nearby store or free tickets being given away for a summer concert series. Whatever the text message is about, Cavender's wants customers to feel an increased sense of trust and loyalty.



The South Florida Group of Improv Comedy Club and Restaurants, a group of improvs and stand-up comics, currently operates five top comedy clubs. Each week, over thirty five shows are produced and sixteen thousand need to be filled.

An average of one hundred thousand text messages are sent to their customers on a typical weekend.

Mobile Marketing success for Cavender's meant having a high rate of customer engagement coupled with an extremely low opt-out rate. According to Cavender's spokesperson Brent Allison, "We're interested in building relationships and not just 'selling'. We would rather have 5000 fully engaged subscribers than 50,000 coupon seekers."

With the comedy clubs, there was a 986% return on investment, which had a direct impact on the bottom line. For example, during one weekend campaign this past January, the clubs realized a net revenue increase of \$58,469. Comedy club rep Scott Keeler said, "We have found that this success with mobile marketing could not be matched by any other marketing programs, including email marketing and outbound phone marketing."

Best Practices in Mobile Marketing. The comedy clubs and the western wear apparel company Cavender's had different outcomes, and yet both were successful in their use of mobile marketing because they used the same set of best practices.

The Permission factor. With most marketing, it is okay to be aggressive and abide by the old adage that it is best to seek forgiveness rather than to ask for permission. And while this principle works with most marketing, it doesn't with mobile marketing. Mobile phone numbers are personal and no one wants to be spammed! Effective mobile marketing is strictly permission-based. Both the comedy clubs and Cavender's had their customers' express consent to use their mobile numbers.

The marketing mix. Think about how mobile marketing will fit in with your overall marketing program and how it will enhance your existing relationship with your customers. For example, Cavender's uses both non-traditional media and traditional media, such as print, radio and billboards, TV Ads, radio ads, print display ads; outbound marketing via telephone, email blasts; and social media: Google+, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest. Cavender's wants to be where their customers are located and using SMS is another way to reach them. The south Florida Group uses multiple marketing strategies to maximize attendance: traditional media such as print, radio and billboards, outbound marketing via telephone, email blasts, social media and mobile marketing.

Crafting high-quality marketing messages. Is your marketing message meaningful enough to text? Take great care to create messages that are compelling and relevant for the customer. Big Screen, Little Screen—your message needs to be tailored to fit the medium. This isn't TV, it's texting. One text says it all. Feel free to be clever and create. Pique a little bit of curiosity. Write a headline that sells. Use photos, images, links and coupons that generously expand the message of your text. Create a message that is original and credible enough to fit with your brand. Every time you use SMS you need to provide value to the customer. Give a gift that deepens your customer's emotional connection to your brand. Make your gift memorable.

Frequency of messages. Be careful to assess how frequently your customers would like to receive messages. In the case of Cavender's, only sending one or two messages a month proved to be an effective tool of customer engagement, and yet for the Comedy Clubs messages might be sent several times in one day prior to a show. With Cavender's they were even careful about what time of day they texted customers. The comedy club customers, however, wanted frequent messages because they wanted to know exactly what time their favorite comedians were going to be onstage.

Many of the issues raised about best practices in mobile marketing can be answered with *Know your audience*. Spend a lot of thoughtful time thinking about what matters to them. Measuring ROI can be as simple as a click (tap). Mobile users can respond to your text. No matter who the audience is, there is no truer engagement than clicking to a number to speak to a live person and engaging in real time conversation. Mobile marketing is really about expanding and deepening your existing customer relationships. Think about what is your business objective, what do you want to achieve, and how mobile marketing will help you get there.

ProTexting.com team contributed to this Mobile Marketing white paper.

About ProTexting

Based in New York City, ProTexting offers a comprehensive suite of interactive mobile marketing tools designed to make it easy to create, deliver and monitor all types of mobile engagement campaigns. ProTexting helps businesses reach their customers on their mobile phones so they can achieve direct communication and increase sales. Beyond the ability to send text messages to groups, users can deliver: mobile coupons, mobile surveys and voting, mobile sweepstakes, mobile virtual business cards, QR codes and more. Many market segments and brands are already benefitting from ProTexting's user-friendly and secure environment: Retail Stores, Bars and Restaurants, Real Estate Agencies, Advertising Agencies, PR, Marketing and Event Planning Firms, Nightclubs and Entertainment venues, Sports Venues and Teams, Colleges and Universities, Religious and Social Organizations. For more information about ProTexting go to <http://www.protexting.com> or find us on Facebook [facebook.com/protexting](https://www.facebook.com/protexting) or Twitter [@protexting](https://twitter.com/protexting).

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