

The Ez Guide To Mobile Marketing With Text Messaging

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Introductory Note

The prospect of launching your first mobile marketing campaign can be downright scary. Mobile is a new platform, with new conventions, new language, and new metrics. Perhaps you've read a white paper in the past. It was probably dozens of pages long and filled with incomprehensible jargon. It discussed mobile marketing campaigns that promised paradigm shifting results. The only problem with the paper was that the campaigns it spoke of were dauntingly complex, and they seemed to rely on technology that has yet to truly arrive. Moreover, they were expensive, and they necessitated that you put your business in the hands of an expensive marketing firm.

We understand where you are coming from. And that is why we put together this Ez Guide To Mobile Marketing With Text Messaging. What makes this paper different?

- **Simplicity:** Mobile Marketing encompasses a number of exciting different methods, from mobile video to location-based advertising. The problem with these methods is twofold: they are unproven and require consumers to possess sophisticated devices, and they are incredibly complicated for businesses to implement. That's why we like to focus on SMS. Text messaging bypasses these hurdles. Nearly every mobile phone supports text messaging, and with 600 billion text messages sent per year in the United States, a majority of consumers are familiar with the technology.
- **Do-It-Yourself:** Mobile Marketing does not need to be difficult. This guide will show how you can quickly get started with a Do-It-Yourself (DIY) solution that won't sacrifice any of the power and effectiveness of an expensive, agency-run campaign.
- **Cost:** In economic times good or bad, you always want to keep a careful eye on the return on investment (ROI) of your marketing campaigns. DIY mobile marketing with text messaging fulfills this goal in two ways. First, text messaging is inexpensive. Rates per message are as low as a few pennies each. And second, you can use a powerful DIY mobile marketing software package to carefully monitor costs and response rates in real time.

Ready to learn how easy it is to launch your first mobile marketing campaign?

About Ez Texting:

Since 2006, Ez Texting has led the mobile marketing industry in providing a simple, affordable text messaging platform for small to medium-sized businesses. We proudly offer the only US-based turnkey online solution that allows clients from all industries – education, hospitality, religion, politics, non-profits, technology and more – to develop and execute a text messaging campaign within minutes.

Own a fast-food franchise and need to send instant coupons to hungry customers? Organizing a weekly soccer league for your kids and want a quick way to communicate with fellow parents? Looking for a way to capture incoming leads for your sales team? Look no further.

Using our powerful platform, clients can setup SMS alerts, voting, contests, polls and much more. Get instant feedback from your members right to your Ez Texting inbox with our true 2-way messaging capabilities. And with the easy-to-remember shared short code 313131, setting up keywords is a breeze. We also offer advanced API and dedicated short code options.

Ez Texting currently supports messaging to the US and Canada for a rapidly growing client base of over 40,000 users.

A Note From Shane Neman CEO of Ez Texting, Inc.

A few years ago, the term “mobile marketing” was a concept far too esoteric and technical for businesses to grasp, let alone attempt to implement in-house. Ez Texting offers a web-based mobile text messaging platform for businesses. Here’s how it works: You connect to Ez Texting online, tap out a message and then it is sent out to your intended audience (customers, organization members, employees, etc). For marketers, customers on the receiving end can choose to either ignore the note or respond to the promotion.

When a local sales team from Jostens, the yearbook and class ring company, recently used Ez Texting to remind students in the Puyallup, Wash., area about payment due dates, the number of people who paid for the company’s graduation products ahead of schedule rose by as much as 40%. Because of that success rate this Jostens team scrapped its direct mail campaign, saving it roughly \$1,000 in postage.

We love helping people reach that "Aha!" moment. So many clients come to us with ideas they can only conceptualize. It's rewarding to present them with techniques that can help their ideas evolve into real results.

We also love educating customers about what exactly mobile marketing is, how they can use it and showing them what kind of results they can expect. That's a big feat for a small team of people, but we have managed to help over 40,000 customers and continue to do so every day.

- Shane Neman
- CEO, Ez Texting, Inc.

What Is Mobile Marketing & Why Is It Different?

Mobile Marketing is, simply put, the practice of extending your marketing efforts to mobile devices. Today 'mobile devices' primarily means mobile phones, including smart phones such as the Blackberry and the Apple iPhone. In the future we will likely see full-fledged mobile computers, with persistent connections to the Internet. Such devices will offer a rich media marketing platform. However, those services are not yet here on a meaningful scale. For example, less than a quarter of Americans have ever browsed the mobile web.ⁱ And this represents the fundamental conundrum facing your firm when you consider whether to launch your first mobile marketing campaign. You've heard that mobile marketing is the future of advertising, but just not yet.

Only that's not the case.

Contrary to what you may have heard, Mobile Marketing is here, and savvy firms, from Fortune 500 companies to small businesses, are already running successful mobile campaigns. SMS Text Messaging is the key to this puzzle.

Nearly every phone in the United States supports text messaging. Over half of all Americans have sent or received a text message. The average mobile phone subscriber sends nearly 200 text messages every month. When you look closer, at the prized 18 – 29 demographic, the adoption rate is even higher, edging toward saturation at 85%. Among those 30 – 49 years old, the adoption rate is at 65% and climbing.ⁱⁱ

So Americans are clearly texting. But what do they think about being marketed to via text message? In a recent Direct Marketing Association survey, 70% of the sample revealed that they had *responded* to a marketing text message. To put this in perspective, the DMA adds that only 30% of those surveyed responded to a marketing email.ⁱⁱⁱ

Why are consumers so eager to respond to marketing text messages? The answer reveals the value text messaging offers to both you and your customers:

- **It's Interactive** – 21st century marketing is about having a conversation with your customers, rather than shouting at them. A world saturated with intrusive advertising like spam, pop-ups, and commercials has overwhelmed consumers. Increasingly, they tune out messages broadcast to a wide audience, whether by using digital video recorders to

skip past commercials, or simply by ignoring the banner ads on their favorite website.

- **It's Personal** - Your customers expect you to speak to them, and text messaging allows you to reach them individually, whenever, wherever, in the palm of their hands. This reach is of value to you the marketer. It also is of value to your customers. With a few taps of their thumbs they can respond to whatever message that you have sent them. With text messaging you can build relationships with your customers.
- **It's Immediate** – Text Messaging, like Twitter, and Instant Messaging, is blazingly fast. With text messaging you can communicate with your customers as speedily as they are now accustomed to living. You can also move quickly. Say you are a winter wear shop and you see that today a snowstorm is on its way. In less than five minutes you can send a text message to your customers containing a special offer on hats and gloves.
- **It's Trackable** – When you send out text messages to your customers you can see, in real time, who has responded to your message.
- **It's New** - Although thousands of companies large and small are already marketing to their customers via text message, the medium is still in its infancy. If you act now, you are letting your customers know that you are a forward-thinking firm. Your marketing efforts will break through the traditional clutter.

What Is The Value Proposition?

Mobile Marketing comes in many different flavors. For the vast majority of businesses, we think that text messaging is the best way to reach your consumers. In order to give you a quick overview of your options, below we walk you through the forms of mobile marketing other than text messaging that are available, explaining their pros and cons.

- **Advertising on the Mobile Web** – Many prominent websites now offer custom tailored sites for mobile phones, via WAP, and specially designed iPhone or Blackberry sites. The problem is, less than a quarter of Americans use the mobile web. This seriously restricts the reach of your mobile advertising campaign. Furthermore, when you design a banner ad for the mobile web you need to make sure that it will display correctly on thousands of different devices, made by over a dozen different manufacturers.

If your firm does decide to build its own WAP site, you can easily integrate it into your text messaging campaigns.

- **Bluetooth/Infrared** – In recent years a number of brands have rolled out Bluetooth and infrared marketing campaigns. In a typical scenario, a street advertisement will offer consumers the opportunity to receive marketing content wirelessly at the ‘hotspot.’ We have seen such initiatives from Discovery Channel and Pepsi using New York City bus stop shelters. These campaigns, while technologically innovative, are rare.
- **Location Based Advertising** – Many mobile phones are equipped with Global Position System receivers. In a typical scenario, a store may send a special offer to a consumer when they are in the neighborhood. This technology is growing in popularity overseas, but it is very much in its infancy in the US.
- **Multimedia Message Service (MMS)** – Most mobile phones support multimedia messages, which can contain text, sound, images, and even video. The iPhone, notably does not support MMS. The downside to MMS marketing is that receiving such messages can be costly to consumers. Furthermore, different networks and different devices conform to differing standards, hindering simple, ubiquitous campaigns. Successful MMS campaigns are typically run “on-deck,” which means that they are confined to a single carrier. Although running an “on-

deck” campaign allows you to leverage the power of MMS by conforming to a particular carrier’s technology, you are limited to that carrier’s customers

- **Mobile Search** – Marketers familiar with Cost Per Click (CPC) search advertising programs such as Google AdWords, may be aware that these programs are now available on the mobile web. Extending your CPC search campaign to the mobile web presents numerous challenges. First, mobile search suffers the same ‘reach’ drawbacks as mobile advertising. Furthermore, the major cellular carriers hope to keep searches in house, rather than ceding their users to a mobile search engine; and when consumers search on their mobile device their intentions are very different than when they are sitting at their desktop.
- **Mobile Gaming** – Consumers have begun to embrace gaming on their mobile phones. Some firms have begun to advertise within freely available games. Mobile gaming is certainly popular, but it does not offer scale. Furthermore, your firm may have difficulty finding suitable placements.

As you can see, all of these marketing formats have serious drawbacks. We would not be surprised to see them become more viable in the future. For now though, none of them offer the reach, the simplicity, and the low cost of text messaging.

Now let’s take a look at mobile marketing with text messaging:

- **You Can Do-It-Yourself** – Small and medium businesses that do not have the inclination or the resources to work with a marketing agency can launch a text messaging campaign in-house using a simple web-based software/service like Ez Texting. All you need is a web browser and a credit card to get started.
- **Text Messaging Is Inexpensive** – The cost of text messaging is important to you and your customers alike. Sending out a mass text messaging campaign is inexpensive (prices as low as a nickle per message). Receiving text messages comes at a very low price as well: most mobile phone plans include at least a few hundred messages per month, and additional messages cost only pennies to receive. Heavy texters – most of whom are concentrated in the 18-35 age group – are likely to have unlimited message plans.

- **High Penetration Rate** – Half of all Americans are already texting, and even those who don't text are almost certain to own a phone that supports text messaging. Over 250 million Americans own a mobile phone, and nearly all of them are ready to receive your message. No other type of mobile marketing can match text messaging's reach.
- **Begin The Conversation With Text Messaging** – Other types of mobile marketing will grow in importance in the future. If you start text messaging with your customers now, you'll have the relationship (and data) in place to reach them in new ways in the future.

How To Start Your Text Message Marketing Campaign In 9 Steps

As this is the Ez Guide to Mobile Marketing with Text Messaging we hate to complicate things, but we do need to help you understand an important difference between the two common types of text message marketing campaigns. Don't worry – the difference is simple, but as you will see, the steps that you will take to get started will vary based on the type of campaign that you are planning.

There are two types of text messaging campaigns: **pull** and **push**. In a push campaign, your firm starts off with a database of opted in phone numbers. A pull campaign is designed to build a database of phone numbers for future use.

- 1) **Pick A Firm** – Can they handle volume; do they support all carriers; do they offer easy-to-use software; do they offer advanced features you may want to use down the road?
- 2) **Target The Customers/Members You Would Like To Reach** – The power of marketing with text messages is that it allows you to reach the customers you want to reach. Figure out who they are before you design your campaign. (If you are conducting a push campaign, you already have these customers' phone numbers. If you are launching a pull campaign, you will design the campaign to best reach your target customers)
- 3) **Setup A Means To Collect Numbers** – There are three ways to collect phone numbers. You can direct your customers to opt-in by sending a message with your keyword to a short code; you can collect customer phone numbers using a web widget; or, if you are conducting a push campaign, you can easily import previously collected phone numbers into your campaign database.
- 4) **Choose A Keyword** – A Keyword is a short word (which may include numbers) that customers send a text message to, in order to join your list. An example would be: *'Text KEYWORD to SHORTCODE to join our text messaging list.'* When you select a mobile marketing firm to work with, such as Ez Texting, they will allow you to use their shared Short Code. In Ez Texting's case this code is 313131. Feel free to give this a try! Text EZ to the number 313131 and see what happens.

- 5) **Choose A Good Call To Action (CTA)** – You want to offer your customers value in return for joining your database. A typical CTA might go: *Text KEYWORD to SHORTCODE to join our text messaging list and receive 10% off your next purchase at the boutique.*
- 6) **Design Your Promotional Efforts** – Your mobile marketing campaign can stand alone, or it can compliment your existing marketing campaigns.
- 7) **Keep It Simple!** – When you send out a mass message, keep it simple. You have 160 characters. Use them wisely. *And always send a test message to yourself!*
- 8) **Always Allow Your Customers To Opt-Out** – When you first text your customers you need to let them know how to Opt-Out from receiving future text messages. This is usually accomplished by replying *STOP* to one of your messages.
- 9) **Track Your Results** – When you run a campaign you are going to collect a lot of data – response rates, time of day, and other data points. Use that data to design your next campaign and you'll achieve even greater ROI!

The Value Of Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Mobile Marketing

As we've already shown you, Mobile Marketing with text messaging is easy. There are other advantages, beyond ease of use, to DIY text messaging:

- **Ease Of Use** – A Mobile Marketing package like Ez Texting is simple to use. It is web-based, which means that there is no software to install. You can check on your campaigns and launch new ones from any computer with an Internet connection or even directly from your own cell phone.
- **Cost Effective** – Our current economic climate is extremely challenging. There is a good chance that your customers are spending less. Meanwhile, your competitors are cutting prices, hoping to make whatever money they can. When you start looking for places to cut corners, your marketing budget often winds up in the crosshairs. A DIY mobile marketing campaign allows you to keep talking to your customers without the upfront costs of traditional ad buys. You can't afford to stop advertising, and text messaging allows you to eschew expensive, untargeted campaigns in favor of inexpensive, targeted campaigns. Many Ez Texting clients tell us they were able to cut back on other, more costly advertising methods once they built an effective database of opt-in customers.
- **Control** – Everyone needs a helping hand every now and then, and a premier mobile marketing firm like Ez Texting is always there to help you get started and answer your questions. What you don't need is an expensive agency to do things you can do yourself, on their terms, instead of your own. Ez Texting's software allows you to conceive and send messages on your own. Even more importantly, you control every dollar that you spend.
- **Data** – When you run your own mobile marketing campaign you control your data. Names, phone numbers, response rates – whatever data you collect, it is all yours. Do not rely on an agency to provide you with your data upon request.
- **Campaigns That Are Uniquely Yours** – Instead of allowing an agency to repurpose a cookie-cutter campaign, with a DIY solution you (or your marketing team) design campaigns that fit what your company does and what it represents.

Text Message Marketing That Goes Beyond Mere Messages

SMS Text messaging is the most popular and effective form of mobile marketing because it does exactly what it is supposed to do. You can achieve great ROI doing nothing more than occasionally texting your customers with notices, reminders and offers. But, as you will see, there is so much more that you can do. Importantly, for you and for your customers, all of these compelling methods keep things simple.

- **Mobile Couponing** - Invite customers to text in your keyword to receive instant coupons that they can display in your store for a discount. In numerous surveys, consumers report that they are especially open to messages that offer value.
- **Contests** – Commonly referred to as “Text-2-Win”, a mobile contest offers consumers the opportunity to text in to win a prize. Ez Texting’s software includes built-in contest functionality, allowing you to randomly select winners or to offer prizes to the first x number of entries. Every person that texts into the contest will be added to your database of phone numbers
- **Voting & Trivia** - Interacting with consumers often produces the most successful marketing campaigns. Not only do Voting & Trivia allow customers to put in their two cents on a topic, but you collect valuable demographic data about your target consumers’ likes, dislikes and personality trends.

Tips & Tricks To Turbo Charge Your Mobile Marketing Campaign

Do-It-Yourself mobile marketing with Ez Texting's software is simple. That does not mean that our software isn't extremely powerful. After spending a few minutes sending out experimental messages, you'll be ready to try out some of our advanced features:

- **Message Forwarding** – The messages that your customers send you can be forwarded to your email address or directly to your own mobile phone. Radio stations use this feature to relay song requests to DJs. Churches set up forwarding to a cell phone for anonymous prayer requests during church services.
- **Send Messages From Your Phone** – When you just cannot get to a computer with an Internet connection you still can send out messages to your database of customers. This is perfect for one-the-go clients and marketers. Busy working the floor at a convention or a trade show? Send out timely messages to your clients from your mobile phone.
- **Message Scheduling** –If you know that you want to send out a message at some time in the future, just enter it into the system, schedule it, and then when the time comes the message will be sent out automatically.
- **Web Widget** - A fully customizable signup widget allows patrons to join your text messaging database from any website, email blast, MySpace or Facebook page. This security-enabled widget only subscribes unique, active cell phone numbers. Simply copy and paste the widget and you are done!
- **Random Sends** – Running a special offer? Only want to hit some of your customers? With a random send the Ez Texting software will send out messages to x number of random phone numbers in your database.
- **Application Programming Interface (API)** – Generally API is for advanced users only. If you don't know what an API is, it is probably best to skip to the next page. Through your Ez Texting account, you can use our API to integrate the sending and receiving of text messages with your own website or application. This is helpful for firms with existing platforms, such as doctor's offices that wish to add an SMS notification system to their CRM tool.

Look Who's Texting

As we said in the introduction to this guide, mobile marketing with text messaging is already here. Businesses large and small are running campaigns this very moment. Last year, SuperStop USA, a gas station in St. Paul, MN, launched one of our favorite Ez Texting powered mobile marketing campaigns:

SuperStop USA – When gas prices are scheduled to go up, SuperStop USA owner Tony Donatell knows in advance. He believed that his customers would make it a point to fill up their tanks at his station if they were alerted in advance of the price increase. What Mr. Donatell needed was a way to quickly reach his customers with this information.

SuperStop USA found a solution with an Ez Texting powered program called *Gas Alerts*.^{iv} To attract subscribers, the station deployed Point of Purchase (POP) displays featuring their CTA, ranging from in-store signs at the registers to promotional posters outside at the pumps instructing customers to text “GAS” to 25827.

Super Stop amassed over 70 subscribers in less than two weeks. They reported a response rate greater than 20% for each text message blast. The program is still going strong a year later.

The following three campaigns were some of 2008's most prominent and successful mobile marketing efforts:

American Idol – A few years ago, the producers of *American Idol* and AT&T teamed up to allow *Idol* viewers to vote on their favorite contestants via SMS. In 2008, fans voted in record numbers, sending in 78 million text messages. In 2008, AT&T expanded their *Idol* efforts to include “voting reminders, trivia, a TXT-n-Win sweepstakes promising the winner \$50,000 cash and a trip for two to the *Idol* series finale in Los Angeles, and contestant ringtones and video clips featuring outrageous audition moments.”^v

President Barack Obama's 2008 Election Campaign – Political historians will be studying Barack Obama's historic campaign for decades to come. There is one thing that everyone already agrees upon – Obama's New Media team leveraged the web, social networks, and text messaging in unprecedented ways to communicate with supporters, recruit donors, and enhance get-out-the-vote (GOTV) efforts. Famously, the Obama campaign announced their Vice Presidential selection of Joe Biden to opted in subscribers

via text message. The message went out to 2.9 million mobile phones. The phone numbers went into the campaign database.

Finally, when Election Day came, supporters received text messages reminding them to vote. This was much more than a nifty way to end a campaign that exploited text messaging so successfully – research has found that SMS is more effective than all GOTV methods other than old fashioned door-to-door canvassing. Canvassing may be more effective at turning out votes, than text messaging, but it costs nearly 20x as much per recruited vote.^{vi}

The American Red Cross – The American Red Cross raised \$190,000 dollars in 2008 with its Text 2HELP program. The program is activated during major disasters. According to The Wireless Foundation, “subscribers of participating wireless carriers can send a text message to "2HELP" (24357) containing the word "GIVE." A \$5 tax-deductible donation will be made to the American Red Cross for disaster relief efforts. Donations will appear on customers' monthly bills or be debited from a prepaid account balance.”

In 2008, the Text 2HELP campaign was advertised across various communications channels, and received its biggest boost when both Presidential candidates called their constituents to action. During the Republican National Convention, Mike Duncan, the chairman of the RNC, asked convention attendants to take out their mobile phones and text in a donation. The Obama campaign leveraged their own text messaging campaign to aid the Red Cross, sending their entire database of subscribers a message asking them to text GIVE to 24537 (2HELP).

**Ready To Start Your Own DIY Mobile Marketing Campaign?
Visit EzTexting.com To See How Easy Mobile Marketing Can Be!**

ⁱ <http://news.bango.com/2008/08/26/mobile-web-use-in-us-surges-ahead>

ⁱⁱ http://pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Mobile.Data.Access.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ http://www.bizreport.com/2008/07/dma_text_message_campaigns_most_successful.html

^{iv} The program is handled by an Ez Texting sister company.

^v <http://www.att.com/gen/press-room?pid=4800&cdvn=news&newsarticleid=25195>

^{vi} <http://www.newvotersproject.org/text-messaging>