



# Building Text Campaigns To Drive Marketing Results

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# Why Use Text Campaigns?

Text Marketing. You've probably read a lot of articles about it lately. There are seemingly endless amounts of conversations swirling around the use of text communication in the business world today. For the fitness industry, any sentence about text marketing often features another word: lawsuit.

Relatively speaking, text marketing is still new. The rules and regulations of its use aren't as clearly defined as email marketing. This ambiguity has resulted in several high-profile fitness businesses being named in lawsuits centered around alleged improper text communication practices. Your first impulse may be to avoid using text marketing campaigns to promote your gym. Who could blame you? However, you would lose an incredibly powerful and effective marketing tool. Compare text messaging against email and the numbers speak for themselves:



**Open Rate:** Text messages enjoy an incredible 98% open rate compared to 22% for email marketing. ([Adobe](#))



**Response Rate:** The response rate of SMS text message marketing is 45% vs email response rates at 6%. ([Rebrandly](#))



**Response Time:** The average response time for an email is about 90 minutes, compared to 90 seconds for a text message. ([EZ Texting](#))

In a world overwhelmed by media and advertisement, text messages are a viable option to cut through the noise and deliver your promotion to your audience. This e-book focuses on text campaigns, i.e. promotional offers sent to a wide audience through SMS text messages. It aims to give your gym a jumpstart to building your own text campaigns in **three important ways**:

- Lay out **best practices** to protect your gym against litigation while marketing through text message.
- Explain unique **elements of texting** to better understand how to build successful campaigns.
- Provide **campaign templates** to give examples of written text campaigns.

# Best Practices

Lawsuits around text marketing garner a lot of attention. They're like business ghost stories. Chilling tales of marketing gone wrong. What's frequently forgotten in these stories is that by and large consumers not only like text communication with businesses, they often prefer it to email or phone calls.

Text marketing can be a win-win for both your gym and your prospects and members. To strike a winning balance, implement these crucial best practices to protect your business and respect your prospects' and members' privacy.

## Required Opt-In For All Prospects

The simplest strategy to protect your business? Give each prospect the opportunity to provide a clear yes or no to text communication. Ensure your gym's CRM software includes communication waiver sections which outline text message policies on its new lead forms. This provides prospects the opportunity to voluntarily opt-in to text communication. Due to its popularity, you can reasonably expect high numbers of prospects to voluntarily elect to opt-in.

## Restrict Text Send Times

A critical mistake is to apply email marketing send times to text messages. Emails are impersonal, tucked away in inboxes. A 6am email blast is unlikely to draw the ire of your recipients, but a 6am text message buzzing on the nightstand is a whole other story. Just like business phone calls, restrict text messages to regular business hours to respect your prospects' and customers' private lives.

## Restrict Access To Communication Capabilities

Ensure you can restrict which team members have access to communication preferences in your CRM. An untrained employee may see nothing wrong with manually opting a prospect back into text communication if they don't fully understand the ramifications.



A 2016 Twilio study found **9 out of 10** customers globally want to use text for communication with businesses.

## Best Practices (cont'd)

### In-Message Opt-Out Functionality

Ensure the SMS messaging service you route your texts through includes opt-out functionality within text messages. This includes instructions on how to opt-out in the first text message a recipient receives, i.e. replying STOP at any time to discontinue text communication. This gives prospects and members complete control over their communication preferences and reduces the chances that a small irritation with your communication practices doesn't escalate into something much bigger.

### Keep Comprehensive Records

One potential danger is the inability of gyms to collect a comprehensive record of text messages sent by staff to prospects and members. This is compounded when gym staff use personal devices for business texts. Best practice is to conduct all text communication through a CRM software instead of personal devices. This keeps every sent-and-received message on record and easily sourced should a legal issue arise around your text usage.



75% of people wouldn't mind receiving an SMS text message from a brand (after opt-in)

-Rebrandly

### Communicate As Promised

Layout your intended communication practices, i.e. what you'll send and when you'll send it, and stick to it! Few things burn trust like a bait and switch. If you tell your members you will only text them important information about the gym like unexpected closures, don't add them to your promotional campaigns. At best you'll have an annoyed member opting out of further communication, at worst a possible legal headache.

# Elements of Text Campaigns

While many strategies of running a promotion are applicable across mediums (phone, email, print, snail mail, etc.), text communication has elements that are unique to it. Keep in mind these six elements when constructing your text campaigns.

## Brief Messaging

Brevity is key in text marketing. The standard SMS message length is 160 characters and as [Twilio](#) explains, you can hurt your promotion by exceeding it: “When you send an SMS message over 160 characters the message will be split. For example, a 161 character message will be sent as two messages, one with 153 characters and the second with 8 characters.” If your campaign is split across multiple messages, you’re figuratively (and somewhat literally) cutting your odds of landing the sale in half.

## Keyword Call-to-Action

The concise nature of text messaging is its appeal. Short messages sent and received quickly and easily. A successful text campaign should reduce potential friction points by establishing keyword CTAs (call to action): single word replies that opt the recipient into the promotion. For example, a cycling group class discount could be claimed by replying “SPIN” or 10 sessions of PT purchased by replying “10PACK”.

## Responsible Emoji Use

As silly as a title of “responsible emoji use” is, it’s true! Emojis can be fun. They break up the monotony and catch the eye. That’s what makes them so appealing. But they can shift from fun to outright annoying quickly. Does every text campaign need an emoji? No. Does a text campaign need seven emojis? Absolutely not. When you decide to add an emoji to a campaign, choose wisely. The selected emoji should relate logically to your promotional content like adding 🧑‍🌾 to a winter promotional. But add 🐸 to a text campaign about reduced pre-workout supplement prices, and you’ll leave your recipients with a lot of questions. 🤔



Entrepreneur reports 90% of text messages are read **within 3 seconds** of delivery.

# Elements of Text Campaigns (cont'd)

## Personalized Messaging

Fight the dreaded plague of mass marketing: impersonal messaging. Insert merge tags into your promotional messages to personalize every text sent. Merge tags are placeholders for values that change depending on the recipient like their first name, their city of residence, or their membership ID. When the text campaign is sent, the merge tags pull in the corresponding data for each recipient. Texts that are written as “**{{recipient-first}}**, catch our best membership rate of the year” become “Ashley, catch our best membership rate of the year” or “Michael, catch our best membership rate of the year” once sent.



## Segmented Audiences

Not every promotion is right for every prospect or member of your gym. Boost your close rates by targeting the right audience for your promotions. Segmentation is the practice of dividing your audience by important factors with the goal of isolating the perfect pool of buyers for the promotion you're running. Audiences can be segmented by age range, gender, membership status, their stage in the sales process, and so much more.

[Market segmentation] helps [businesses] to target specific consumer groups instead of focusing on a single individual. Marketers can be more efficient in terms of time, money and other resources.

- LinkedIn

## Shortened Links

Again, text communication is all about brevity. You can't have precious character space eaten up by lengthy URL links. Several sites exist to shorten URL links like [Bitly](#) and [TinyUrl](#). A shortened link is just that: shorter, yet still redirects recipients to the intended webpage. This is an essential part of your text marketing promotions that lead to additional landing pages before netting the sale.

## Campaign Templates - Prospects

Below are two prospect campaign templates. Both campaigns are examples of segmented audiences, targeting prospects in a specific point in the sales funnel. These campaigns can serve as a starting point for the creation of original text marketing campaigns or may be copied for your gym's promotional use.

### Promotional Join Rate Campaign

{{recipient-first}}, take advantage of our lowest rates of the year. Reply JOIN to claim your {{location-name}} membership and pay just \$1 at signup! 🤝

### Expired Trial Pass Campaign

If you liked your trial, you'll love being a member of {{location-name}}. Reply JOIN to start your membership and we'll waive the signup fee!



# Campaign Templates - Members

Below are two member campaign templates. Both campaigns are examples of segmented audiences, targeting members at a specific point in their customer journey. These campaigns can serve as a starting point for the creation of original text marketing campaigns or may be copied for your gym's promotional use.

## Member Renewal Campaign

{{recipient-first}}, one year down, one year stronger! Reply RENEW to lock in your current membership rate at {{location-name}} for the coming year.

## Inactive Membership Campaign

{{recipient-first}}, we miss you! Reply MEET to schedule a free trainer assessment to kickstart your workout routine at {{location-name}}. 💪



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