

## **SMS MARKETING GUIDE**

Everything you need to know on using SMS to boost your business, improve communication and engage with customers.

Including tips, ideas and success stories.

# Introduction

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.

With an open rate of 98%, SMS is the perfect way to update your guests on special announcements, confirm details or engage in conversation helping you to boost attendance. In particular, if the schedule changes at the last minute SMS is definitely the way to go, because you can be confident that virtually everyone will read it straight away. How many texts do you receive that you don't read?

We integrate nicely with others which makes it really simple to add SMS to your existing software and manage your SMS messages in one place. So, if you're looking for a cost-effective solution to increase communication and engage with customers and boost sales, SMS won't disappoint.

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

### Read on for:

- How to make SMS marketing work
- Five reasons you need SMS
- SMS marketing: it's not just about selling
- Success Story: Fill your restaurant fast
- Success Story: Communicate with job-hunters in an instant
- Success Story: Boost attendance at your event

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.

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

# Who's using SMS marketing?

“SMS is so simple and easy to use yet so effective in communicating with our audience....brilliant!”

## GRAD CORNWALL

Sam Tilley  
GradCornwall



Simon Goodwin  
Snowbombing

“FireText are brilliant! Messages are scheduled and sent in super quick time.”

“Using FireText is quick and easy, but most importantly cost-effective, we always see a healthy return-on-investment with our SMS campaigns.”



Michael O'Kane  
Pizza Hut

**BLACK**<sup>®</sup>  
**WHITE**  
**DENIM.**

Joanna Davies  
Black White

“FireText makes communicating with my highly valued customers so easy. It's great value, simple to use and delivers great results.”

# Five reasons you need SMS

Adding SMS to your communications toolkit will not only save you time, keep your communication costs down and boost sales. It's also a tried and tested way of staying in touch with customers in a way we know they love, have access to and is guaranteed to be seen. We've got five reasons why you can't afford to ignore SMS.

## 1 Help your business go green

We revealed previously that sending a text message has the lowest impact on our carbon footprint – in fact it's almost a carbon free way of communicating – so if you're looking for ways to make your business greener, SMS marketing is a big step in the right direction.

## 2 It's cost effective

At just 4p per message, with no monthly contract, an SMS campaign won't cost you the earth but you could see fantastic return on investment. Real-time reporting and trackable URLs can help you ensure your money is well spent.

## 3 Keep up with competitors

With smartphone users increasing daily, most businesses are finding ways they can make their business mobile friendly. SMS is tried, tested and has been around for over 20 years – using it to communicate with customers will ensure your business keeps up with market trends whilst using a reliable method.

## 4 Save valuable time

Sending an SMS to all your customers with FireText takes no longer than sending a text on your own phone. So, not only will you free up some precious time, with over 90% of messages read within 3 minutes of being received you could see results in minutes.

## 5 Your customers love it

We already know 98% of SMS get opened, putting it heads and shoulders above any other communication method in terms of read rate. Most people send and receives text messages on a daily basis so we know your customers like, have access to and know how to use SMS

# SMS marketing – it's not just about selling.

There is a common misconception that SMS marketing is only used to sell to customers. Whilst it is a great tool to reach customers with promotions and boost sales; that's not all it does. It's a chance to be really creative with your communication without swallowing up your budget.

## 1 Generate Leads

You can set up a 'keyword' and advertise it anywhere and everywhere – menus, posters, shop window, print adverts and on your website. This will allow customers to opt-in to your mailing list, providing you with lots of

Text RESTAURANT to 82228 for news, promotions and special offers.

new contacts and letting your customers do the hard work by building your database for you. Each new contact you collect will be a quality lead showing a genuine interest in your business. Give a reason for them to opt-in like a VIP Club or to receive special offers and promotions.

## 2 Event Planning

Send tickets, directions or confirm details to all guests at the click of a button. Why SMS over email? Because it's instant. In particular, if the schedule changes at the last minute SMS is definitely the way to go; because you can be confident that virtually everyone will read it straight away.

Hey Liz, the sun is out and the musicians are rehearsing! See you at 5pm tomorrow for Live Festival. Map and directions at [www.live.com/map](http://www.live.com/map).

## 3 Customer Service

It's not always about generating new customers, it's also important to retain the ones you already have and make sure your service is second to none. A welcome message ahead of a hotel stay or a quick follow on message after a visit could really enhance the customer's overall experience.

Mr Barker, we hope you enjoyed your stay at the Seaside Resort Hotel. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to improve our service in the future. Have a safe journey home.

## 4 Engage with Customers

You could take customer service one step further and open up the conversation. Engage with your customers by asking for feedback. Not only will this enhance their experience of you but it may also provide a valuable insight on how to develop and improve your services.

How did we do today? We'd love to hear your thoughts, reply FEEDBACK

## 5 Booking Confirmation

Confirm a package delivery, spa appointment or ticket purchase with a text. Not everyone wants to log into their emails and find that confirmation amongst all the other emails, with SMS that all important information is available instantly and effortlessly in your pocket.

Good news Lucy - your tickets have been booked. Simply show reference code FT340 at the gates. Enjoy the show!

# Fill your restaurant quickly with SMS

Stories like this one seem too good to be true but this case study comes straight from Kunwar Sood at Mumbai Café who tells us exactly why he believes SMS is an integral marketing tool for his business.

## The Objective

To promote Father's Day lunch offer  
To increase reservations for Father's Day

## The Plan

Mumbai Café is a popular North Indian restaurant and bar in Newington, Kent with a very proactive marketing strategy. Kunwar understands the importance of marketing in order to grow his client base, but running a restaurant keeps him very busy.

“I was looking for a platform which would enable me to send a simple message to my customers instantly, FireText was the perfect solution.”

Kunwar wanted to get a simple message out to all of his subscribers in an instant, with the aim of getting a quick response and to increase bookings for that weekend.

The message was simple and contained all relevant information, including the offer and price as well as contact details and a link to website.

Kunwar sees the importance of giving customers an opt-out which is another reason why he chose SMS.

## The Message



## The Results

Kunwar sent the message out at 11:20am on the Thursday before Father's Day.

By 1:30pm, **90 of the 100 seats** in his restaurant were booked.

Not only did the message produce instant results, but of the **2505** contacts it was sent to, just 9 chose to opt out of future offers.

“The response from our SMS campaigns has been fantastic, and without doubt has increased business. When teamed with the outstanding service I have received from the start, I cannot recommend FireText enough.”



# Communicate with job-hunters in an instant

We had a chat with Karen Hill from Diamond Recruitment Group who is staying up to date with candidates using SMS. She explains how FireText’s integration with Itris makes it easy to send messages to candidates from within their existing software.

## The Objective

- Stay in touch with candidates
- Provide instant reminders to casual workers

## The Plan

Diamond Recruitment Group is a leading Recruitment Agency in Northern Ireland. With offices throughout Northern Ireland, they specialise in helping people find jobs in Belfast and all over the UK. The friendly team at Diamond Recruitment Group focus in connecting job seekers with the perfect contract, temporary or permanent recruitment opportunity to suit their experience and skill set.

With a number of clients looking for both temporary and permanent jobs, the team at Diamond were looking for a solution to stay in touch and send timely reminders in a way that was both time-efficient for their team and accessible and useful for the candidates.

Karen is the Systems Administrator at Diamond and works closely with the team at Itris who provide their recruitment software. With so many candidates to manage, calling each one would not only be time consuming, but was also not always convenient for job-seekers to take the call.

After looking into her communication options she found that Itris had an integration with FireText and this would enable her team to send SMS messages to their contacts from within their existing recruitment software. Not only could she guarantee that the messages were getting through to the candidates, but she

knows that the nature of SMS would also mean important job alerts would be picked up instantly.

The integration was set up in a few hours and Karen was able to start sending SMS messages to both individuals and groups all from within their current software platform.

## The Message

### Individual

Hi Dan, I have rearranged your interview for tomorrow at 2pm can you confirm you will be attending Thanks Julie @ Diamond 028 90 558000

### Group

Hi, we’ve got a shift for you tomorrow at 6am in Riblets, bus leaves at 4:15am. Thanks Diamond

## The Result

Karen explains how the introduction of SMS as a communication tool has helped them keep candidates up to date with jobs and

“ We can now stay in touch with all our candidates at the click of a button, with confidence that they’ve got the message. Our team here are really busy so learning a new piece of software was out of the question – the Itris integration allowed us to add SMS to our communication really simply. We’re seeing great results but with little effort from us.”

# Boost event attendance with SMS.

If you need some inspiration on how to use SMS in event planning, take a look at this case study on how Partner to Succeed used SMS to help market their event and boost attendance at their recent Collaborative Cornwall business conference.

## The Objective

- To increase attendance at the Collaborate Cornwall business conference.
- To improve communication with guests pre and post event.

## The Plan

A mobile number was collected from each guest on registration so the team could easily compile a contact group specifically for this event. A message was sent to attendees both before the event; to increase attendance and provide useful information, as well as following the event; to gain feedback and enhance the customer experience.

The conference was held in an exciting cinema venue and Partner to Succeed wanted to convey this in their message. The aim was not only to remind guests of start time and provide useful directions but also to increase attendance with an enthusiastic message.

The follow on message was sent at the end of the day whilst thoughts and memories of the event were still fresh in guest's minds. It left a positive image of the company and opened up communication enabling the team to gain crucial feedback for their next event.

## The Message

### Pre event

Hey Kate. The red carpet is out! The premiere of Collaborate Cornwall 2012 is showing tomorrow at the Lighthouse Cinema, Newquay and you are on the guest list. We look forward to welcoming you from 9am-9.30am. Map to Mount Wise Car Park <http://fts.ms/l7Jqj9>. The Partner to Succeed team.

### Post event

Wow – What a day? We hope you found Collaborate Cornwall 2012 a useful and informative event. We'd love to get your feedback – please feel free to send your comments by replying to this message. Thanks for attending! The Partner to Succeed team.

## The Results

Becky Palmer, event organiser said

“We can now stay in touch with all our candidates at the click of a button, with confidence that they've got the message. Our team here are really busy so learning a new piece of software was out of the question – the Itris integration allowed us to add SMS to our communication really simply. We're seeing great results but with little effort from us.”

Amongst the feedback was a testimonial from Chris Phillips, Unlocking Potential, who attended the event:

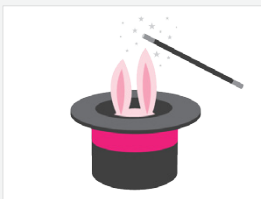
“The text was fantastic, it was short but included all the important details I needed – even a map to the venue! Great service.”

# Last Word...

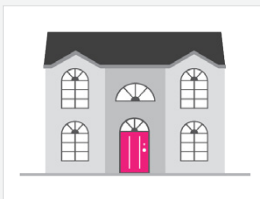
If you're looking for a way to communicate and engage with customers old and new then you've found it. SMS is simple, fast and gets results by improving customer service and increasing business.

In this guide, we've explored some great uses of SMS for your restaurant 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...



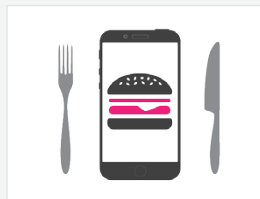
Recruitment Agencies



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

