Cracking the Code: Getting Customers to Opt in to Your Text Message Marketing Campaigns

Have you gone mobile? It's the communication channel of the decade and the gatekeeper to reaching and engaging with your customers. Yet, mobile still hasn't been fully embraced by many companies around the world.

Why? For starters, many companies are in the early stages of developing their mobile strategy. A December 2014 Forrester report titled "Use Analytics to Build Mobile Advantage" revealed that 56% of digital business professionals admitted to not having clear mobile objectives. But 53% of these same professionals stated that increasing customer engagement was one of their top mobile consumer strategies.

Everybody knows the importance of mobile, but many don't know how it works. If you're also wondering where to begin with mobile, you're not alone. Although there is no one-size-fits-all approach to developing a mobile engagement strategy, there is one channel that has proven itself as having the greatest response rate – text messaging, or SMS communications.

Millions of consumers are opening and responding to text messages right now. In fact, 90% of all text messages are read within three minutes of delivery according to mobileSQUARED, providing a world of mobile engagement possibilities to deliver the right message to the right customer at the right time. However, before you can engage with your customers using text messaging, you have to obtain their explicit permission to be contacted. At first, it may sound like a daunting task. However, read on, and we will teach you how to crack the code of obtaining text message opt-ins to build an effective database of mobile customers to communicate with.

Syniverse®

We make mobile work
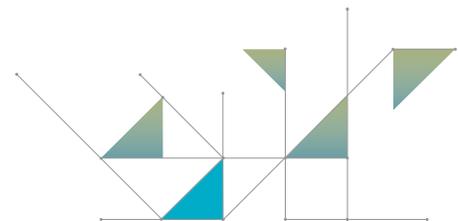
Why should you grow your text message opt-in database?

To effectively communicate with your customers through text messaging, you must gain their explicit permission first. There are variations of country laws and regulations that require single or double opt-in from customers, so it's important that you establish your opt-in database from the start. The good news is that your customers are on board: In a PricewaterhouseCoopers study, 80% of respondents said they were willing to share personal information if the company let them know upfront how they were going to use it. Letting your customers know how you intend to leverage their information will open a treasure trove of text messaging communication possibilities.

> Imagine that you're at home trying to relax after a hard day of work, and your home phone keeps ringing. Now imagine that a customer begins receiving text messages from hundreds of different companies daily, and only a few messages are wanted and relevant to her. Equally as annoying, right? Obtaining a customer's explicit permission to be contacted via text messaging ensures that you aren't the nagging business that keeps tapping your customer on the shoulder.

What's the key to growing a successful text message opt-in database?

How many times have you asked yourself, "What's in it for me?" Probably many times. On this note, consider that a customer's mobile device provides one of the most personal methods of communication in their lives, and you are going to have to work to get their attention. Also consider it's important to entice your customers with a mobile opt-in offer they can't refuse. Whether your customer engagement strategy is built around sending informational or promotional messages, the key is to enhance your customer's "path to purchase" or, better yet, "path to action." If you're transparent, your customers will spread the word, and their friends and family will rush to opt in for your text message communications as well. Wouldn't that be great?

> Take a deep breath. Obtaining customer permission doesn't have to be a scary database housekeeping exercise. In the long run, the benefits are twofold. You get a list of customers who have explicitly stated, "I want you to contact me through mobile," so you can better target your text message communication efforts. At the same time, the customer can receive contextually relevant text messages that are timely. It's a win-win for everybody!

Syniverse®

We make mobile work
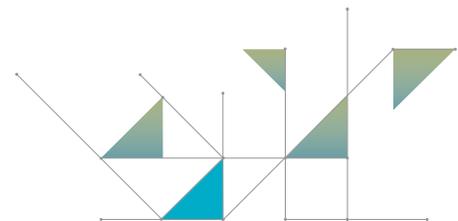
Excited yet?

Here are 10 ways to get your customers to opt in for your text message marketing campaigns:

Social Media Post:
"Enjoy a meal on us when you sign up for text message alerts!"

App Home Page:
"Opt in for text messaging and receive VIP loyalty rewards!"

In-App Push:
"Double reward points this month when you sign up to receive text messages!"

Point-of-sale:
"Sign up for text message alerts and receive 10% off your entire purchase today."

Email:
"Opt in and receive 25% off your next purchase."

Opt-in

Radio:
"Opt in for text message alerts and enter our prize a day giveaway."

In-Store Sign:
"Scan QR code on any store sign to opt in for text messages and receive a gift today."

OPEN

Web Page Sign-up:
"Sign up for text message promotions and receive a scratch-to-win coupon for a mystery discount."

TV Ad:
"Opt in for text message communications and receive a buy-one-get-one-free product of your choice.""

Shipping Statements:
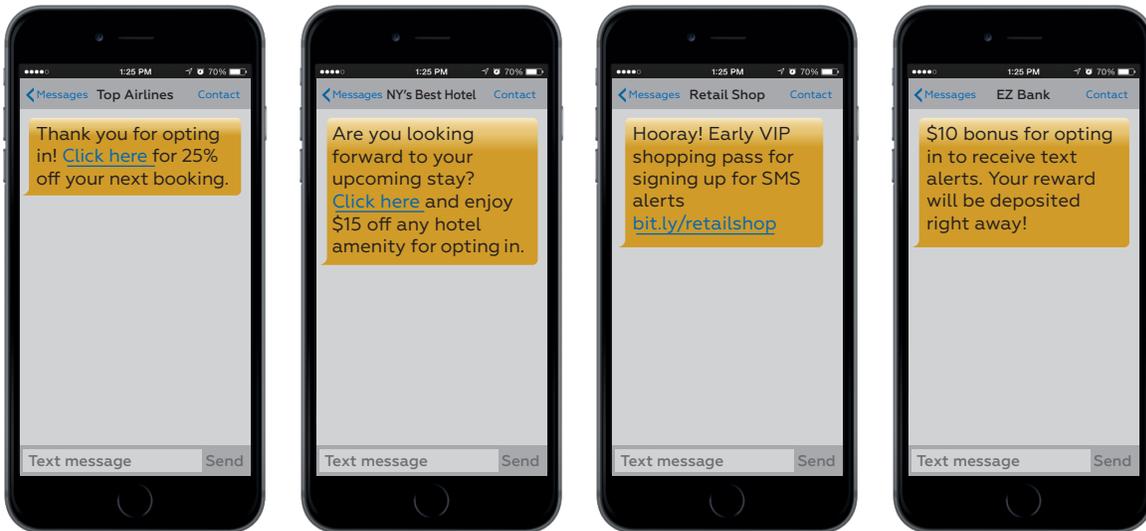"Receive free shipping for the month of May when you opt in to receive text messages."

A mobile opt-in strategy doesn't have to be built from scratch. By leveraging some of your traditional marketing channels, you can effectively reach your target audience to gain text message communication privileges.
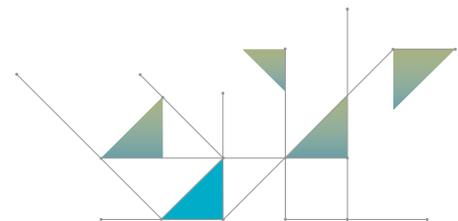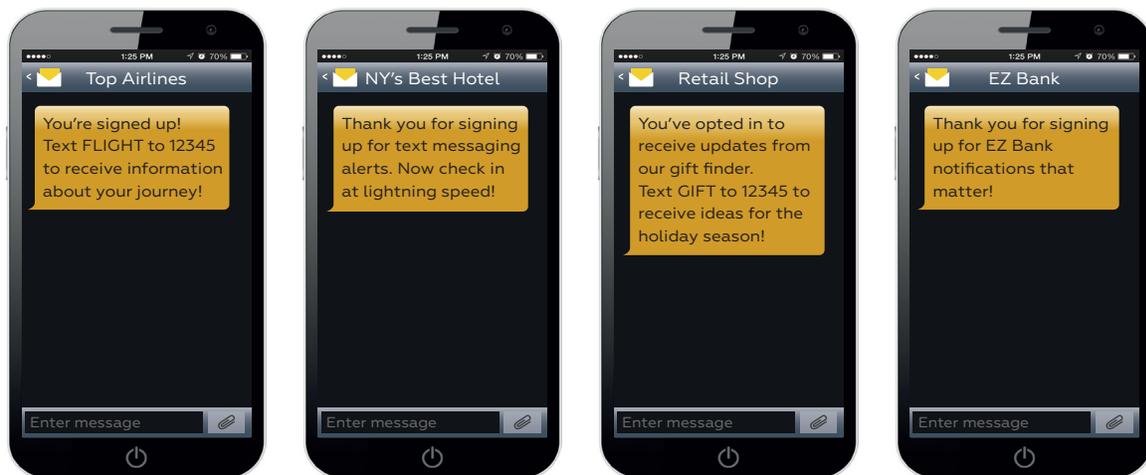
Syniverse ®

We make mobile work

Wondering what an informational or promotional text message might look like on a device? Scroll down for some examples for different industries:

Example use cases:

Promotional

Top Airlines
Thank you for opting in! Click here for 25% off your next booking.

NY's Best Hotel
Are you looking forward to your upcoming stay? Click here and enjoy $15 off any hotel amenity for opting in.

Retail Shop
Hooray! Early VIP shopping pass for signing up for SMS alerts
bit.ly/retailshop

EZ Bank
$10 bonus for opting in to receive text alerts. Your reward will be deposited right away!

Informational

Top Airlines
You're signed up! Text FLIGHT to 12345 to receive information about your journey!

NY's Best Hotel
Thank you for signing up for text messaging alerts. Now check in at lightning speed!

Retail Shop
You've opted in to receive updates from our gift finder. Text GIFT to 12345 to receive ideas for the holiday season!

EZ Bank
Thank you for signing up for EZ Bank notifications that matter!

**Syniverse** ®

We make mobile work

Keeping Customers Opted In

Getting your customers to opt in to your text messaging campaigns is one thing. Keeping them engaged is another. Once customers opt out of receiving text message communications from your company, it will be much harder to get them back. So while text message marketing might be highly effective when done right, it can also be detrimental to your brand integrity if the following best practices aren't followed.

Make it relevant.

The highly personal nature of mobile means that customers expect communications sent via text messaging to be relevant to them. And the greater the relevance of the message, the more likely it is to be well-received. Companies can leverage mobile context – information gained from location, identity, customer usage patterns and enterprise applications – to send highly targeted, hyperpersonalized text messages to reach the right customer, in the right place, in the right mobile moment.
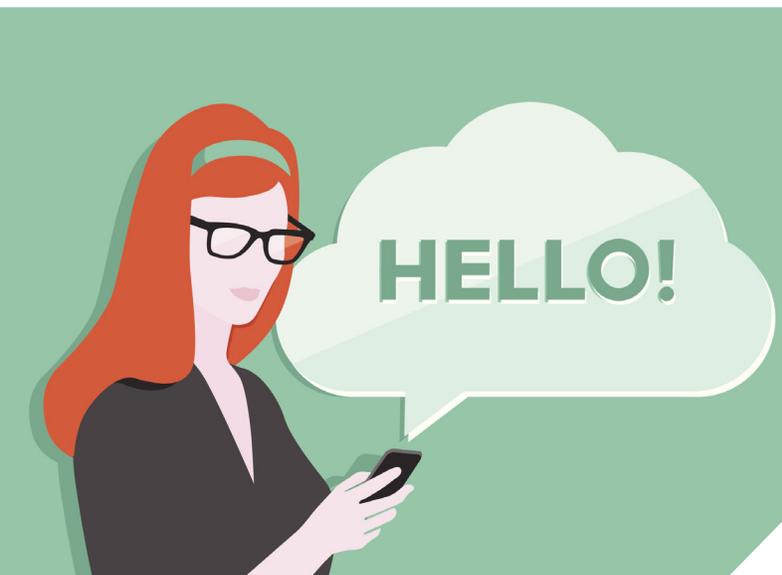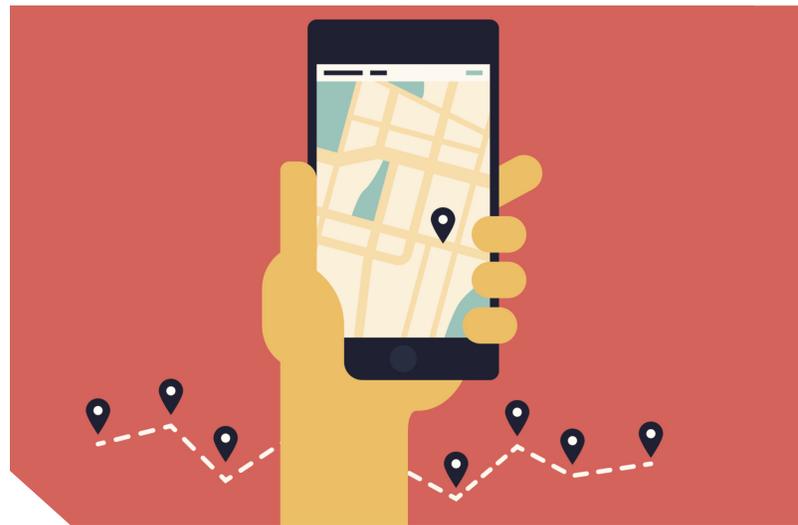
Engage in a conversation.

The beauty of text messaging is that it allows you to easily engage in a conversation with your customers, responding to their concerns or inquiries in real time, through a reliable channel. So think outside of the call center. Companies are increasingly finding success in customer satisfaction through text messaging to give customers an alternative way to get in touch when they're on the go. In a recent Harris poll, 64% of consumers with texting capabilities said they would prefer to use text messaging over voice communication as a customer service contact method. Engage in a conversation with your customers by adopting a communication channel they prefer: text messaging.

*Syniverse*®

We make mobile work
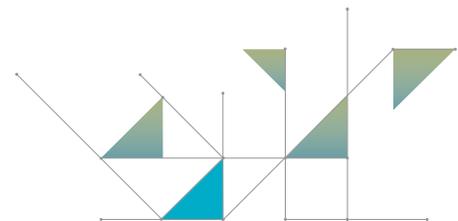
Play the game and keep it fun.

As mobile usage increases, so, too, does the use of games, which naturally lend themselves to mobile environments. Consumer brands can take advantage of using games, or game-like elements, to enter the consumer's recreational world to help increase loyalty and optimize engagement. From scratch-to-win coupons to brand trivia sent through text messages, the more interactive you can make your mobile marketing, the more engaged your customers will be.

Respect your customers.

When you receive a text message opt-in from customers, it's critical to remember that they have expressed trust in your brand. In return, it is important that you respect their privacy and preferences. Communicate the number of text messages you will send in a given period of time. Also ensure you include a way for customers to opt out of your text messaging campaigns at any time. If you respect the frequency with which you communicate with your customers and push meaningful, timely content, the likelihood of a customer opting out is relatively low. Ensure that your text messaging campaign is as contextual as possible to keep your customers wanting more.
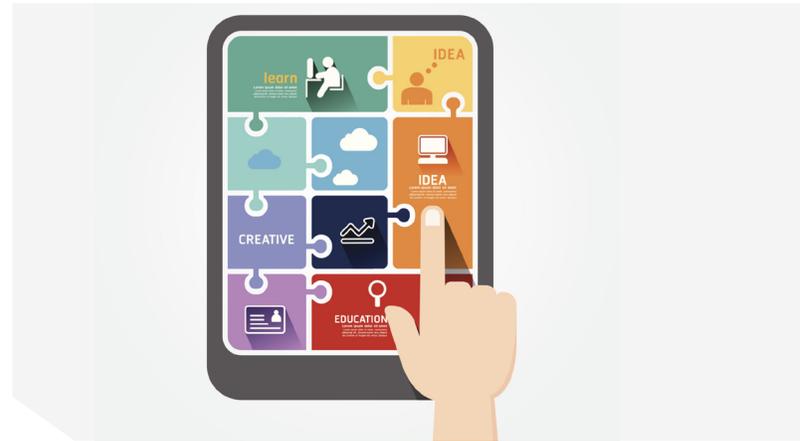
Reaching Your Full Mobile Potential.

Congratulations. The fact that you've read this far in this guide is a testament to your dedication and commitment to realizing the power of text message communications. So take the first step. Build a mobile opt-in database of loyal customers so that you're ahead of the rest, and watch your business metrics improve exponentially. Now you have the knowledge and tools necessary to hook your customers with text messaging offers they can't refuse. Let us know if you need any help along the way, and we can show you some other great tips and tricks on how to truly *make mobile work* for your company.

Syniverse is here to help you leverage the mobile channel to further engage with your customers. Our unmatched mobile reach to nearly 7 billion mobile devices, long history of over 25 years in the mobile space, and relationships with many of the world's largest companies and mobile operators ensure that you can rely on us to help identify the solution that best fits your specific needs. Contact us now to learn more.

Check out our **mobile engagement resources** for best-practice examples and guides to help you further realize the power of mobile!

Syniverse ®

We make mobile work