A GUIDE TO

SMS

WHAT IS SMS?

Short messaging services (SMS) is an owned marketing channel that directly interacts with customers via text. When implemented and executed carefully, SMS campaigns connect with engaged customers through a personal and direct channel they access every day.

SMS is best used for:

Time-sensitive content

Succinct reminders or notifications

Personalized conversations

Cultivating relationships with engaged VIPs

MESSAGE TYPES

Marketing text message prices vary by the wireless carrier and type. Carriers determine the number of messages sent by character count and SMS Marketing Platforms structure their pricing based on these variable carrier costs.

SMS: Short Messaging Service
- A standard text message
- Character limit: 160
- SMS with emoji: 70

MMS: Multimedia Messaging Service
- Includes multimedia content (image/gif/video/audio)
- Character limit: 1600
- Not available for all number types
- MMS are more expensive per message due to the additional infrastructure required to send larger media

NUMBER TYPES

Short Codes

Common Short Codes (CSC) are numeric sequences that are 5-6 digits long and are designed for high-volume marketing sends and use cases.

Short codes can be easy for customers to remember and help build trust in your SMS marketing efforts.

It is best to purchase a dedicated short code reserved for your exclusive use if you plan to send a large volume of SMS messages to recipients in the United States or Canada.
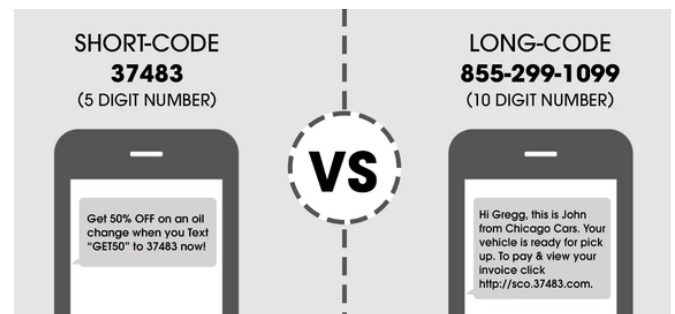
Long Codes

Long Codes are made of 10 digits and look like a personal phone number. They are used for P2P (Person-to-Person) which is one-to-one communication and for A2P (Application-to-Person) which is used as marketing communication.

There are two subtypes of long codes:

10DLC:
10DLC is a type of long code that is registered with carriers to support high volume A2P SMS messaging using the 10-digit phone number format. 10DLC supports both transactional and promotional messaging and can include any US area code.

Toll-free numbers:
A toll-free number is a 10-digit number that begins with one of the following area codes: 800, 888, 877, 866, 855, 844, or 833. Toll-free numbers can be to send transactional messages only.

NUMBER TYPES

Alphanumeric Sender ID

Alphanumeric Sender ID format sends SMS messages to supported countries from a personalized sender ID (like a business or organization name), instead of a formatted number.

COMPLIANCE

SMS Consent must be explicit and specific. Subscribers must be opted in to receive SMS messages.

Consent must be obtained in writing via a physically signed agreement, a digitally signed agreement, or most commonly, an SMS opt-in.

Did you know?
60% of SMS program signups come from the checkout process.

Ways to Collect Consent

- Signup forms: enable both desktop and mobile collection pop-ups

- Checkout page: enable this feature through ecommerce provider or set up a form that triggers when a customer reaches a stage in the checkout journey)

- APIs

- Keywords: feature on a website/website banner, social media, email campaigns, product packaging, in-person events

- Email banners/dynamic buttons: incorporate into welcome series, post-purchase floats or use a new product release

- CSV uploads

DELIVERABILITY

SMS deliverability is defined as a text message successfully being delivered to a recipient's mobile device. SMS marketing platforms and wireless carrier both perform a series of checks before delivering promotions texts.

Factors that impact deliverability:

- Subscribers have given consent and opted-in to receive SMS promotions
- Messages contain non-compliant terms (Sex, Hate, Alchohol, Firearms, Tobacco), URLs, or linked landing pages
- Carriers monitor the rate of sending and the content of the messages to identify spam.
- A recipient's cellular coverage can also influence deliverability to a recipient.

Maintain SMS Deliverability by:

- Segmenting SMS lists
- Make messaging conversational and avoid "spammy" language or all caps.
- Include your brand name in each message to build recognition and trust.
- Send between 9 am - 8 pm in recipients' local time zones and avoid sending non-transactional messages during "quiet hours".
- Limit sending to 2-6 SMS messages a month
- Make it easy to unsubscribe
- Use a trusted sending number
- Follow sending/content guidelines specific to recipients' local area
- Collect email first when using standard forms to easily map phone numbers to email addresses
- Consult with legal counsel to ensure full compliance

AUTOMATION
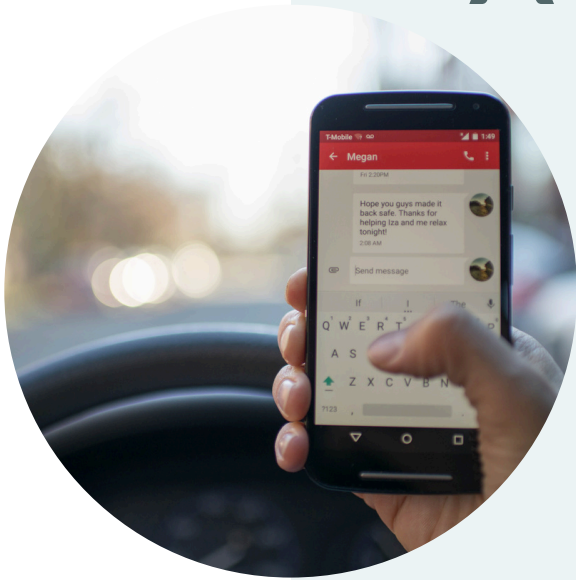
An impactful automated SMS campaign engages customers in a targeted, personalized and timely manner to get the highest ROI possible.

Use SMS automation to:
- Ask for customer reviews
- Send transactional messages
- Recover abandoned shopping carts
- Reach out with special offers
- Raise awareness for sales and promotions
- Remind clients of appointments

REPORTING

Reporting is key to measuring success of SMS campaigns. Use consistent copy templates and test content to easily track the efficacy of messages and pivot on strategy when needed.

Key Metrics to Track SMS Marketing Efficacy
- SMS sent – The total number of text messages sent
- Click rate – The percentage of recipients that clicked on a link in an SMS
- Sales – The dollar value of sales generated by the campaign
- Unsubscribe rate – The percentage of customers that unsubscribed from your messages
- Bounce rate – The percentage of intended recipients that did not receive the SMS for any reason (such as for an invalid number)

For questions or more information contact the Digital Marketing Team at: