



## **SMS MARKETING GUIDE**

Everything you need to know about using SMS marketing to recruit, retain and renew memberships.

Including tips, ideas and success stories.

# Hello...

As mobile devices continue to develop and we become more and more reliant on them for both our work and social lives; it's becoming increasingly important to ensure you have mobile included in your marketing mix.

From checking your bank balance or shopping to searching for the best restaurant to eat in. Our mobile phones are now the source of all information and PCs are becoming less and less important. In fact, mobile internet browsing overtook desktop in 2014 meaning mobile marketing is more important than ever.

FireText is a UK-based team of developers, problem solvers, marketers, tinkerers, all working around the clock to offer the most powerful text marketing platform...for you!

Whether you're brand new to SMS marketing or a texting pro, we offer outstanding support and advice to guide you through your campaign.

We are currently working with organisations large and small, across the UK from 4Networking to Mr Site and have seen some fantastic results. So, if you're looking for a cost-effective solution to renew, retain and grow your memberships, you've found it.

## **How many text messages do you receive that you don't open?**

### **Read on for:**

- How to make SMS marketing work.
- Five ways SMS will boost membership.
- Success Story – 4Networking.

The FireText Team

# The Stats



**91%**

of mobile phone owners use their device for SMS

You know you're communicating with customers in a way they know and love.

Smart Insights, 2013

**98%**

of SMS messages are opened

You can guarantee your message will be opened and read.

Frost & Sullivan, 2011

**94%**

of SMS are read within 5 minutes of being received

Perfect for time bound campaigns!

Ofcom, 2012

OVER **62%**

of UK adults own a smartphone

And growing...enrich your messages with URL links to online content.

ComScore, 2013

**75%**

of smartphone users like to receive offers by SMS

Give your customers what they want.

YouGovPLC, 2010

**81%**

of adults keep their mobile switched on 24/7

Send your campaign with confidence that it will be seen.

Media Ofcom, 2011

# SMS Marketing – how to make it work

SMS marketing is fast, cost-effective and personal – it's no wonder it's becoming increasingly popular with businesses of all sizes, but it's important to use it well.

It's easy and convenient to use your mobile phone for everything you used to use your PC for i.e. email and browsing and with the number of smartphone users increasing this trend is set to continue. Consumers, however are used to receiving email marketing and are becoming immune to it, there is no need to read them straight away and therefore they don't prompt an instant response, if at all.

With a 98% open rate, SMS is clearly the most reliable way to ensure your message gets seen on a mobile device. You can be personal and straight to the point in a text message, everyone knows how to read and reply to them and they don't take up too much of their time.

When you send an SMS, you're delivering a message straight to the customer's pocket. Knowing that over 94% of text messages are read within 5 seconds of being received, if you need an instant response you can rely on SMS to deliver.

You need to ensure your customers want to receive the messages; if you send an unwanted text you will do your business more harm than good. You can contact customers you've interacted with previously or let your customers opt-in to your mailing list to ensure good quality data – give your customers a reason to opt in – e.g. to receive special offers or join a 'VIP club'.

Likewise, always provide an opt-out. It may hurt your pride if someone decides they'd no longer like to receive your offers, but it will hurt your reputation more if you don't give customers the option. Don't focus on the opt-outs, put your energy into providing irresistible offers to the customers who do want to hear from you.

Later in this guide, we'll give you some examples on how to use SMS to boost membership.

At just 160 characters, SMS may be small but is certainly powerful and a versatile tool for every business.

# Who's using SMS marketing?

“FireText’s SMS service is utterly brilliant and has significantly improved our business – our costs are down, our green credentials are up and our communications are now hugely more effective. The best bit – our customers love the SMS service”



**Theodore Wilkins**  
Leeds Art Gallery



**Di Timberlake**  
4Networking

“The SMS service has become a valuable part of our renewal programme. It ensures that everyone receives a timely reminder without tying up valuable staff time and our members find it a useful prompt to take action. My only regret is that I didn’t start using it sooner!”

“The FireText integration is really easy and allows us to remind customers to renew services in an instant.”



**Clifford McDowell**  
Mr Site

# Five ways SMS will boost membership

This is by no means a definitive list of how to use SMS for membership; but hopefully it will help get your creative ideas flowing!

## 1 Recruit

As with any business, it is important to recruit new customers in order to grow and develop as a company. Contact prospective customers with a low-cost SMS campaign, with a 98% open rate it's the perfect platform to make sure your message gets read.

Thank you for your interest. Sign up to annual membership for just £99 and benefit from these discounts every month.

## 2 Retain

Once your members are on board you need to keep them up to date with exciting content to remind them why they signed up and to ensure they stick with you. An SMS campaign is not only cost-effective but it's immediate too.

Hello Liz, as a valued member, receive a further 30% off your insurance renewal this month. Quote INSURANCE30 online or call 0800 123 4567.

## 3 Remind

How will members know their membership is about to expire? Communicating this with them is key to ensure retention rates are maintained. Automatically send an SMS reminder to members with their renewal date. Include a link in the message taking them straight to the renewal page and track click through rates with real-time reporting.

Hello Joe, your insurance is due to expire on 03/08. To take advantage of our fantastic offers. Call 0800 123 4567 or renew online at [www.firetext.co.uk](http://www.firetext.co.uk)

## 4 Renew

Make sure it's easy for customers to renew their membership and give them a good reason why they should. Renew before 1st January and get a 20% discount off your membership. With almost 100% read rate, you can ensure your offer gets seen.

Hello Harry, don't forget to renew your annual membership before 1st January to receive a 20% discount off your renewal! Call 0800 123 4567 or renew online at [www.firetext.co.uk](http://www.firetext.co.uk)

## 5 Reward

Once your members have signed up, you need to stay on their radar to ensure they see value in being a member. A simple text to update members on the latest benefits and offers is not only cost-effective for you but adds great value to the customers.

Hello Kate, as a thank you for renewing your membership, enjoy a 50% discount on any additional services this month. Enjoy! Use RENEW50 online or call 0800 123 4567

# How 4Networking are using SMS to save time & boost membership renewals

When it comes to renewing memberships, it can be costly and time consuming to send constant reminders out to your members. This case study shows how 4Networking's switch to SMS reminders enabled them to cut down their admin time and see a growth in memberships.

## The Objective

To increase membership renewals

To offer improved customer service in a fraction of the time

## The Plan

4Networking is the UK's only joined-up business networking organisation, running 5000+ meetings across the UK every year and a membership base of many thousands. With a range of different membership options available and a stream of membership renewals coming in every day, communicating with members about their membership renewal is a complex task. The central support team are busy running the HQ, chatting with customers and supporting the regional 4N teams; so they were looking for a way they could improve communication with customers, increase membership renewals whilst also saving time and money.

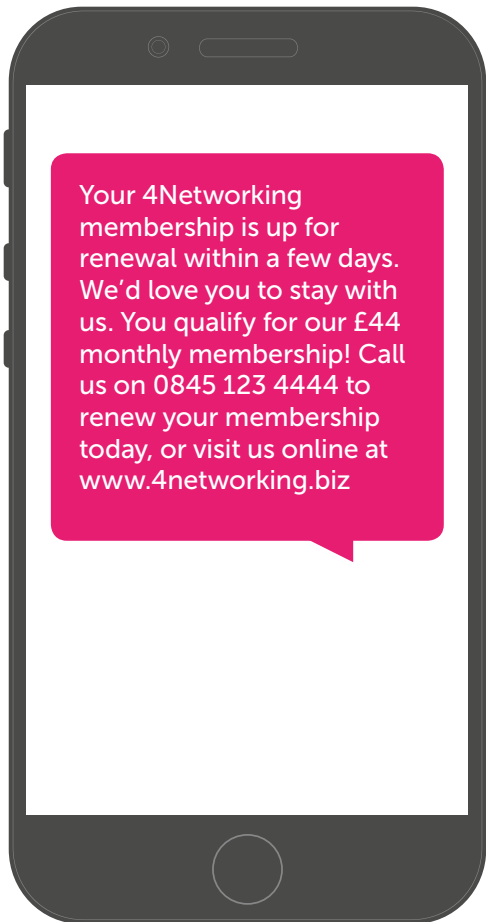
Office Manager Di Timberlake decided to trial an account with FireText;

“ I needed a solution that was not only cost-effective, but also user friendly for both myself and our members. It's vital our messages get seen, as emails often get missed and memberships can drop off. ”

Di wanted to keep the process simple so opted to send a message out every Monday morning to any members whose membership was due to expire that week. With the instant nature of SMS and high open rates, Di knew that her message would be seen.

The text message is simple and friendly and contains all the vital information for the member to renew; including a clear call to action.

## The Message



## The Results

The message takes just a couple of minutes to send out each week and instant delivery reporting shows when the message has been delivered.

The 4N phone is always busy on a Monday after the message is sent out and membership renewals have grown.

Di says,

- “ The SMS service has become a valuable part of our renewal programme. It ensures that everyone receives a timely reminder without tying up valuable staff time and our members find it a useful prompt to take action. My only regret is that I didn't start using it sooner! ”



# Last Word...

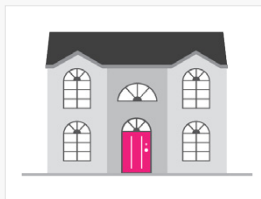
If you're looking for a way to communicate and engage with customers old and new then you've found it. SMS is simple, fast and gets results by improving customer service and increasing business.

In this guide, we've explored some great uses of SMS for membership to get you thinking; these are by no means definitive so please get in touch to discuss how SMS can work for you.

## Easy online SMS marketing for every type of business...



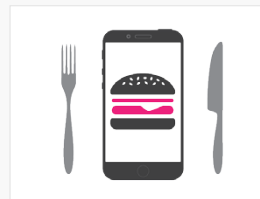
Recruitment Agencies



Estate Agents



Retail Shops



Restaurants



Hotels & Guest Houses

## Your in great company...



# Let's chat

Don't worry if you still have some questions; at FireText we're always talking SMS.

We'd love to talk to you. You can get in touch on:

Text us

**HELLO to 82228**

Talk to us

**0800 038 55 22**

Visit us

**firetext.co.uk**

Write to us

**hello@firetext.co.uk**

Join the conversation

