

RateNow

Best Practices for SMS Marketing

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Mobile Marketing Association (MMA) Best Practices

The following two statistics offer a glimpse into the power of text messaging:

- More than 90% of cell phone users keep their phone within three feet, 24 hours per day.
- More than 95% of text messages are read within four minutes.

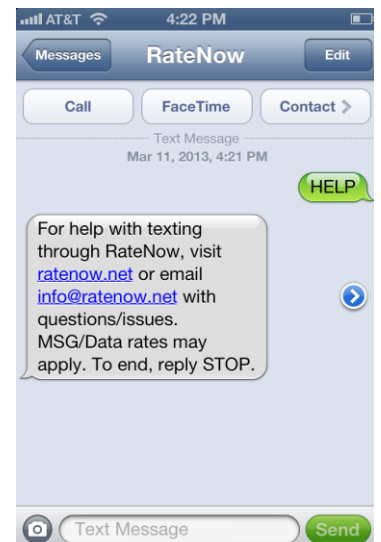
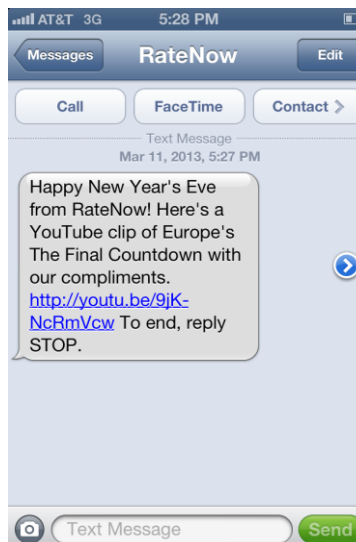
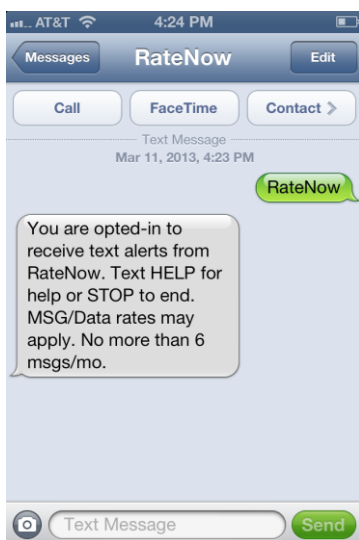
SMS Marketing provides RateNow Users with unparalleled access to customers. As the third party provider of such powerful software, RateNow intimately understands the requirements of the Mobile Marketing Association (MMA), how RateNow meets these requirements, and what Users need to know to stay in compliance.

You can find a wealth of information about best practices on the MMA’s website: <http://www.mmaglobal.com>. In addition, the entire MMA Best Practices document is available from RateNow on request, by emailing info@ratenow.net.

It is crucial that every RateNow User understands the severity of abusing SMS marketing. The Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) sets statutory damages for SMS text spam at \$500 per occurrence. So, for example, a large chain of Jiffy Lube stores that sent 2.3 million unsolicited, un-opted text messages settled for 43 Million dollars (see link for details: <http://www.mobilemarketingwatch.com/textmarks-walloped-with-major-sms-spam-settlement-25031/>).

There are many best practices that need to be followed to be compliant with the MMA Best Practices linked above. The RateNow system has been built with all of these best practices in mind. Some of the key issues are the following:

- A) The five things that must be included on every Call to Action, and also must be included in the Confirmation Text when a customer opts in:**
 1. Content provider's name (e.g. "Applebees: ")
 2. Program description (e.g. "Welcome to our Mobile VIP Club")
 3. Frequency of alerts (e.g. "8msgs/mth")
 4. Rate/cost disclosure (e.g. "Msg/Data rates may apply.")
 5. Instructions for opt-out and help (e.g. "Text HELP for help or STOP to end")
- B) All subscription services with recurring messages (broadcast clubs) must contain STOP instructions (“To end, reply stop”) in each and every message sent from the system.**
- C) All programs must support the commands STOP, QUIT, END, CANCEL, UNSUBSCRIBE, STOP ALL, and HELP.**



Ten Ways to Make SMS Campaigns Work

1. Always get permission

SMS mobile marketing is permission marketing, where your customers give you their explicit permission to be marketed to. Because you're communicating with customers who have given their consent, SMS is a uniquely powerful tool to deliver your messaging to customers. To streamline your mobile marketing campaigns and ensure that you are always in compliance with best practices and established consumer protection laws, always have your customers join your SMS campaigns directly from their own phones. They do this by texting a keyword (defined by you) to a channel (local phone number). It's that simple, and you should keep it that simple.

2. Follow best practices

You have better things to do than to review the 165 page MMA U.S. Consumer Best Practices Guide. Rest assured that RateNow is intimately familiar with all of the details, and our software will make sure you are following all the rules at every step.

3. Incentivize your customers

Customers are very protective of their mobile phone numbers, as they should be. So give them a reason to join your broadcast club. In all of your advertising, make sure the benefit to your customers is very clear – exclusive offers, discounts, promotions. Make sure they understand that the club is for your most loyal customers, your VIPs. Offering a free product or service, or entering customers into a drawing are additional ways to drive your opt-in numbers higher.

4. Put your Call To Action (CTA) everywhere

While a simple advertisement at your cash register will work, you won't be able to realize the full potential of your mobile marketing unless you advertise it everywhere. Anywhere your customers put their eyes, you should be asking them to opt-in - Facebook, Twitter, print media, email, stickers, in-store signage, table tents, receipts, and everywhere else. If more customers know about your program, your results will be remarkably improved.

5. Use RateNow to build your list

In our experience, more than 70% of respondents to RateNow feedback surveys are willing to opt-in to a text club. This is an easy, efficient way to not only capture customer experience in the moment, but to deepen the relationship with your most loyal customers. In the Final Text of your RateNow surveys, include a statement like "Thanks for participating. Reply DEALS to join our list for exclusive offers and discounts, straight to your phone. 4msgs/month." The majority of respondents will probably opt-in, and you'll expand your distribution lists more quickly.

6. Focus on repeat customers AND new customers

An SMS program should reinforce loyalty, as well turn your new customers into frequent customers. The objective is to bring each customer in more often, and have them spend more than they normally would. Driving additional purchases from your already loyal customers is provides a great return on your investment in mobile marketing.

7. Use texting as an enhancer

Your SMS messages should be used to reinforce all of your other marketing and advertising. Your messages don't have to be just plain text? Include your businesses phone number, URLs to your website, links to your Facebook or Yelp profiles, links to interesting videos or articles, and anything else that might enhance your brand's impact and image. While direct offers are great, and text messaging has off-the-charts redemption rates, your mobile marketing can be used for so much more!

8. Figure out the frequency

One of the key issues to maximize the effectiveness of your SMS marketing is to determine the frequency of your messaging. To make this determination, consider how often your customers buy what you are selling. If your customers' purchase frequency is monthly, then you don't want to send them text messages every week. If the purchase weekly, you don't want to send daily messages. Make the frequency of your messaging match the buying habits of your customers.

And make sure to keep in mind the time of day where your messages will be received. No one wants to be awoken by a text message offer, no matter how great the deal.

9. Validate the value

Derek Johnson, CEO of Tatango, has a great way to determine if the text message you are sending is valuable enough – the "Quarter Test." Before you click send on every text broadcast, ask yourself the following: If your customers were forced to pay a quarter to receive your message, is the message valuable enough that they will want to continue receiving messages from you in the future?

10. Track, measure, and improve

The measurement of ROI is key to every marketing initiative. For your SMS campaigns, you should pay particular attention to three key metrics: (1) subscriber growth, (2) unsubscribe rates, and (3) redemption rate (how many customers use the offers/information you are providing). By tracking these three areas, you can quickly adjust your program to be progressively more successful, more targeted, and with better returns.

Five Ways to Make SMS Campaigns Fail

1. Weak CTA

The power of SMS marketing comes from interactivity. You text your customers an opportunity or a valuable piece of information, and your customers take advantage of it. If your CTA isn't specific enough, doesn't offer enough incentive, or is too repetitive, your campaigns will suffer. Make sure you frequently offer directly stated deals with limited time and specific action.

2. TxtTlk

Your customers will read your SMS advertising on their phones. That isn't a reason for your marketing material to read like you hired a 14-year-old to write it. Keep messages professional and easily readable. If you must cut down on characters, drop filler words like "the" or "and," instead of truncating content or using abbreviations. There may be times when text talk is appropriate, depending on the make-up of your customer base. However, as a general rule, write your messages like your high school English teacher is going to be grading them.

3. Blah...

Your subscribers want intimate details, actionable advice and insider information. Make your messages specific, relevant, and current. In addition, stay focused on your company, your industry, and the targeted interests of your subscriber list.

4. Adspeak

Phrases like "Act Now!" and "Satisfaction Guaranteed!" are invisible to consumers. They are so common that many don't even notice them anymore, and when we do notice them, they send the wrong message. On a text message that just interrupted your Bad Piggies game, your Facebook shenanigans, or an important phone call, these phrases are rude and unwelcome. So, keep your messages personal, realistic and genuine every time. Your customers have demonstrated trust in you and your brand, so communicate with them like you would with a friend – NOT a business target.

5. Generic Time Frame

If the SMS broadcast you're about to send today can easily wait for tomorrow or next month, don't send the broadcast. Instead, do something to link it solidly with something going on in the area, with your business, or on the calendar. This keeps the content as relevant as possible, and syncs with what's already on the minds of your subscribers.

A couple more tips...

Always include your Company Name in your messages! Even if it's a recognizable abbreviation of your name, your customers will associate the message with your brand immediately if you put your name first.

RateNow can help with your CTA, no charge. See a sample of what we're doing for clients below, and contact your Rep if you'd like us to put something together for you.

GET 3oz FREE!

Sign up for **CHERRY BERRY VIP TEXT ALERTS**
and receive exclusive offers and deals
right on your phone!

CherryBerry
self-serve yogurt bar

text
CHERRY
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78619

Or scan here
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**You'll get 3oz of FROYO free right now,
and up to 8 great CherryBerry offers per month.**

8 Messages per Month. Message and data rates may apply. Show confirmation text to redeem. CherryBerry. Powered by RateNow.

RateNow BroadCast Pricing

Broadcast pricing is based on the number of subscribers in the User’s list. The number of text messages you can send to each subscriber is unlimited (and we have plenty of tips and best practices to make sure you send the right amount).

RateNow Pricing – Broadcast Only					
	Starter	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Platinum
Monthly Price	\$24	\$49	\$99	\$199	\$375
Keywords	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Broadcast Subscribers	200	400	1000	2000	4000
Unlimited Features Per Channel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Real Time Reports	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
24 Hour Support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Personal RateNow Account Rep	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Larger unlimited plans available. Contact our Sales team at (800) 594-8989 for more information.					

RateNow also offers per message pricing for clients with more than 5,000 subscribers in their lists. The per message price for each level of monthly messaging is below:

RateNow Pricing – Per Message				
Messages per month	5,000	10,000	25,000	50,000+
Per Message Price	\$24	\$49	\$99	\$199
Larger plans available. Contact our Sales team at (800) 594-8989 for more information.				



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