



Top 10 Tips to Launching a Successful Customer Opt-in Text Marketing Campaigns

Before I list my 10 Top Tips for mobile marketing, I wanted to make sure everyone reading this understands what is meant by an opt in list and how you can build a customer opt in text messaging list.

A customer opt in list simply means a person has given their mobile number to you and is allowing you to send them a text message which has relevant content and message to why they signed up. Be careful to make sure that your message content is always relevant.

The easiest way to allow your customer to opt into your list is from their mobile phone...funny that! All they need to do is send a text message to a short code that is 5 or 6 digits with a keyword that belongs to you.

e.g. if they are joining my mobile opt in list where my keyword was 'marty' and my short code number was 12345 then my customers would simply send a text message to 12345 with the word 'marty' in it. Technology will then take care of the rest including sending back an auto reply text and your lists starts to build.

So let's get on with my Top 10 Tips:

There are 2 core steps to launching any mobile marketing program:

- Building your permission based customer list of mobile phone numbers (Tips 1 - 5)
- Launching the text messaging campaigns to your customers. (Tips 6 - 10)

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1. Choose a simple keyword that is easy to text.

Most of your customers will join your mobile program by sending a text message to a short code number (5 or 6 digits) with a keyword to identify your program.

I have seen many businesses who are besotted with their own brand or business/personal name whom choose a campaign keyword which is over 10 characters and difficult to spell.

Your customer may have limited time to read your marketing material and have to remember both a short dial number and the keyword to text...keep it short and keep it simple to spell!

2. What relationship do you want to develop with your customer?

You are not trying to build a list of customer mobile numbers so you can SPAM them with a message whenever you want to.

Used properly, sending text marketing messages can not only initiate a call to action but can build a better more trusting relationship with your customer so make sure you plan a long term communication strategy and not one message at a time.

You should also consider collecting a customers name in the join process so you can personalize all future messages you send. Personalizing your text broadcasts can increase your response rates but be careful not to overstep the relationship too quickly as this must feel genuine to your customer.

3. Make an irresistible offer to join your campaign

We are all bombarded with so many different advertising messages every day and we all want to know what's in it for us.

You need to keep this front of mind with your marketing ...why should they join your mobile opt in list as they don't need another meaningless text message coming into their busy life!!

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Put yourself in your customer's shoes and ask yourself what they would really want from you and your business and build that into the marketing material your user will read or hear. Focus on your call to action that will have customers rushing to text your keyword...does it stand out, is it exciting and a no-brainer to join?

4. Integrate your mobile program into ALL your marketing activity.

Do not limit the amount you integrate your keyword commands to join your mobile opt in lists in all your current marketing activity.

Include it in your TV & Radio advertising, website, your email footer, print advertising, merchandise material, your shop window, on your receipts or invoices, on your products, on your mobile phone voice message...put your keyword and short code on everything. (If your budget allows, try different keywords for different advertising mediums so you know which is the most successful)

Don't forget all the social media channels as well. If you use Facebook, Twitter, photobucket etc then make sure you include this information as often as possible and if you don't use social media you really need to as they work hand in hand with mobile marketing.

5. Keep the message on the marketing material simple

Depending on which medium your customers view or hear will depend on how long they have to understand both what they get and what they have to do to join your opt-in list.

Test marketing is still in its infancy in the US so you have to keep things as simple as possible, if you are including this message on TV & radio ads where you may only have 30 - 60 seconds then make sure you repeat the keyword and short code at least 5 times and not just once at the end.

If it's in print in magazines, on websites, on packaging etc make sure the font and colors of the keyword and short code are a bigger font and the colors catch the eye.

The more and more companies launch marketing to join in opt in lists for text marketing, the more the average person in the street will instinctively know what to do...however for the time being always keep it super basic.

Make sure you also disclose in your marketing material that users may be charged standard message rates when they receive a message. The company/software you select

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to manage your opt-in list and text broadcast will explain more about these legal requirements.

6. Your marketing text message must be simple, relevant & timely

It is vitally important that all 3 of these factors are aligned as just any one off target will at best, affect the message penetration and at worse, could damage your customer relationship...forever!

If the message is clear but not relevant to the recipients needs or what they are expecting they will no doubt be annoyed...if it's a relevant message but they receive it at 2am then this ill timed interruption could be very negative for your businesses.

Most companies you can use to send the text messages will only enable you to send 160 characters in each broadcast so you have to make each word count.

Text messaging also has its own shortened language, which you can use to get more info it.

However be careful not to get too cryptic and use text 'lingo' that goes over the head of your target audience. Anyone under 30 years of age should be pretty savvy and probably most under 40 will understand the message but any older and you are risking the message being lost in translation!

7. Think about the viral effect - Good & Bad!

One of the most powerful effects of messaging via text messaging is that the receiver can forward the message to a friend or family. Your message can spread like fire if it has the right incentive so think about a call to action that involves spreading the message.

Also remember that same message can be distributed with negative effect so consider the consequences because your message may only be sent to hundreds or a few thousands but within an hour could have multiplied 10 fold.



8. Listen to your customer & Capture feedback

Remember sending a text message is not like sending a pager message.

It's a bi-directional messaging tool so when you send campaign messages to your customers, consider the feature which enables you to capture their feedback and opinions as they will appreciate your interest and will find it so very easy to reply!

Some people argue that this could mean they have hundreds of messages to review every time they message their customer opt in list.

I say how lucky are you that your customers want to share their wants and needs with you. You will never get a quicker and more direct way to find out what your customers do and don't like about your business so put on your thicker skin for an hour and read and learn.

9. Ensure your customers can ALWAYS opt out

Even if a customer willingly joins your mobile marketing program there will come a time when some of these people just aren't interested in your business or messages any more.

Don't take it personally and hopefully it won't be many but its vital the process the customer can use to leave your mobile program is even easier than the method for joining.

MMA guidelines specify the exact requirements of how a user is able to unsubscribe and if you choose the right supplier then they will provide this functionality as part of their core service.

Just make sure you test it once your service goes live! ☺

10. Lead your customers to a richer experience

This tip is a little more advanced and is something you should consider after you have launched a number of messaging campaigns and are feeling comfortable with the medium.

Much like E-Mail contains links to websites so can you include a link to a mobile site (called WAP site) so you can start sending text messages with a link to your WAP site.

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Setting up your WAP site will enable you to publish much richer information that can elaborate on your text message offer. This can include photos, audio and even video.

For more information on setting up your own WAP sites [click here](#)