2020 Guide to Customer Messaging

twilio

Strategy is crucial to every business's success

In today's digital landscape, the right messaging strategy is crucial to every business's success. With nearly 90% of consumers wanting to message with businesses, companies large and small can't afford to be left behind. This *2020 Guide to Consumer Messaging* is for organizations who wish to communicate relevant, personalized, and timely information through their customers' preferred messaging channel. From arrival alerts to support chat and much, much more, messaging is an effective way to make instant customer connections. Learn the best practices that will help your business messaging exceed customer expectations.

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Reach your customers where they are

Messaging is written communication sent over a variety of digital channels, from email and SMS to in-app chat, and newer channels that are emerging all the time. These days, customers expect businesses to reach them with relevant information at the right time within the channel they prefer. In fact, businesses that communicate with the right information, frequency, and channel enjoy higher consumer goodwill with 75% of consumers rewarding businesses that communicate in the way they prefer.

Without a doubt, messaging is a part of life for billions of people today. The average user spends 3.7 hours per day on their mobile device with 50% of that time spent in social and communications apps. Since all 5.1B mobile phone subscribers can send and receive text messages, messaging provides users who don't have a smartphone or access to a computer with a quick, easy, and inexpensive way to communicate. All these factors combined have made messaging a truly universal channel.

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Your customers are probably already communicating with their family and friends via messaging, from SMS to WhatsApp to Facebook Messenger, and they want to connect with businesses that way as well. Research shows 62% of consumers want to communicate with businesses via messaging, although consumers are split on the channels they prefer. Around 39% of consumers surveyed said they

prefer SMS/MMS and 23% said they prefer Messaging apps (like WhatsApp). Millennials prefer to receive messages from businesses through social media, mobile apps, and messaging apps at more than twice the rate of older customers. Unfortunately, many businesses aren't set up for messaging yet; only 48% of businesses are equipped with SMS, and the percentage is even lower for other messaging channels.

For businesses looking to stay competitive, adding messaging into the customer journey is essential. Consider this: 96% of messages are read within three minutes of receipt, and 90% within three seconds! Messaging provides consumers the information they need when and where they need it. It's quick and easy for customers to text back a confirmation to an appointment reminder, and it's reassuring for them to receive a notification saying their food delivery is on its way.

Satisfying customer communication isn't just a "nice to have" for businesses, it's imperative. Poor communication directly and negatively impacts a company's bottom line. Likewise, great communication can be a key driver of a business's success. 75% of consumers have rewarded businesses that communicate in the way they prefer. With this magnitude of impact, companies large and small can't afford to be left behind.

1.57 billion smartphones are on track to sell in 2020 — each one capable of handling text messaging at a minimum.

According to Gartner Research

According to Gartner, worldwide sales of smartphones to end users are on track to reach 1.57 billion units in 2020 — each one capable of handling text messaging, at a minimum. On top of that, popular messaging apps such as WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger are easy to download and use right away. Every year, new messaging channels become available, and each channel has nuances in terms of their capabilities and best practices. Not only are new channels becoming available every year, but monthly active users are shooting through the roof. With 1.5B monthly active users (MAUs), WhatsApp handily topped global downloads for communication applications in 2019, and

is among the top-performing apps in the App Store and Play Store. The bottom line: More and more of your customers are using these platforms on a daily basis.

Since SMS (Short Message Service) was invented in the 1980s, it's one of the oldest texting technologies and also the most frequently used. MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service) was built using the same technology as SMS to allow users to send multimedia content such as pictures, audio, phone contacts, and video files. Because SMS and MMS are transmitted over a cellular network, they require a wireless plan from cellular carriers to operate.

Timeline of B2C Communication Methods

THEN
In person
Letters
Telegraph
Telephone

Internet

In-app chat
Push notifications
SMS
Email/ web forms

WhatsApp Business API

Facebook Messenger
RCS
Apple Business Chat

NOW

Over time, more and more specialized messaging channels have launched. Push notifications are a form of one-way communication that can provide useful information and also direct users to your app. In-app chat lets your customers have conversations with your business from within your web or mobile app. WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and other messaging applications are often referred to as "Over The Top" (OTT) applications because they do not require a cellular network connection, and use IP (internet protocols) instead. To send and receive texts using these apps, your device needs to be connected to the internet, either over WiFi or via a mobile internet connection.

As we look to 2020 and beyond, consumers will expect business to communicate with technology that is conversational, rich, and trusted. Consumers will expect to have their inquiries solved in-channel and in real-time, with the option to message with a real person. When businesses reach out, consumers will want to see engaging, rich messages that mirror native, peer-to-peer messaging experiences and have access to self-service options. And, to protect against bad actors, consumers will need assurance that the business they are communicating with can be trusted.

As we see these trends emerge, new interfaces will take the messaging experience to the next level, such as Rich Communication Services (RCS) and Apple Business Chat, which can be delivered via a device's default messaging application. Today, we've already seen companies like Google address the shift, launching a message verification feature to reinforce trust on Android devices.
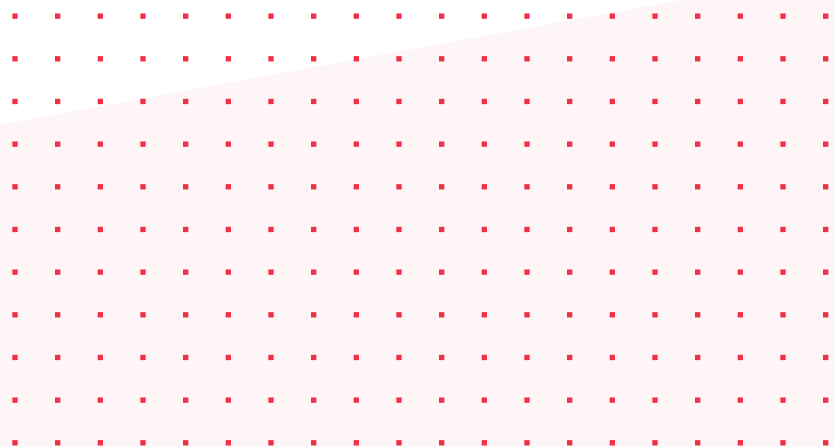
Here are a few common ways brands use messaging today:

Operations

To keep customers up to speed with proactive alerts and account notifications over email or messaging, or with phone and identity verification using one-time passcodes or secure links.

Service

To give customers a faster way to get questions answered, receive live support, and provide real-time feedback by messaging with intelligent assistants, sales reps, or support agents directly; can deflect as many as 40% of inbound calls. Increasingly, brands are using messaging with employees and customers to support frontline employees (like drivers or technicians) and allow them to securely, compliantly engage with consumers.
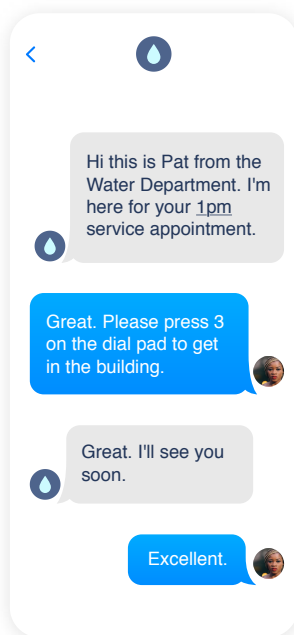
Marketing

To increase engagement and drive conversions with personalized promotions, coupons, time-sensitive surveys, and special sales delivered to users at just the right time. Increasingly, loyalty programs that used to require a physical card or application are moving to messaging.
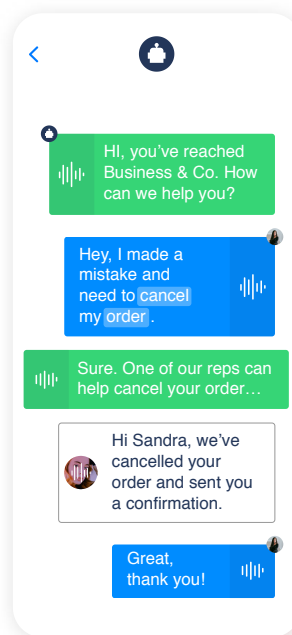
It's important to note that within these three broader categories, there are specific use cases ranging from promotions to alerts & notifications to self-service. While not every channel or use case will make sense for you and your customers, the common goal of customer messaging is to deliver a customer experience that mimics how your customers would speak with a friend. This e-book will give you an overview of the best practices you should be familiar with for the most popular messaging channels today.
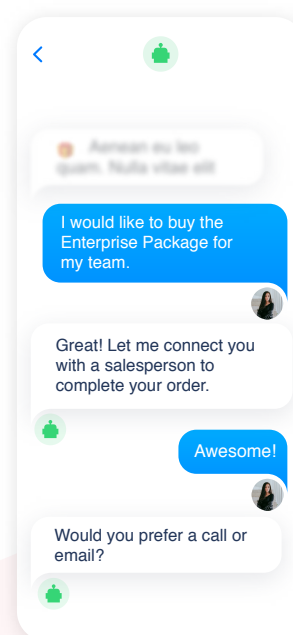
Operations

Service

Marketing

Hi this is Pat from the Water Department. I'm here for your 1pm service appointment.

Great. Please press 3 on the dial pad to get in the building.

Great. I'll see you soon.

Excellent.

HI, you've reached Business & Co. How can we help you?

Hey, I made a mistake and need to cancel my order.

Sure. One of our reps can help cancel your order…

Hi Sandra, we've cancelled your order and sent you a confirmation.

Great, thank you!

I would like to buy the Enterprise Package for my team.

Great! Let me connect you with a salesperson to complete your order.

Awesome!

Would you prefer a call or email?

Messaging best practices (regardless of channel)

Before you dive into messaging your customers, you ought to decide on the type of messaging you want to enable. Is it one-way or two-way communication? This can be determined by asking yourself if you'll need to respond. Will it be a bulk or transactional message? To answer this, think about whether you plan to communicate with one specific person at a time or many people at once?

Your answers will determine the type of technology you'll use, so give this some thought. Your next challenge is to decide which messaging channels you want to use: SMS, in-app chat, push notifications, social messaging apps like Facebook Messenger, or all of the above?

While these decisions are important, there are best practices that you'll need to keep in mind regardless of the channel or strategy you choose. Here are our top ten:

Get permission

One of the most important rules of business messaging is that you must first gain permission from customers to contact them, regardless of the messaging channel. Failing to do so can damage your brand and result in hefty legal fees. It's imperative that you are compliant and adhere to local laws and CTIA Messaging Principles and Best Practices, which protect consumers from unwanted solicitation. Likewise, you must give users the opportunity to opt out, by any reasonable means necessary. This is why you often see messages from businesses include language like "Text STOP to stop".

When you wish to communicate via SMS, ask your users to sign up to receive text messages containing special offers, new product updates, or other valuable information via an online form, contest entries, or by texting a particular keyword to a phone number. For in-app messaging, getting users to opt in for notifications is a crucial success driver for delivering your message. But many consumers opt out or turn off app notifications to avoid what they think will be spam-like messaging. Some apps or app categories have an easier time getting users to keep notifications turned on.

A recent Twilio study found that 94% of consumers are annoyed by communications from businesses, making easy opt-outs a must-have when building successful messaging campaigns. It's the law and it's what consumers largely expect from businesses. 54% of consumers want businesses to make it easy to opt out. Perhaps that because 41% don't even remember opting in to messages in the first place.

Once a compliant opt-in is obtained, focus on highly targeted, relevant messaging spaced in a way that consumers enjoy. Consider factors like age and location when deciding when to send messages, how often, and through which channels.

Communicate at the right time

When consumers contact businesses, it's primarily for help or information. They want quick resolution and value fast response times. In fact, when it comes to urgent communications, 50% of consumers want to receive notifications via text or messaging apps.

Communicating at the right time isn't just about communicating quickly, however. When you're messaging your customers—instead of the other way around—aim for times your customers won't be busy. Look at your email inbox and you'll notice that many businesses have begun to perfect send times for your particular time zone. The same should be true for mobile messaging. Since messages are geared to inspire urgent action, it's not effective to send messages after hours. You also don't want to annoy your customers by waking them up too early or bothering them in the middle of the night. As a general rule, don't send messages before 9am or after 9pm (in some countries, it's actually illegal to message outside of set hours). It's best to be aware of your customer's location, and understand the time zone differences that apply. In fact, **research shows that afternoons are preferred by consumers; 39% prefer afternoons-only and 70% prefer afternoons or any time.**

It's also important to limit how often you send messages. Nobody wants to receive an excessive amount of messages from a business. Be clear about how often you'll be messaging your subscribers and, if possible, limit it to two to four messages per month.

Communicate with the right information

One of the top three reasons customers contact businesses is that they are seeking information such as account balances, hours of operation, or details about a product or service. Quick and easy access to this information is essential. Use contextual data to make your customers' interactions personalized and efficient, and make it easy for them to find the information they're looking for.

When you're sending messages, keep in mind that customers respond more to materials addressed directly to them. A little personalization goes a long way, such as using your subscribers' first name or adding a conversational touch that reflects your customers' interests. You can also target your customers with more relevant messages based on their preferences. By segmenting your audience, you can be more intentional with your outreach rather than sending the same message to everyone. 74% of consumers surveyed said they like when businesses personalize communications, and the same Twilio study found Gen Z and Millennials twice as likely as Baby Boomers to say personalization increases trust.

Remember that when a customer hands over their phone number or username and agrees to receive messages, they're putting a lot of trust in you. It's your responsibility to show them the same level of trust and respect—that's what your customer relationships are built on. Don't send anything that even hints of spam, and refrain from sending messages without a true customer benefit. Ask customers about their preferences just as you would over other channels, such as email. Inquire as to when they would like to receive messages and what kind of information they want. Then customize your messaging to suit their wants.

Communicate over the right channel

Consumers are clear: they want options. They expect to interact with businesses the way they communicate with other people. And as newer communication channels become more popular, consumer expectations are shifting: 52% want the option to choose where they receive messages from businesses. People want to interact with businesses on the channels they prefer, and they want businesses to keep track of their shifting preferences.

Often times, consumer preferences shift based on the urgency of the message. A good strategy is to put yourself in your customers' shoes — think about the use case along the lines of how immediate the consumer needs to read a message (urgency) versus how likely the consumer wants a record of the interaction (archival). We call this the Immediacy Framework. What's the impact if they don't receive a message immediately, or if they can't go back and search for a receipt? For example, if you order food via a popular app you might expect delivery notifications via SMS or WhatsApp, but the purchase receipt via email. Understanding these touchpoints along the customer journey is critical to creating great customer engagement.

This experience can only be accomplished by adopting a multi-channel strategy that allows you to deliver the right message at the right time on the right channel. Whether a customer is connecting with a business from a smartphone using WhatsApp, a desktop using Facebook Messenger, or on a mobile phone via SMS, the experience across multiple devices and channels should be seamless.

It's all too tempting for businesses to focus their efforts on a particular channel, especially if it's delivering results. However, a single-channel strategy will never deliver the long-term engagement and retention of an approach that considers customer geography, preferences, and behavior. Throughout the customer lifecycle journey, there are times when your business might use email campaigns to drive results at a high ROI and other times when outreach campaigns deliver better results using a social messaging platform. Each scenario is different. Only by understanding the Immediacy Framework, determining relative strengths and weaknesses of each channel, and keeping track of your customers' preferences can you optimize your messaging campaigns.

Boost your messaging intelligence

Messaging is more than just exchanging content between people. It involves a tremendous amount of intelligence to analyze content, deliver the message to the right person (or bot), and respond in the context of that interaction. Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools can make those interactions more human and, today, AI powered chatbots that respond to customers and can be seen in apps like Microsoft Skype, Facebook Messenger, and Slack.

Capabilities such as intelligent routing, natural language processing, message sentiment analysis, and keyword spotting help your customers have a more personalized and efficient messaging experience without them even noticing. AI can also improve agent conversations by anticipating customer needs and automating actions where possible. When contextual intelligence helps customers resolve common issues without needing to speak to an agent, agents are free to focus on higher-value activities.

Ultimately, contextual intelligence can help you engage with larger numbers of customers without sacrificing the quality of the interaction.
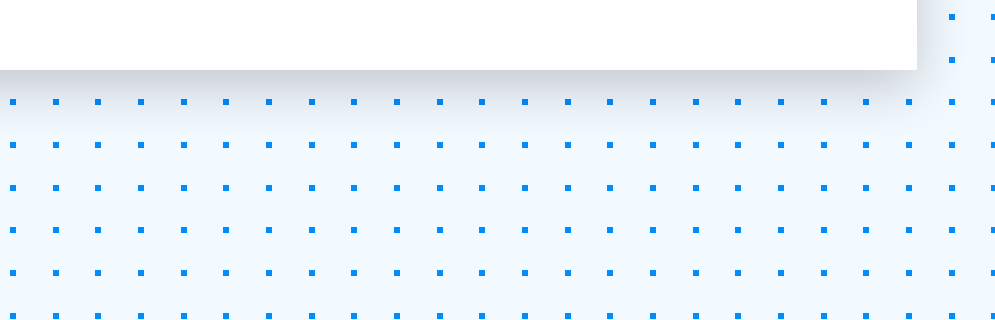
Keep your message simple

Regardless of the channel, simpler is always better. Even though email allows for greater context and richer messages than some other channels, brevity is still valuable. When you send an outbound message, always be clever, engaging, and brief. Provide customers with an offer they can't refuse or with information that really matters. If you don't strike the right balance, you run the risk of opt-outs and your contact list rapidly shrinking. If done correctly, your customer may give your message the same attention level as a text received from a friend.

Messages by their very nature are informal. Most can be quickly read from a lock screen notification (or from a watch!) and immediately understood. There's no need for subject lines, intros, or signatures. Remember that most of your users will be reading your messages on their phone. So, keep your messages short and to the point for maximum impact with minimum word count.

For marketing messages, be sure to have a clear call-to-action (CTA) and an incentive. For example, if you want customers to take part in a campaign that asks them to text a keyword to an SMS short code, make sure both the keyword and the short code stand out and aren't buried in the message. You'll also want to give users incentives to respond: if your special offer is only available to VIP text customers, let them know.

Engage in two-way conversations

Messaging use cases range from urgent notifications such as delivery status or service delays, to convenience messages such as order confirmation or appointment reminders. Messaging is also an excellent channel to share information about new products and services, ask for feedback, or provide support. Even when you're sending outbound messages for which you aren't looking for a reply, keep in mind that for consumers, messaging isn't typically a one-way communication channel. Yet, the unfortunate reality is if you were to respond to an A2P message today, the majority of brands would not be equipped or set up to process your response or reply back.

Most consumers not only want to be able to receive information, but also reply to businesses or engage in a conversation. Not all messaging channels can support a two-way dialog, such as push notifications. Nevertheless, the ability to conduct a two-way conversation should be incorporated into your messaging strategy.

By sending customers a message, you're making a personal connection: giving them the opportunity to respond which in turn gives you valuable feedback on your products or service. Customers may tell you how much they love your brand, act on a coupon to make an immediate purchase, or start a productive conversation. To keep them engaged, you might use an autoresponder to instantly and automatically send personalized, follow-up text messages, or have an agent (or intelligent bot) available to reply.

Integrate your messaging

When you integrate messaging smoothly into the natural flow of your business and customer relationships, any information you learn about your customers and their transactions can help you decide how best to reach out to them. When designing your messaging experience, you can add customer, order, or issue information from CRM, ERP, and other business systems. Every bit of data should bring context to your customer conversations to improve the customer and agent experience.

For example, consider a real estate business. If messaging is built into the CRM, a lead can be distributed instantly to the agent who is responsible for the home, who is available at the right time, or who speaks the same language as the buyer. The business can prioritize and determine which criteria is most ideal, factor in timing, and route the message accordingly. In this way, agents receive incoming messages with the context of who is inquiring and what property they're interested in. Then the agent can instantly communicate with the buyer using in-app chat or another messaging channel, like Facebook Messenger or SMS, if the buyer is no longer in the app.

Integrating mobile messaging into the context of customer conversations allows you to reach your customers the way they want to be reached. It provides a memorable customer experience, which can serve as a competitive advantage in the long run.

Measure what works

Today's businesses measure everything from employee productivity to traffic and conversions on websites and in stores. The same should be true for messaging. Smart businesses know how effective their messaging is and, by using the right tracking tools, can offer direct and measurable metrics that prove their ROI. If you are in sales and marketing, measuring your results allows you to easily determine which messages and promotions are most effective within specific channels, so you can continually refine your campaigns. You can also capture leads and responses for sales follow-up.

If you're using chat or messaging to provide customer service, you can measure handling time and experience time to see how efficient your agents are at resolving your customers' issues. Customer satisfaction surveys are easy to deploy over messaging and can help you begin to understand your customer experience.

When you continually measure the success of your messaging, you see what's happening in real time, so you know where your immediate focus needs to be. You use individual data to map to users' needs/wants and collective data to improve all users' experiences. Understanding the unique metrics that apply to your business will help you identify any problems and take swift action to fix them. With the right tools, metrics, and informed interpretation, you have the power to provide a best-in-class messaging experience.

Choose the right infrastructure

Whether you're deploying email, text messaging, push notifications, in-app chat, or Facebook Messenger, you want a messaging platform that can respond and evolve with the varying needs —and preferences—of your audience. Service interruptions are a headache, disrupting the customer experience and ultimately impacting your bottom line. The infrastructure you build on needs to be flexible to integrate into your current systems while having resilience built in, ongoing diagnosis, and dedicated teams providing global maintenance and customer service 24/7.

As you scale, using one platform across messaging apps lowers ongoing maintenance, eliminates the learning curve, and speeds up the time to market. With a host of messaging options available, make sure to identify what channels your potential provider offers, additional functionality to support those channels, and proof the APIs are stable, reliable, and powered 24/7.

A reliable infrastructure provides a consistent experience when you build, scale, and operate your application, no matter the channels of communication you choose. As a result, you can focus more time on your core business and creating a differentiated customer experience through messaging.

SMS

Short Message Service (SMS), also known as a text message, is a simple but powerful communication tool by which businesses and organizations send messages via text to receptive customers. SMS has become an essential part of our lives. As of 2007, users were sending more text messages than phone calls, and usage among all age groups continues to skyrocket. Businesses, too, increasingly rely on SMS to support customers, ask for feedback, and reward loyalty with special offers.

Because texting is so simple, and the messages are short by design, consumers love using SMS to engage with businesses. They don't have to sit on hold, take time out of their day to visit a business in person, or wait a long time for an email to be responded to. They can fire off a quick message in between everything else they're doing, and be guaranteed to get a succinct reply in no time. Businesses also love the channel; in addition to the consumer preference for texting, there's also its ubiquity, global reach, immediacy, and unrivaled open rates.

Bulk delivery of SMS messaging has more recently been embraced by marketing and sales teams to deliver surveys, rewards, special offers, and promotions.

Since SMS is the one messaging function that's baked into every mobile device — pre-installed by default — this communication channel is a permanent fixture on everyone's phone. The diversity in use of messaging apps also makes native SMS (including iMessage and Android) the lowest common denominator for business messaging.

While commonly used for alerts, reminders, and customer notifications, bulk delivery of SMS messaging has more recently been embraced by marketing and sales teams to deliver surveys, rewards, special offers, and promotions. With some SMS platforms, you can engage customers even more by sending MMS (short for Multimedia Messaging Service) to send multimedia such as pictures, videos, calendar invites, and other attachments over text messaging channels.

You can even send messages in local languages. Organizations in every industry are finding entirely new ways to engage customers with greater immediacy through SMS.

Before venturing into any form of SMS campaign, there are several best practices you should consider, in addition to the ten best practices discussed in the first chapter. These tips will guide you as you evaluate providers who can support your SMS communication efforts and elevate them over the long haul.

1. User sends an SMS to your toll-free support number

2. Business logic automatically responds

3. Agent can respond directly from within ticket
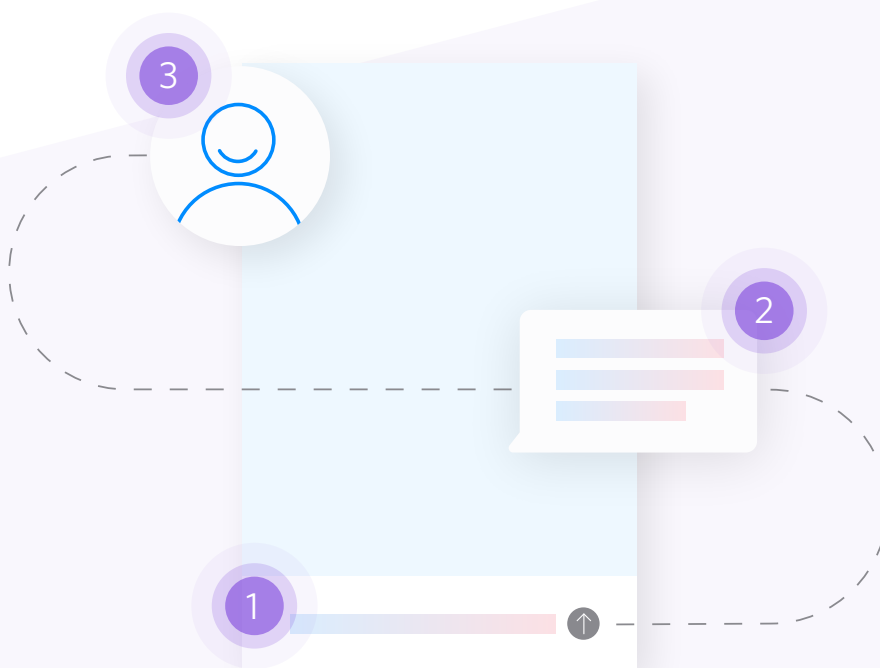
1. Instill trust in consumers

SMS can be an important tool for customer engagement, but only when they are wanted messages that consumers can trust. New technologies like Verified SMS by Google help deliver that trusted experience to some Android users, but there are other ways to help consumers feel comfortable with the message sender. One option is a provisioned phone number that helps consumers to quickly identify the business name or identity. There are four main types of phone numbers that can send and (often) receive business to consumer SMS messages: toll-free numbers, A2P 10DLC, short codes, and alphanumeric sender IDs.

Toll-Free Short Message Service (Toll-Free SMS) is used to send text messages from Toll-Free numbers (8XX) to other mobile phones. For businesses with an existing Toll-Free number, you can text-enable it. Having the same number for both voice and messaging means a better user experience for your customers.

For use cases with a large volume of SMS marketing messages, A2P 10DLC and short codes are preferable. A2P 10DLC numbers are 10-digit phone numbers, the type that a business would provision for A2P traffic. Short codes are a five or six-digit phone number specifically made for commercial use and mass mobile communications. These numbers are individually approved by wireless carriers, meaning it's less likely your messages will be filtered. You can also send short code messages at a much faster rate than regular long code phone numbers. Especially for time-sensitive offers, having the throughput (see below) of a short code is critical.

Alphanumeric Sender ID allows you to set your company name or brand as the Sender ID when sending one-way SMS messages to supported countries. Not all countries support this feature; the North American mainland countries of Canada, the US, and Mexico don't at this time. Alphanumeric Sender IDs may be up to 11 characters, including both upper- and lowercase ASCII letters, the digits 0 through 9, and space: A-Z, a-z, 0-9. Some countries may have additional requirements, such as pre-registration or limiting Alphanumeric Sender ID messages to be sent as transactional only (as opposed to promotional). Additionally, messages sent using an Alphanumeric Sender ID cannot be replied to directly.

Each country has its own telephone numbering protocol, and thus there are many types of long code phone numbers: geographic numbers, non-geographic numbers, and mobile numbers. North America is an exception where no such distinction is made, and the prefixes of numbers do not indicate their type.

2. Go global, but deliver locally

Choose an SMS provider that can scale and grow with your efforts, and one that can send the highest volumes of text and picture messages in the least amount of time. You also need a provider with an extensive carrier network to allow for global as well as localized phone numbers. And since nobody wants to receive a marketing text at 1 am, your provider should be able to automatically deliver your messages to your audience at the right time in the right time zone.

3. Check your throughput

Before any messages are sent, evaluate your provider's "throughput": the number of messages your provider can send per second (often referred to as 'mps'). Emergency alerts, for obvious reasons, should be delivered with top priority. On the other hand, it's alright for certain marketing campaigns to be delivered over the course of several hours. If you need to deliver 100,000 messages simultaneously, for example, your provider must be able to accurately queue these messages and have the ability to dequeue them at a rate equal to the available throughput. In this example, if your provider offers 10 messages per second, it will take 10,000 seconds or 2.7 hours for all messages to be delivered. Bottom line: know the capacity your provider can handle.

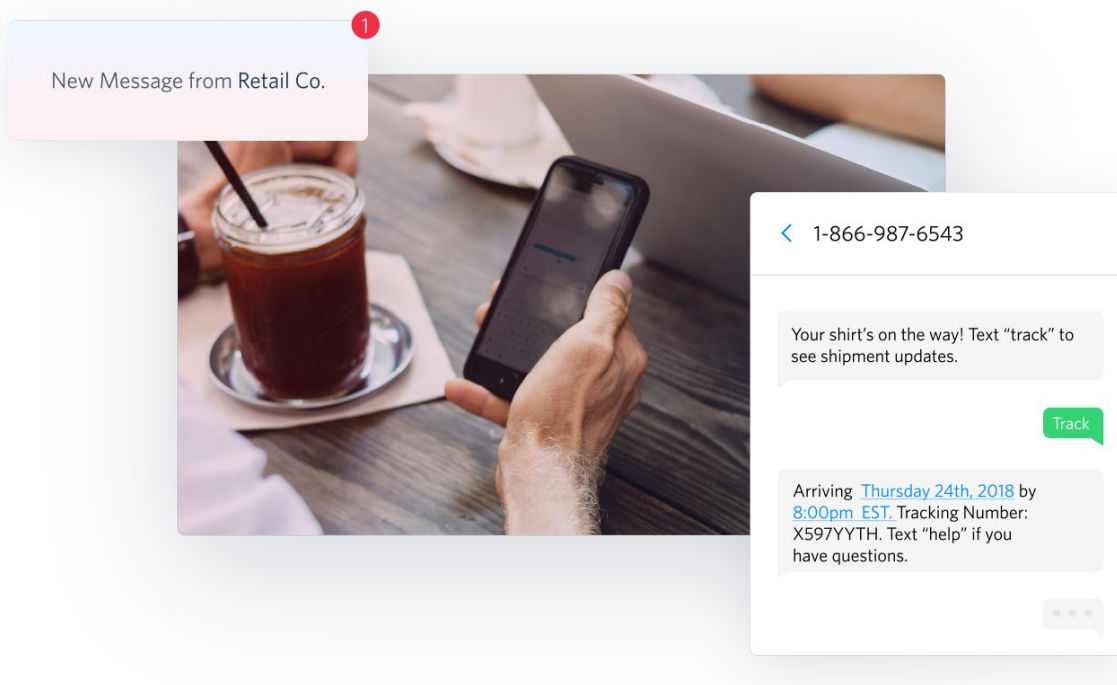## 4. Ensure messages are being sent to SMS-capable phone numbers

When running a bulk SMS campaign, it's conceivable that some of the numbers on your list are landlines or VOIP numbers incapable of receiving SMS. Messages sent to these numbers will not be delivered, but depending on your working agreement with your provider, you may be charged for them regardless. Most SMS providers only check if the number has a valid format; they do not check if it is capable of receiving SMS. Find a provider who does (and has tools to determine number type).

5. Manage customer responses

SMS is such an effective channel for engaging with your customers that it's important to anticipate — and effectively handle — responses to your messages. One way to do this is to provide a set of keywords in your text messages that customers can include in their replies. A keyword makes it easy to build automated response handling. For example, if you're running a promotion where the first 1,000 customers who respond to a text message get an exclusive deal, ask them to reply with a 'Y' if they want to participate. Make certain you're able to respond automatically and in real-time.
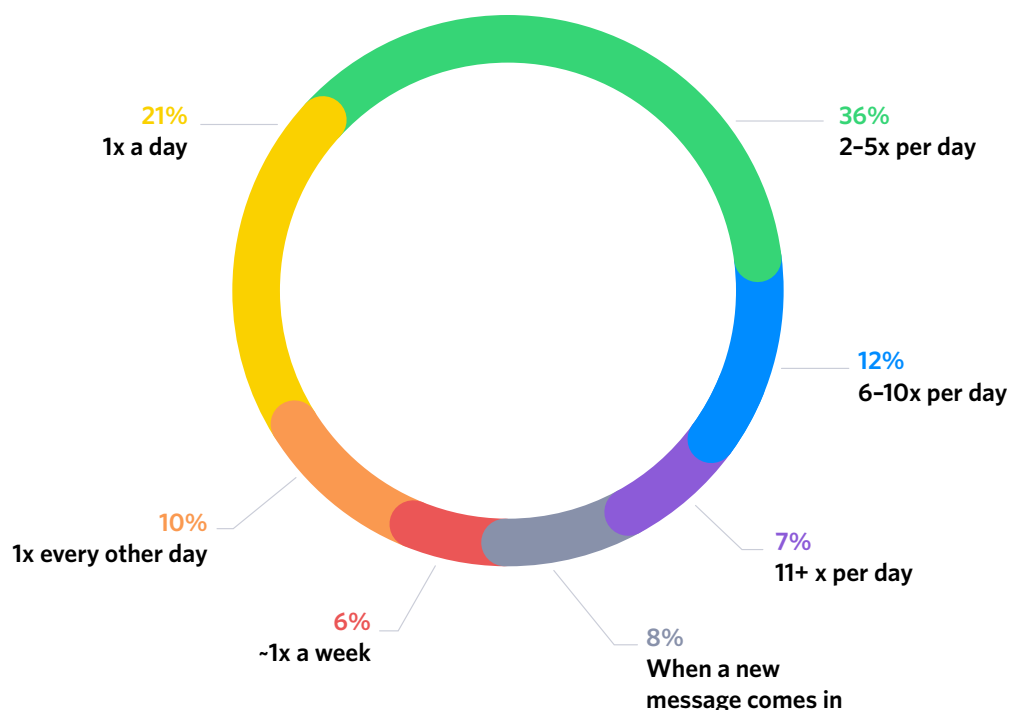
New Message from **Retail Co.**

1-866-987-6543

Your shirt's on the way! Text "track" to see shipment updates.

Track

Arriving Thursday 24th, 2018 by 8:00pm EST. Tracking Number: X597YYTH. Text "help" if you have questions.

Email

Email isn't just important, it's an essential communication channel between recipients and companies. Email has become a part of the morning ritual for recipients all over the world. Some people even say they're addicted to their email.

In our 2019 Email Benchmark and Engagement Study, recipients told us how essential email is to them. When asked how often they're checking their inboxes, 84% of participants check their email at least once a day, with the majority of people checking messages numerous times throughout the day:

Frequency that people typically check personal email

21%
1x a day

36%
2–5x per day

12%
6–10x per day

7%
11+ x per day

10%
1x every other day

6%
~1x a week

8%
When a new
message comes in

However, unlike other forms of messaging, email must conform to laws like CAN-SPAM and GDPR, *as well as* the filters of inbox providers like Gmail, Yahoo, and Outlook. As a result, about 15% of the email sent globally isn't delivered to the inbox correctly. While it may be a bit more difficult to get your messages delivered, email provides many other benefits.

Email gives you complete control over your messages: formatting, branding and engagement that other channels may not afford. We've adapted some tips from Twilio SendGrid's Top 10 Tips and Tricks to Stay out of the Spam Folder guide.

Whether building out a new email program, or refining your existing campaigns to improve performance, here are five things to take into account when you're sending email:

1. Segment your email streams

Segmenting traffic at lower volumes isn't critical, but it's still helpful in order to preserve the integrity of your marketing and transactional email streams. Transactional emails like receipts, shipping notifications, and account updates are opened, read, and saved much more often than marketing newsletters or sales promotions.

You don't want the lower engagement of marketing emails impacting the reputation and deliverability of your transactional messages. By sending your transactional and marketing messages from separate IP addresses, you can improve your chances of getting those messages inboxed correctly. Read about segmenting your email in our Email Segmentation Guide.
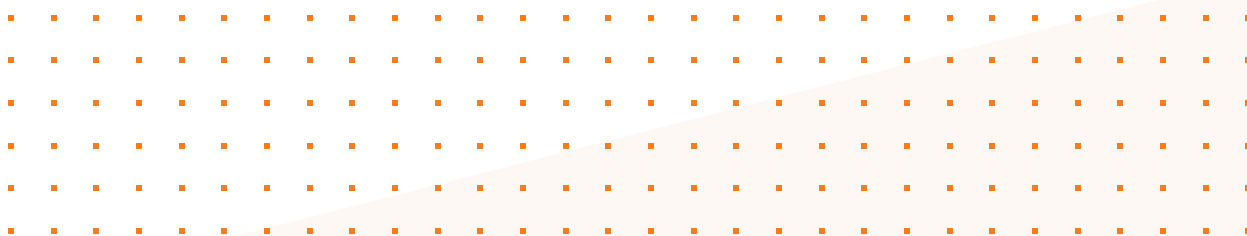
2. Build (don't buy) your lists and opt recipients in

Scraping, buying, renting, and sharing recipient lists are ways to tarnish your brand and sender reputation. They're a big "no-no" in the email acquisition world because, while they can seem like quick wins, they can actually cause long-term damage to your email program.

RENTING OR PURCHASING AN EMAIL LIST
Paying a third party for a large list of addresses sabotages your email marketing and is possibly illegal (depending on how that third party compiled the list — which is out of your control).

SHARING YOUR EMAIL LIST
Sharing or using a shared email list hurts your email deliverability — even if you share and swap lists with a trusted business partner. Instead, recommend your partner in you own email and link to their sign up, and vice versa.

CO-REGISTER YOUR EMAIL LIST
When you co-register your email list, you are acquiring leads and specific email addresses that originated from a bulk email opt-in by a customer who agrees to be included in multiple email list. But, once again, that doesn't mean they have agreed specifically to be emailed by you.

SCRAPING EMAILS
Also known as email harvesting, scraping emails is the worst offense of any email list building crime. A robot typically collects these addresses, and this practice is the most common among spammers.

Instead, you should create multiple opportunities for people to sign up for your emails. Whether that's having opt-in forms on your blog, website, or landing pages, making sure people are able to sign up and receive emails from you is the best way to grow your recipients.

3. Build the right message for your recipients

There's a surprising number of individual pieces of content that come together to create an email. From your subject line all the way down to your footer, it's a challenge to make sure every piece performs its individual job and also contributes to the overall emotion and feeling of the message. So it's smart to either learn (or review) the basics of what goes into your standard email. Remember your purpose, optimize content for mobile viewers, and take advantage of the added real estate that comes with subject lines and preview text. Review our blog post, 10 Tips for Designing and Developing Email for more tips on creating content your recipients will engage with.

4. Authenticate your email

Email authentication has become increasingly necessary as spammers and phishers continue to use email to distribute unwanted or harmful messages. Most email servers now use a number of protocols to verify email messages before they reach the intended recipient. Emails that are not properly authenticated are likely to have email deliverability problems and end up either undelivered or in the spam folder.

SENDER POLICY FRAMEWORK (SPF)

SPF is an email authentication standard that compares the email sender's actual IP address to a list of IP addresses authorized to send mail from that domain. The IP list is published in the domain's DNS record. For a more in-depth explanation of SPF, read Sender Policy Framework: A Layer of Protection in Email Infrastructure.

DOMAIN KEYS IDENTIFIED MAIL (DKIM)

DKIM ensures that an email has not been tampered with during transmission. DKIM acts like a wax seal on a letter. If the letter's seal remains sealed upon delivery, it was securely transported. Learn more about DKIM.

DOMAIN-BASED MESSAGE AUTHENTICATION REPORTING AND CONFORMANCE (DMARC)

DMARC is a more sophisticated authentication method that leverages both SPF and DKIM (both must pass) to prevent email spoofing (forging a sender address). For a deeper dive into DMARC, read What is DMARC?

Twilio SendGrid makes it easy to set these different forms of sender authentication up in any of our email packages. Learn more about how sender authentication can improve your deliverability.

5. Warm up your IPs

Unlike other channels, like SMS or MMS, emails are sent over IPs that need to be introduced to inbox providers like Gmail and Outlook. An IP address is a unique string of numbers that identifies your email domain. An IP address is one of the most important factors that determine your sending reputation. Inbox providers use your IP address to identify you as a sender, track sending behavior, and assign an IP reputation score. Better behavior results in higher delivery rates.

A new IP address doesn't have a reputation score since mail hasn't been sent from it yet. So how do you get your email delivered with a new IP with zero sending reputation? The answer is...warm it up!

Warming up an IP address involves sending low volumes of email on your dedicated IP and then systematically increasing your email volume over a period of time. Doing so provides inbox providers the opportunity to recognize, identify, and

evaluate your sending practices before giving the green light to your entire email list. Learn how to warm your IP up, and get a free warm-up schedule in our email guide How to Warm-Up an IP.

Learn more about email

Email is a critical communication channel that every successful business needs to use, but it can also be tricky. Getting messages delivered to your recipients' inboxes isn't as easy as you might think. To learn more about the ins and outs of email, check out our Email Deliverability Guide.

Email has become a part of the morning ritual for recipients all over the world. Some people even say they're addicted to their email.
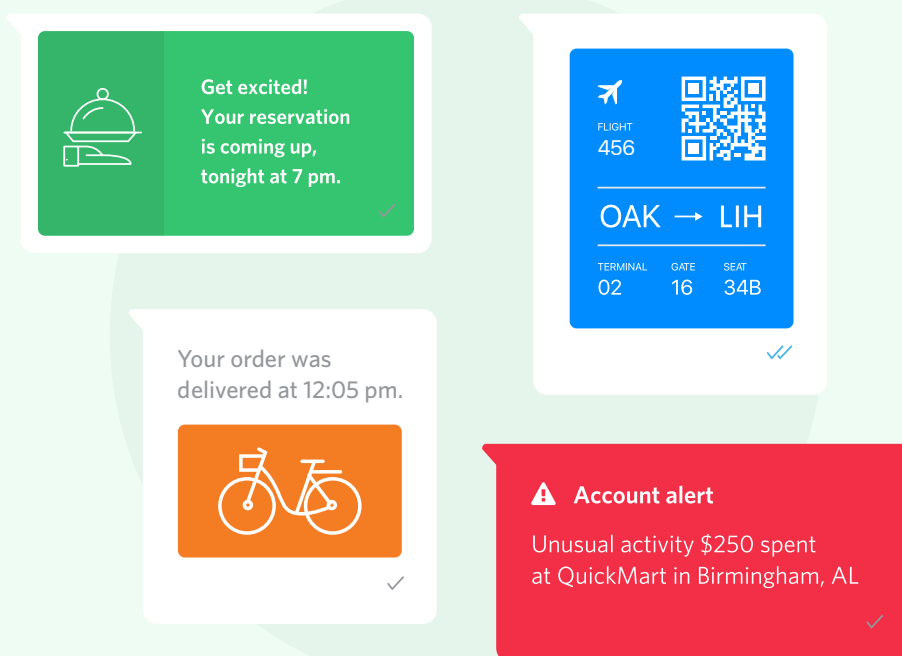
Push notifications

Push notifications can be an important part of the mobile experience. Users have grown accustomed to having push notifications be a component of virtually every app that they use. If your mobile app uses push notifications to communicate with users, those notifications will send customers right back to your app. Sending push notifications can boost app engagement up to 88% with up to 65% of users returning to the app within 30 days when push is enabled.

Note that mobile users without unlimited texting plans must pay for incoming texts and are likely to quickly opt-out of SMS communications. In contrast, Apple and Google don't charge an underlying cost for receiving push notifications on their iOS and Android operating systems. This makes push notifications a consumer cost-friendly method of one-way communication. And thanks to receipts and real-time status updates, you'll also know precisely when your notification has been delivered and read.

**Get excited!
Your reservation
is coming up,
tonight at 7 pm.**

FLIGHT
456

OAK → LIH

TERMINAL 02   GATE 16   SEAT 34B

Your order was
delivered at 12:05 pm.

⚠ **Account alert**

Unusual activity $250 spent
at QuickMart in Birmingham, AL

Push notifications do not require a particular application to be open on a device for the message to be received by the end user, so a smartphone user can see notifications even when their phone is locked, or an app is not running. However, the end user must opt in to receive push notifications from each application. An application usually makes the opt-in request on its initial installation, and the user typically has the option to grant or revoke consent for notifications at any time.

Finally, push notifications enjoy fewer technical and legal limitations than SMS. In the US, the Federal Communications Commission regulates mass promotional messages on email and SMS. Companies must follow the rules of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) and tread carefully when delivering text messages to users who haven't opted in. SMS content is also limited to 160 characters. Neither limitation applies to push notifications, making it a good channel for promotional messages. Since push notifications are entirely opt-in/opt-out, they may help reduce the risks of potential litigation.

The downside of push notifications is that they are not enabled by default when a user installs an app. A customer will have to agree to receive them the first time they use the app, or go back and subscribe to them later. While it varies across app categories, 40% or fewer of people enable push notifications.

Push notifications also pose some unique challenges. Making sound business decisions around what, when, and how frequently to push is critical to relevant and appropriate communication with your customers.

Follow these best practices for better results and engagement:

1. Choose your timing wisely

Respecting time zones and sleep patterns, as well as user engagement habits, can go a long way toward providing useful notifications.

2. Personalize your messages

Target your push notifications to user segments and personalize your messaging for specific users to help ensure you aren't flooding people with unwanted messaging. The goal of push notifications is to provide value to your end users, not just to provide marketing value to your business.

3. Make your notifications rich

Take advantage of rich push notifications for better engagement. With these messages, apps can add gifs, buttons, audio, and more to their messages, regardless of the underlying carrier.

4. Use push in-tandem

Incorporate push campaigns alongside your communications on other channels, like email or in-app messages. When you diversify your outreach across platforms and devices, you can better serve and delight your customers.

5. Track your results

If your push provider is an integrated marketing platform, you'll be able to track downstream conversions rather than just surface metrics like click-through rates. Metrics such as open rates are easily trackable through push notifications, making them a good fit for intricate campaigns.
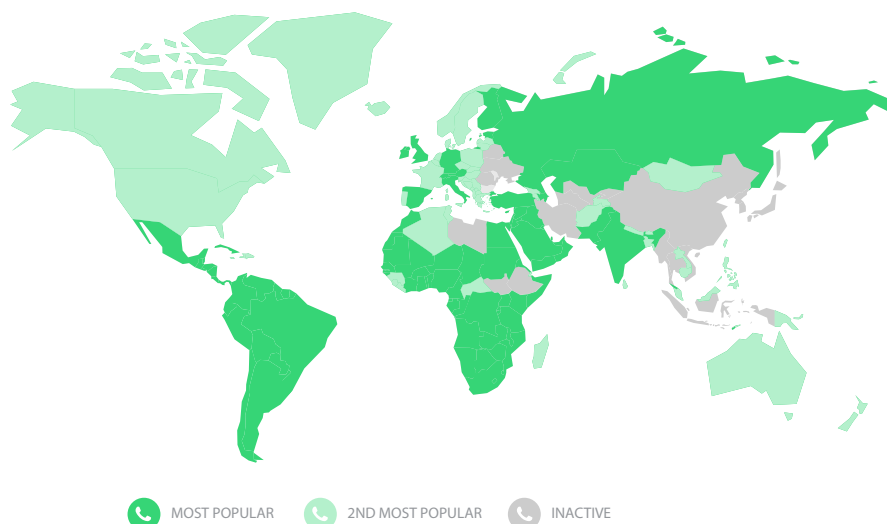
WhatsApp

Texting has exploded over the last decade to the point where we're currently witnessing US wireless networks carrying over 1.5T text messages in a year. One of the reasons SMS is so prevalent in the US is that most carriers offer plans with unlimited texting, making SMS free or nearly free to use.

Unlimited texting plans are less common in other parts of the world. This is the primary reason why free messaging apps like WhatsApp have gained such a significant foothold in these markets. WhatsApp, the messaging service acquired by Facebook for $19 billion in 2014, is by far the most popular messaging application in the world today — with more than 2B monthly active users. Person-to-person SMS usage in countries like India and Brazil — where mobile operators rarely offer unlimited texting plans — has been largely replaced by the free-to-use WhatsApp. According to App Annie, in 2019, WhatsApp was the most downloaded app globally while also having the most monthly active users.

Apart from its popular use for personal communication, WhatsApp is also widely used for business messaging. With WhatsApp, companies create 'Business Profiles,' a unique, fully-branded business identity. This allows you to provide specifics like email and phone contacts, social media links, store addresses, website URLs, and suitable business details or offers. More importantly, your WhatsApp Business Profile gives you the opportunity to inject your brand personality with every customer interaction. And because WhatsApp verifies all business accounts, your customers are assured it's not an imposter on the other end when they opt-in to connect with you.

MOST POPULAR   2ND MOST POPULAR   INACTIVE

The best reason to use WhatsApp for business is that many of your customers are probably already using it. Depending where your customers are based, or if your customers travel globally, know this: as of early 2018, WhatsApp is the number one messaging app in 104 countries. And it has the highest smartphone penetration rates—as high as 95% in some of those countries. That popularity is unrivaled in Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia, with the exception of China which tends to prefer WeChat for business communications. If you want to tap into a more global market, WhatsApp should absolutely be in your communications portfolio.

Here are the key best practices to keep in mind when messaging your customers on WhatsApp:

1. Reach out to known users

Most people dislike receiving messages from unknown numbers, and in WhatsApp, where your customers communicate with their friends and family, an uninvited message could feel like an invasion of privacy. That's why you should only use WhatsApp to connect to known customers/users rather than reaching new users.
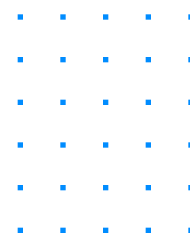
2. Be informal

WhatsApp is where many consumers interact informally with their friends, so trust and creativity in your business messaging are essential. Your campaigns should reflect (and respect) the personal tone of this channel.

3. Get creative

Because WhatsApp enables multimedia communications — think photos, documents, videos, slideshares, and more — brands have the freedom to be creative with their conversations. Moving beyond a simple text or email, you can infuse your brand ethos in uniquely new ways to make even more engaging customer connections.

4. Create a trustworthy profile

Because Business Profiles are mandatory, your WhatsApp branded business identity serves as the familiar face that greets users when you message them, increasing their trust in you and their loyalty to your business.

5. Utilize rich features

Many of the features consumers have come to expect in the consumer version of WhatsApp are now available for business-to-consumer WhatsApp, as well. Read receipts provide more granular engagement data for message engagement, and new features like location support are launching all the time. WhatsApp offers the ubiquity of the world's most popular messaging app, with the added benefit of being an OTT application not restricted by native messaging applications.

6. Talk back

While WhatsApp serves as an ideal channel for notifications like delivery alerts, purchase confirmations, and customer support, it also allows a more direct way to have two-way conversations with your customers. Your customers may use WhatsApp to research products and services, get reviews and consultations, make a payment, file a complaint, or book (or reschedule) a service call — all without having to phone, email, or even visit a brand's website. It's important to have a friendly agent ready to assist on the other side of the message.
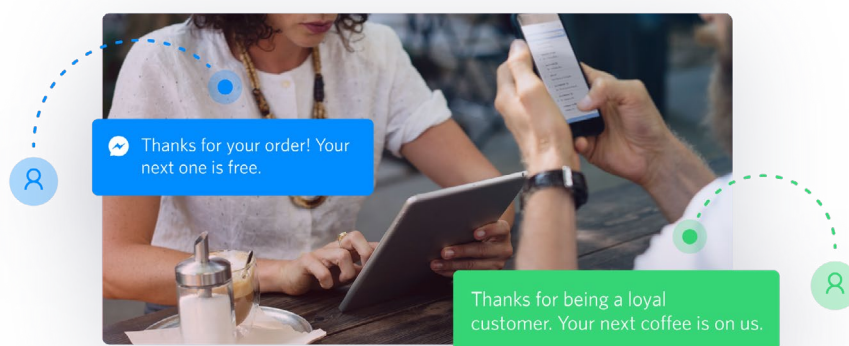
Facebook Messenger

Facebook is the world's largest social media platform. If you're wondering whether you should engage users through Facebook Messenger, consider that Facebook's standalone Messenger App has over 1.3 billion monthly active users. It's becoming an increasingly popular channel for consumers to interact with business, especially because Messenger is automatically integrated with every Facebook business page. In fact, businesses trade over 2 billion messages on Messenger each month.

The platform's widespread use isn't the only reason businesses are embracing this channel. With Facebook Messenger Marketing, your communications are tied to individual Facebook accounts. That means your messages won't "bounce," and you don't have to worry about people giving you a "fake" Facebook account (the way they use made-up email addresses on your opt-in forms).

Businesses trade over 2 billion messages on Facebook Messenger each month

Another benefit to Facebook Messenger is that inboxes aren't as flooded as email inboxes. Since most people begin using Messenger to interact with family and friends, they're actual users of the service and probably already have push notifications enabled on their phone for when they receive a new message. It's becoming commonplace for consumers to jump from sharing funny memes and inspirational quotes with their besties to chatting with customer service, all in Facebook Messenger.

By communicating through Messenger, you're creating an easy and secure way for your customers to reach you, right from your Facebook business page. You can provide support, take feedback, give order updates, or anything else your customers need. To facilitate their expanding communications on Facebook Messenger, many businesses today are using chatbots. Chatbot usage is growing fast: as of 2018, there were over 300,000 active chatbots on Messenger.

Chatbots enable you to create sophisticated, interactive messages that engage your audience where they hang out. Companies use conversational bots, trained within the context of the business, to help customers without human oversight. These "assistants" glean the context and intent of a customer's message and can take immediate action—with a natural, human-like response—for example by generating a ticket, appropriately replying to the message, proposing a callback from a live agent, or automatically routing the user to a chat window with a live agent for quick resolution.

For outbound messaging, you can use Messenger to reach people at scale with announcements, offers, and other relevant information, and then interact with each of them individually when you receive replies.

When you're ready to engage on Facebook Messenger, here are some best practices that will help you be successful:

1. Consider how your messages will appear

Compact messages are easier for people to follow. To keep the text short, send a few separate messages instead of one long one. To make messages more visually appealing, include images, tables, and charts along with, or instead of, text. Be careful though: consider how your image may be cropped when it appears in the messenger bubble.

2. Reply right away with welcome greetings and instant replies

Messenger lets you set a customizable greeting that will appear the first time someone starts writing a message to your business. This greeting can provide any information you want people to have before they message you. You can also create an instant reply so people will instantaneously receive a response thanking them for reaching out and letting them know you'll respond personally shortly.

3. Save time with saved replies

Your agents will probably answer the same question or provide the same information many times in a day. Messenger has a feature called Saved Replies that lets you write, save, and then reuse messages. These can be especially useful for customer service outreach.

4. Personalize your messages

Messenger provides customer information cards to help you glean information about each customer before responding. The context shows you where they live, their local time, order history, and more. This information helps you personalize your messages for each customer.

5. Use an Away Message if you can't reply right away

Whenever you're away from your computer or phone, Messenger has a feature called Away Messages that lets customers know you'll respond ASAP. Facebook scores each business with a responsiveness rating, and this feature will help you keep your rating high, while also setting the right expectations with your customers. Take advantage of Messenger's other useful tools, such as Appointment Reminders and Follow Up Message, to keep in touch at the right time.
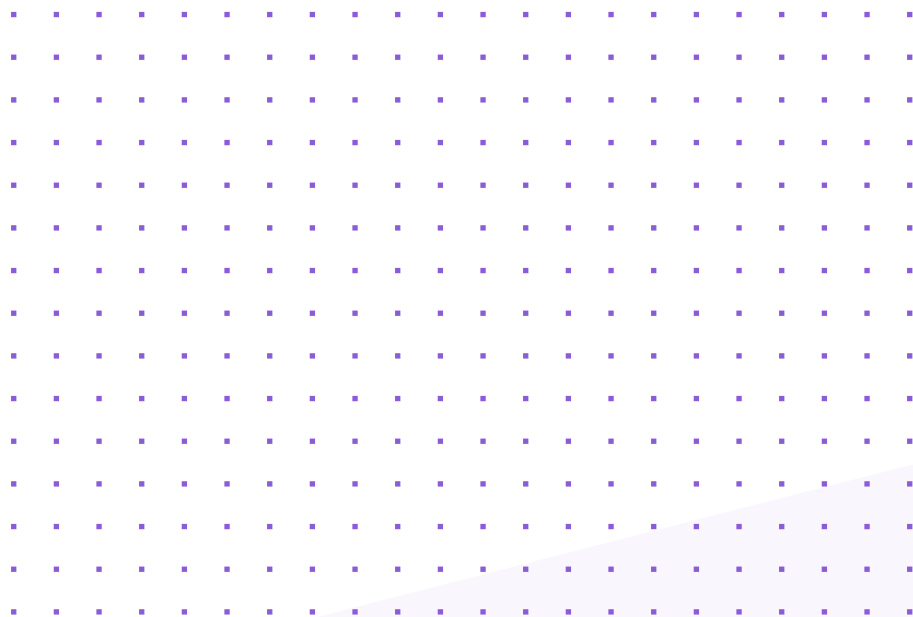
In-app chat

Text and other forms of messaging may be common, but there are times when your customers want a more dynamic interaction with your business. In-app chat, also known as live chat, can be integrated into a web browser or mobile application, usually via a small pop-up module through which a visitor can have a written conversation with a live agent or chatbot in real-time. Live chat has the highest satisfaction levels, with 83%. Customer satisfaction with chat has actually increased year-over-year.

With in-app chat functions, you can reduce common delays with back-and-forth emails between your team and customers, and express real-time details or sentiments that are difficult to describe through text messages. Your agents won't waste time searching for a customer's individual information, as their profile is accessible from the app's backend. Likewise, your customers won't have to leave the app to talk to you or install any special software, as the chat lives within your website or application's ecosystem. In-app conversations are continuous, with chat history and message-read status synchronizing across mobile and web. Message activity can be stored in the cloud and updated in real-time for service analysis or product feedback.
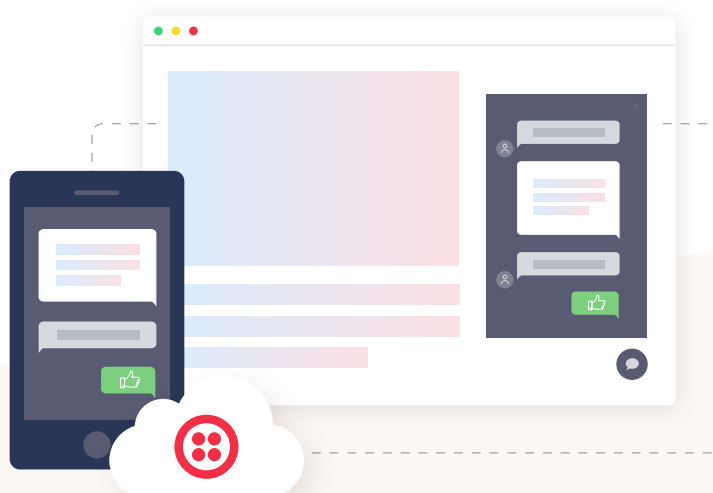
Depending on the specific use case, either a support representative (or bot) will reach out to a user to see if they need help with anything or a person visiting the website or application will initiate the chat and the appropriate agent will join the conversation. Most in-app chat solutions enable you to display your representative's name and photo to help build rapport right away. Live chat typically does more than allow two users to send messages to each other instantly. Robust live chat systems include typing indicators, chat history, read receipts, and integration into third-party software (e.g., ticketing support issues, collecting and analyzing data, or routing customers to the most appropriate representative), all of which improve the chat experience for both the agent and the customer.

One of the most dynamic ways to connect with users, live chat is now an integral part of many companies' customer support process. Live chat is faster than email and more efficient than phone support since an experienced customer service representative can field multiple chat instances at a time. Intelligent chatbots can further expedite the process by providing instant replies in cases where human agents aren't necessary, and giving contextual suggestions to agents when appropriate.

Live chat usually offers shorter wait times than other forms of support, and customers can easily multitask while waiting, which eases the pain of waiting for answers. Along with swift responses, a sense of privacy also increases customer engagement and satisfaction.
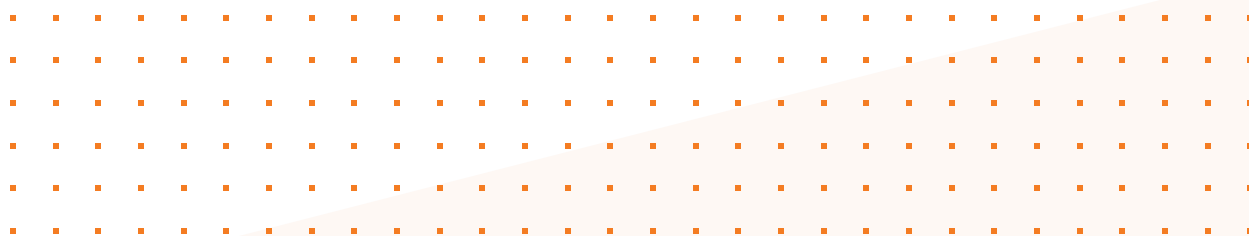
Here are some best practices for your in-app chat experience:

1. Be prepared with pre-written responses

Incorporating automated greetings and responses both decreases the amount of work repetitive work a customer service agent has to do and provides instant contact for the user who needs help. Or, use knowledge bases and NLU to help make agents more efficient.

2. Show empathy

As with all excellent customer service, the customer is always right. Acknowledge their concerns or complaints, and show you care about their needs.

3. Be upfront about wait times

Let your customers know how long they'll need to wait for a response, and then follow through. If you need to research their case or look for the answer to their question, let them know what you're doing so they know what to expect. Likewise, if live chat isn't available 24/7, clearly communicate your operating hours, or fallback to bots to answer common questions.

4. Give your agents insight

Because live chat is built into the website or application it serves, a good chat solution will provide the customer service agent visibility about the user who needs help, e.g., how long they've been on the site, if they are a new or returning user, or how many others are waiting to chat.

5. Analyze your results

In-app chat can give an organization insight into customer habits, trends, and pain points. Marketing, sales, and customer support teams can analyze the efficacy of their support team, and even extract data to aid business intelligence efforts.

Operator IP Messaging

While SMS is widespread, it was designed for the pre-smartphone era, and doesn't have the capabilities that modern smartphone messaging apps offer. SMS messages are limited to just plain text. To keep up with evolving consumer demands, operators (both carriers and technology providers) are investing in messaging services that deliver rich experiences via a device's default messaging application. While this innovation represents new opportunities for businesses and an improved experience for consumers, it's still early days and penetration is limited.

Today, rich consumer messaging is mainly seen through RCS (Rich Communication Services) and Apple iMessage. RCS is an upgrade to legacy SMS, allowing for rich media, group text, suggested replies and more. It's championed by the GSMA, Google & Android, Samsung, and many carriers and mobile phone manufacturers. iMessage is Apple's rich messaging experience that supports texts, photos, or videos sent to another Apple user over Wi-Fi or cellular data networks.

As this experience becomes the new norm in P2P messaging, operators are adding support for rich business-to-consumer messaging. Operator IP Messaging mainly consists of RCS Business Messaging (RBM) and Apple Business Chat (ABC). RBM allows companies to send rich media, customize branding, and include suggested replies and actions through a customer's default messaging app. ABC connects businesses to customers directly within Messages, allowing them to resolve issues, complete transactions, help customers find their business, enable conversations to be started through new avenues like Maps, and more.

Operator IP Messaging's breadth of capabilities will mean businesses can provide branded, interactive, mobile customer experiences that were typically only possible online or in a mobile application – with the added convenience of taking place over a common messaging channel. For example, a message from an airline

reminding the customer to check in for a flight will provide an interactive check-in experience utilizing RBM or ABC, complete with a boarding pass, visual flight updates, and an airline terminal map, all within the messaging app the customer normally uses to send simple text messages.
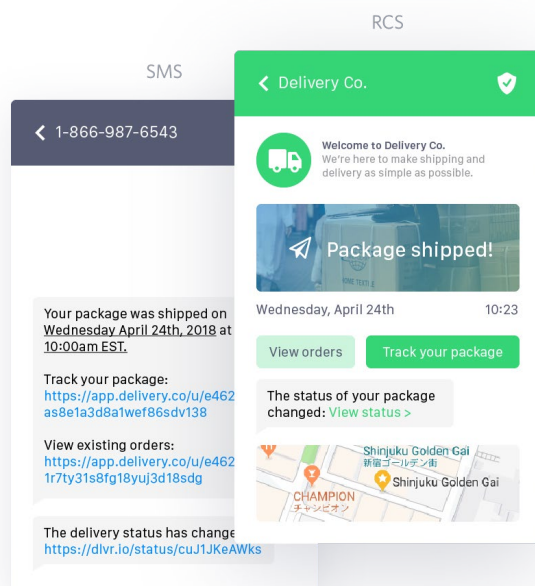
Businesses looking to embrace offerings like RBM or ABC should note that Google upgraded the Android operating system to RCS, but Apple has not yet integrated the technology. They, instead, created and support ABC (in beta) today. With iPhone representing a 13% market share of the smartphone market worldwide, this poses a significant challenge for many businesses. Until RCS messaging is available on all mobile devices, capability checks and fallback logic will be critical.

Since Operator IP Messaging is still new to the marketplace, and the limits of rich messaging are still unknown. However, the best practices discussed in Chapter 2 also apply to this next generation messaging standard.

Depending on where you and your consumers are located should dictate your usage of Operator IP Messaging, as you may need to wait a bit longer for adoption. While multiple providers like Google and the newly launched Cross Carrier Messaging Initiative (CCMI) are working to bring RCS business messaging to the masses, Apple is moving forward with Apple Business Chat, meaning you need to keep tabs of the evolution and decisions by operators over the coming years

While still in early stages, there are some important considerations for using Operator IP Messaging:

1. Fallback to SMS

With the differences between RBM and ABC as well as RCS not yet being globally available (even though it has grown from 150 million to almost 300 million monthly active users), you need another ubiquitous channel to reach all the users who can't be reached via Operator IP Messaging.

2. Instill trust with branding and verified sender ID

You can think of a verified sender ID as a hybrid between a verified account on a social platform and a shortcode for SMS. It ensures your users know it's actually you sending the message. The ability to add imagery or business details to your sender ID also extends your brand connection.

3. Structure the conversation

Instead of providing a keyword for response, you can use suggested replies and carousels to offer users a clear sense of what to do next. Payment integration, custom buttons, and map, calendar, and contact options add additional utility.

4. Engage your users

Rich card carousels bring your messages to life, improving engagement with app-like experiences that don't require your users to leave the app. You can include full-color, high-resolution graphics and videos in the message body, or include a loyalty card or ticket complete with QR code.

5. Contextualize resources

Next-generation features allow you to provide novel experiences, but that doesn't mean you need to make use of all of those integrations and features at once. Treat each message with the same care and attention you would your mobile application—deliver the resources that make sense for the interaction and add value for your customer.

Messaging made easy

How you reach your customers can make the difference between them reading your message and taking action, or ignoring your message and unsubscribing. People have moved from calling and emailing to messaging. The immediacy, convenience, and personal nature of business messaging give you the perfect opportunity to connect with customers around the world on the devices they use every day.

Businesses use Twilio to add messaging capabilities to their software so they can communicate the right information at the right time—at scale. Twilio Messaging APIs integrate messaging into your business communications in a variety of ways. Whether you want to send a basic SMS, incorporate in-app chat, share push notifications, or communicate through social messaging apps, with Twilio, you can message customers on multiple channels using a single omnichannel platform.

Using Twilio APIs, your developers can grab the tools they need to give your web and mobile apps the power to exchange messages of any variety, all with minimal development effort. Twilio manages the complexity of the global carrier network to provide industry-leading message deliverability, allowing you to focus on creating a world-class customer experience instead of building and maintaining communication infrastructure.

Messaging glossary

Alphanumeric Sender ID

Allows you to set your company name or brand as the Sender ID when sending one-way SMS messages to supported countries.

Application Programming Interface (API)

An API is provided by a service or program so that others may use the features and functions of the system. APIs are like a contract that describes how a consumer will make requests of the system, and what they will receive in return.

Application-to-Person Messaging (A2P)

Otherwise known as application-to-person messaging, A2P is a one-way SMS to which recipients are not expected to reply. When you send a text message to vote for your favorite performer on a televised talent show, you're using A2P messaging. Software applications use an API to send and receive texts.

Artificial Intelligence

The ability of a computer to mimic human cognitive skills such as learning and understanding.

Call-to-Action (CTA)

A statement or instruction that explains and incentivizes customers and potential customers to take action, such as subscribe to your marketing list.

Channel
Paths of communication, such as phone, email, SMS, and in-app chat.

Chatbot
A computer program that replicates conversation via internet messaging, sometimes used in e-commerce, contact centers, and customer service as a virtual agent to provide information on a limited topic.

Contact Center
An operation combining human, technical, and physical resources to field inbound and/or place outbound communications. Contact centers often handle contacts via multiple channels, including voice, email, chat, social media, and SMS. Contact centers deploy technological solutions and operational processes to distribute contacts to teams of contact center agents, often located in one or more locations.

Contextual Intelligence
Customers' personal information, interaction history, and all other aspects of the customer journey that is available to an agent during a service or sales interaction, in order to provide better, faster service. Contextually intelligent systems save customers from having to repeat themselves and ultimately contribute to superior experiences.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

A CRM system helps an organization improve its customer relationships, keep its customers contact details up to date, track every interaction they have with the business, and manage their accounts.

Live Chat

Another common way to apply messaging to engagement is when it appears in web browsers or mobile applications like an instant message system, usually via a small pop-up module through which a visitor can have a written conversation with a live operator in real-time. Live chat is also known as in-app chat.

Long Code

10-digit phone numbers, the type that a consumer or business would purchase from a landline or mobile carrier, and are generally the most common type of phone numbers you see.

MMS

Short for Multimedia Messaging Service, MMS is a standard way to send multimedia such as pictures, videos, and other attachments over text messaging channels. Marketers use MMS to send branded messages and advertisements that are more engaging than copy-based SMS.

Omnichannel

When all communication channels (such as phone, SMS, online chat, and email) are connected and integrated to provide a seamless customer experience.

Opt-In/Opt-Out

Because messaging is a permission-based medium, customers decide to join your list (opt-in). If they become disinterested, they may unsubscribe from your list (opt-out).

OTT Messaging

Short for over-the-top messaging, OTT is an instant messaging service or online chat provided by third parties, such as Facebook-owned mobile application WhatsApp. It is used as an alternative to text messaging services provided by a mobile network operator. OTT allows for the streaming of audio, video, and other media services directly to the consumer over the internet.

Person-to-Person Messaging (P2P)

P2P stands for Person-to-Person messaging. In simple terms, this is when two or more people communicate over text messaging. For example, when you send a text message from your phone to another person's phone, that's P2P. This can also include traffic that goes through an API to connect two people.

Push Notification

Push notifications are a form of one-way communication that can provide useful information and also direct users to your app.

RCS

Rich Communications Services, aka RCS, upgrades carrier messaging with features like sharing high-resolution photos and videos, adding appointments to calendars, mapping directions to businesses, browsing products, and more. RCS combines the messaging elements consumers expect from popular messaging apps like WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger with the ubiquity of SMS.

Short Code

Short codes are a five or six-digit phone number specifically made for commercial use and mass mobile communications—and you'll typically want one when using SMS for larger-scale marketing purposes.

SMS

An acronym for Short Message Service, SMS is an alternative way to refer to a text message. An SMS is generally sent from one mobile device to another over a cellular network. This protocol has been built into every mobile phone made since 2005.

Throughput

The number of messages your provider can send per second (often referred to as 'mps').

Thanks for reading.

Would you like to learn more about what
Twilio can do for your business?

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