

# Six reasons your text message marketing efforts aren't as effective as they coul

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Text messages are limited to just 160 characters. When you send a text to your customers, it's crucial that every single word is helping and not hurting your cause. Language in marketing is always important but it's even more so when the channel calls for very concise messages. The following six mistakes might be keeping you from achieving maximum success with your text message marketing efforts.

## **Too many words**

Even if SMS allowed for more than 160 characters, you wouldn't want to use them. The nature of the SMS channel demands a concise and clearly worded message that can be read in seconds. The research shows that people will only give about five seconds of their time to looking at promotional content before moving on to something else. You have seconds to get and hold their attention. That means no filler words of any kind.

## **You use jargon or textspeak**

Unless your business is in a highly technical field and your target audience is well educated in it, you shouldn't be using larger or jargon words. Aim to use language that virtually any person on your recipient list will be able to understand. For the same reason, you shouldn't be using textspeak either. While clever little acronyms and emoticons might convey more with fewer characters, you can't count on your audience understanding it and it tends to come across as juvenile and annoying rather than hip.

## **The wrong focus**

Everyone's favorite subject is themselves. So while it may be tempting to make your messages about your brand and about your products, it will come across as shameless self-promotion. People opt in and stay opted in to receive your texts when they're getting something out of it. Craft your messages so that it stays focused on the customers and how your brand will make their lives better.

## **Passive voice**

In active voice, the subject of the sentence is acting upon the object. In passive voice, the object of the sentence is being acted upon by the subject of the sentence. People prefer the active voice while the passive voice tends to make people lose interest.

## **Emotionless language**

Good writing is compelling, not just convincing. You should use emotionally charged words that are going to be more likely to get your audience to have an emotional response and more likely to get your audience to take action.

## **No sense of urgency**

Every text message needs a call to action and a sense of urgency. If recipients aren't immediately persuaded to redeem a coupon or "like" your Facebook page or do some other action, the chances of them remembering to do so later drops significantly. Immediacy is an important trait of the SMS channel. People receive, open, and read text messages within a couple of minutes. If you suffuse each message with a sense of urgency, they'll be the most likely to take the course of action you are striving for.

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Author: Lorraine Brown

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