

# SMS MARKETING GUIDE

FOR ALL BUSINESSES



# Executive Summary

This guide provides a comprehensive roadmap to acquiring more qualified leads through SMS marketing using vanity short codes. From compliance with TCPA and CTIA regulations to real-time intake funnels with bilingual agents, this document outlines everything a business needs to implement an effective texting strategy. Use this guide to ensure campaign success, legal compliance, and rapid response to inquiries generated by your digital and traditional advertising.

## SMS Marketing Guide

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## 1. Introduction

SMS marketing has become the highest-converting legal lead generation strategy in the digital era. With open rates exceeding 98% and immediate delivery to mobile phones, personal injury lawyers are seeing unmatched ROI through short code text campaigns.

## 2. Why SMS Marketing is Effective

- **98%** of text messages are read within 3 minutes
- Texting is more discreet and convenient than calling
- Text keywords allow instant opt-ins from billboards, radio, or websites
- SMS campaigns can be bilingual, automated, and live-agent-supported

## 3. What is a Short Code?

A short code is a 5- or 6-digit number used for sending and receiving SMS messages. Short codes can be:

- **Random** (e.g., 27895)
- **Dedicated Vanity** (e.g., 210911, 702911, 310310, 512512, 802802, 907907)

**Only one brand per short code - making it exclusive Digital Real Estate.**

## 4. The Benefits of Vanity Short Codes

- Memorable and easy to advertise
- Area-code-based codes help build trust and brand alignment
- Improved ad recall over toll-free or random numbers
- Prioritized by mobile carriers for delivery speed

## 5. Regulatory Compliance (TCPA, CTIA, 10DLC)

### **TCPA:**

TCPA compliance refers to adhering to the rules set forth by the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA). This federal law regulates telemarketing calls, automated calls, prerecorded calls, text messages, and unsolicited faxes. TCPA compliance is crucial for businesses to avoid hefty fines and legal repercussions.

Key aspects of TCPA compliance include:

Obtaining prior express consent:

Businesses must obtain consent before making marketing calls or sending texts to consumers, and this consent must be documented.

Providing opt-out options:

All marketing communications should include clear instructions on how consumers can opt-out of future communications.

Consequences of non-compliance:

Fines of \$500 to \$1,500 per violation and Lawsuits from consumers.

## **CTIA:**

CTIA (Consumer Telecommunications & Networks Association) compliance refers to adherence to the industry's Messaging Principles and Best Practices, which provide guidelines for sending text messages to consumers in the US. These principles focus on protecting consumers from unwanted messages while supporting legitimate messaging uses. Key aspects of CTIA compliance include obtaining express written consent, providing easy opt-out mechanisms, and adhering to content guidelines.

### **Key Principles of CTIA Compliance:**

Obtain Express Written Consent:

Before sending any text messages, including marketing messages, you must obtain the consumer's explicit agreement to receive them. This consent should be clearly stated and documented.

Provide Easy Opt-Out:

Consumers must have an easy way to stop receiving messages, such as using a keyword like "STOP" to opt out.

Maintain a Privacy Policy:

Clearly explain how consumer data is collected, used, and protected in a privacy policy.

## **TCR:**

The Campaign Registry (TCR) requires businesses sending text messages to individuals (A2P 10DLC) to register their brands and campaigns. This registration process verifies the legitimacy of the business and its messaging practices, ensuring compliance with industry standards and helping to reduce spam. Key requirements include providing detailed company information, campaign details, and opt-in information.

## **Key aspects of TCR registration**

**Brand Registration:** This initial step verifies the legitimacy of your business, including its name, industry, and online presence (website, social media).

**Campaign Registration:** You'll need to register each specific SMS campaign, providing details like the campaign's purpose, sample messages, and opt-in/opt-out instructions.

**Compliance Verification:** The vetting process ensures your SMS campaigns adhere to regulations like TCPA (Telephone Consumer Protection Act) and industry best practices, especially regarding opt-in/opt-out procedures and privacy policies.

**Message Content Review:** Sample messages are reviewed to ensure they align with the campaign's description, include clear opt-out instructions, and don't contain prohibited content or practices.

**Opt-In/Opt-Out Process:** The vetting process examines how you obtain consent from recipients to send SMS messages and how you handle opt-out requests.

**Website Review:** Your website's privacy policy is reviewed to ensure it clearly outlines how you handle user data and comply with regulations.

**EIN/Tax ID:**

A unique Employer Identification Number (EIN) is required for each brand registered with TCR.

**Vetting Score:** A vetting score may be assigned, potentially impacting message deliverability and throughput.

**Potential for Enhanced Vetting:** Depending on your campaign's complexity or industry, you may need to undergo enhanced vetting, which can involve more detailed reviews and potentially higher fees.

**Tips for a successful SMS campaign vetting:**

**Provide accurate and detailed information:** Ensure your brand and campaign details are accurate and consistent with your online presence.

**Clearly explain your opt-in process:** Use clear and conspicuous language about opt-in and opt-out instructions.

**Ensure your website has a compliant privacy policy:** It should clearly outline your data handling practices and opt-in/opt-out procedures.

**Provide informative and compliant sample messages:** These should accurately reflect the messages you'll be sending and include clear opt-out language.

Maintain consistent brand and campaign information: Ensure consistency across all your messaging materials.

Consider enhanced vetting if necessary: If you anticipate high message volume or operate in a regulated industry, enhanced vetting might be beneficial.

By understanding and properly preparing for the SMS campaign vetting process, you can ensure your campaigns are compliant, deliverable, and trusted by your audience.

## 6. Building a Compliant Campaign

1. Draft compliant opt-in language
2. Structure welcome, help, and stop messages
3. Submit compliant applications to all major carriers

## 7. Keyword and Call-to-Action Strategy: Best practices

1. Keep keywords short and relevant (e.g., "CARCRASH")
2. Place CTA on billboards: "Injured? Text WRECK to 210911"
3. Use A/B testing to find high-converting terms

## 8. Lead Qualification Funnel

1. User texts keyword to your short code
2. Auto-response: "Thanks! Are you injured or contacting us for someone else?"
3. Live agent follows up in seconds
4. Pertinent data such as insurance, location, parties involved, injuries is documented
5. Lead information is now uploaded to HIPAA storage and delivered to client's POC /CRM via custom API.

## 9. Live Agent Integration

1. **Bilingual U.S.-based agents** handle real-time intake
2. Pre-qualify before lead hits your sales team's inbox
3. Save staff time while increasing case quality

## 10. Sample Campaigns for Billboard, Radio, & TV

### **Billboard:**

Text CRASH to 210911

### **Radio:**

"Been hit? Text WRECK to 512512 now."

**TV:**

“Injured? Text LAWFIRM to 310310 — 24/7 response guaranteed.”

## 11. Tracking, Reporting, and ROI

1. Every lead is time-stamped and logged
2. Chat history is kept for life of campaign
3. Variable keywords organize leads from TV, billboard, radio, social media, PPC (Pay per Click)
4. Monthly ROI reports included

## 12. Short Code Pricing Breakdown

<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Cost</u></b>
Application Fee	\$2,500 one-time
Activation Fee	\$2,000 one-time
Vanity Short Code	\$4,500/month
Bilingual Live Agents	\$2,000/month & up
Text Credits (240k/year)	Included
Extra SMS Credit	\$0.10/message
Extra MMS Credit	\$0.30/message

## 13. Platform Features

1. API's options for CRM integration
2. Bilingual auto-response templates
3. CTIA and TCPA compliance tracking
4. Campaign keyword A/B testing
5. HIPAA compliant data storage

## 14. Getting Started with Corto Media

1. Choose your vanity short code (e.g., 210911)
2. Approve message flow and keyword
3. Submit application for carrier approval (6–8 weeks)
4. Go live with billboard, TV, and digital campaigns



## **Appendices: SMS Marketing Guide**

### **Appendix A: Sample Short Code Text Campaign**

This example illustrates a realistic SMS flow for a personal injury campaign using a short code.

1. Keyword: INJURED
2. Short Code: 210911
3. User Texts: INJURED to 210911
4. Automated Reply 1: "Thanks for reaching out. Please reply with your name and brief info about your accident."
5. User Replies: "John Doe. Rear-ended on I-35 yesterday, neck pain."
6. Automated Reply 2: "Thanks John. A bilingual live agent will follow up in a moment to gather more details."
7. Live Agent Intro: "Hi John, I'm Maria from ABC Injury Law. Can you tell me the date of the accident and if you've seen a doctor yet?"

This flow ensures rapid intake and direct transfer to your CRM once the lead is qualified.

### **Appendix B: Compliance Checklist (TCPA, CTIA, Carrier Rules)**

1. Opt-In Language Clear and Prominent (e.g., "Text INJURED to 210911 to speak with a legal intake specialist.")
  2. Automated Replies Include Disclaimers (e.g., Msg & data rates may apply. Reply STOP to opt out. HELP for help.)
  3. Terms of Service and Privacy Policy Linked in First Response
  4. Support Contact Included (email or phone)
  5. STOP, HELP, and START keywords function properly
  6. No SHAFT content (Sex, Hate, Alcohol, Firearms, Tobacco)
  7. 10DLC Brand & Campaign Registered (if applicable)
- All messaging pre-approved by major carriers

### **Appendix C: Short Code Application Requirements**

1. Legal Business Name and Entity Type (e.g., PLLC, LLP)
2. EIN or Federal Tax ID
3. Business Address (Must Match IRS Records)
4. Contact Person (With email and direct phone)
5. Website URL
6. SMS Use Case (e.g., personal injury lead generation)
7. Sample Message Flow (Initial, STOP, HELP, Opt-In)
8. Opt-in Mechanism (billboard keyword, web form, phone)
9. Links to Privacy Policy and Terms of Service



10. Support Contact

11. Campaign Purpose (Lead gen, legal services only)

## **Appendix D: Lead Scoring & Qualification Criteria**

### Positive Scoring Criteria:

- +5 Points: Lead responds within 5 minutes
- +5 Points: Provides date of accident
- +5 Points: Provides location and injuries
- +5 Points: Has not yet hired an attorney
- +3 Points: Police report or medical documentation mentioned
- +2 Points: Has insurance or at-fault driver info

### Negative Scoring Criteria:

- -5 Points: Incomplete or vague responses
- -10 Points: Refuses to provide basic case info
- -20 Points: Admits fault or “no damages”

Use this scoring model to route high-potential cases directly to attorney review.