

Salons and SMS text messaging - a match made in heaven

Whether you are a hair salon, nail bar, beauty therapist or full blown health spa - you'll be amazed at the level of success and increased profit you can bring your business using SMS text messaging.

A simple text message can be all it takes to increase appointments, reduce no-shows and add extra value to your treatments through after care.

SMS Marketing is low cost and incredibly effective. This short guide will show you how to bring success to your business with by reducing no-shows and increasing appointments.

More importantly, we can show you ways to use SMS to support your business for the long haul.

SMS isn't expensive or complicated and you could be up and running in moments with everything you need to really make a difference to your bottom line.

brands using SMS successfully reach 95% of smartphone and non-smartphone users

GoMoNews.com

50 percent of survey respondents report responding to a text offer

MarketingCharts.com



Are there any rules I need to be aware of when texting?



Yes

But they're not complicated or hard to stick to - and are all geared around etiquette and best practice, making sure you don't damage your reputation.

So long as a customer has given you their mobile phone number, you are more than entitled to send them a text message related to the nature of the transaction - so as long as you keep it relevant to your own business you're covered here.

You should always identify yourself (your business) as the sender of the message and include a contact phone number - you want them to call you to book an appointment in most cases so this one is easy!

You should also include instructions on how to opt-out of receiving any more messages from you - this is common sense, as you don't want to be sending messages to anyone who doesn't welcome them.

TO SUMMARISE

1. Only send messages to those who have given you their mobile number during the process of a previous transaction or enquiry.
2. Keep your messages relevant to the service you previously provided.
3. Identify yourself as the sender.
4. Include a contact number so they can respond.
5. Provide clear opt-out instructions in the message (e.g. "Reply STOP to unsubscribe"). This can be automated to remove them from your list using a Virtual Mobile Number - we give you one of these for free when you buy 5,000 credits for £175 (saving you 56%).

Step One - check your stock levels



If you have a rummage around the back of your cupboards (or more likely on your computer) you'll probably find that you already have a list of mobile phone numbers that you've gathered from customers - this is the perfect starting point and means that you can **send out your first campaign today.**

If you're sending out appointment reminders, you can do this straight away. You'll find that a brief reminder by text about 24 hours before will reduce no-shows by around 70% - you can even give your customers the option to reply and cancel or rearrange for another time.

If however, you're going to be sending out promotional messages (special offers, vouchers etc.) then it's a good idea to ask for permission first (especially as some of the numbers may have been collected some time ago). A typical opt-in campaign would look something like this...

Hi, as a customer of Freestylers we'd like to occasionally send you some special offers via text message - if you'd rather we didn't just reply STOP.

Typically you would expect about 2% of your list to unsubscribe at this point.

If you haven't collected any customer data - don't fear, just start from today!

Think about how many customers / appointments you get a day and you'll see it won't take long to build up your list.

Step Two - regular treatments for your data

On average, small businesses have around 800 customer records to target with SMS marketing - but you don't want to be average, do you?

Here's some great ways to grow your list...

- ◆ **Appointments:** When someone calls you to book an appointment you probably already ask for their phone number in the event you need to contact them - add it to your list.
- ◆ **Adverts & Signage:** Add your Virtual Mobile Number to your adverts, flyers and signage and your customers will be able to text in to automatically subscribe for your special offers.
- ◆ **Website & Facebook:** If your business has it's own website or Facebook page it's fairly easy to get a 'subscribe' form added. This way, people can send you their numbers and you can just add them to your list.



90 percent of text messages get read within 3 minutes of delivery

ImpigeMobileStrategy.com

Mobile coupons receive 10x higher redemption rates than print coupons

GoMobileBook.com

Step Three - sending the right message

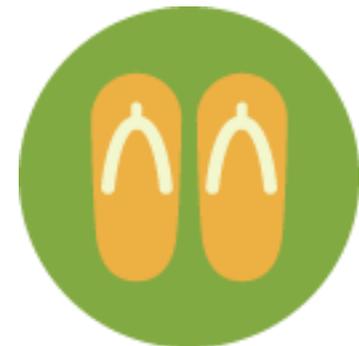
So, you've got your list and you've taken steps to keep it fresh with new customers getting added regularly - you're ready to start using text messaging to promoting your business.

Q: How often should I send messages?

A: You should send one-on-one messages like appointment reminders as often as you need to, however promotional messages should probably be limited to no more than a couple a month, otherwise you might find yourself getting a lot of unsubscribes or get a reputation as a bit of a spammer.

Q: When should I send messages?

A: Obviously, you know your customers best but here's some tips: reminders the day before an appointment are always a good idea. If bookings seem a little quiet or you're hosting a special event, a well timed promotional message can work wonders in drumming up interest.



Step Three - sending the right message

Q: What should I send?

A: Your message should be relevant to both your business and your customers, but here's a few suggestions that have been known to work well...

Hi, just a quick reminder about your appointment with Lisa @ Indulgence Beauty Salon on Weds 29th 11:15am - reply to cancel or rearrange.

Daily grind getting to you? We'd like to invite you to a late night relaxation session at Spa180 on Tue 3rd Nov - exclusive offers and advice to help you unwind from a hard days work. Reply 'YES' to rsvp.

Christmas party just around the corner? Book a hair appointment with us for next week for a half price manicure. Reply to book your double appointment.



Measuring Success - Cost vs Return



SMS is the most responsive and affordable marketing method available today and fastsms provide the best value for money service on the market - this means that you can run a pilot campaign to your customers with very little investment.

Typical costs:

- ◆ 3.5 pence + vat per text message sent (£35 for every 1,000 customers contacted)
- ◆ £99 + vat for a Virtual Mobile Number (this lets your customers subscribe automatically & reply to you)

Our current offer; use Promocode **SALON14**

1,000 message credits & Virtual Mobile Number

£35 + vat

Measuring Success - Cost vs Return



There are a number of ways you can track the success of your SMS Marketing campaigns, keep in mind the goal of each message you send and you should be able to match it up to a measurable result.

- ◆ **Weekly takings:** Often, this is the clearest indicator of how well your business is doing. Remember, even if you can't directly attribute a sale to one of your campaigns you're creating brand awareness just by being active. This is also where you should see a drop in missed appointments from no-shows.
- ◆ **Code redemption:** Perhaps the easiest way to track the origin of a sale/booking is whether they are quoting a special offer code. Think about using different codes for different messages so you can differentiate between broadcasts.
- ◆ **URL tracking:** If you're directing your customers to your website to make a booking consider using a URL shortening tool - these often provide basic tracking so you can see how many visited your site.

SMS Success stories from around the world



In 2010, a hair studio in East Sussex initiated an appointment reminder campaign to nearly 5,000 customers over a 9 month period. During this time they found a 70% reduction in missed appointments.

In 2009, a health a beauty salon in Nottingham sent out a special offer to 213 customers which resulted in 12 bookings for the following week. This would cost just £7.50 to send - resulting in a massive return on investment.



In 2013, a chain of tanning salons in Seattle generated \$196,000 in additional revenue and nearly 5,000 mobile subscribers during the first 30 days of a campaign by offering a discount to anyone who joined their list.

In 2010, a hair salon in the UK followed up with customers 1 month after an appointment by text. Over 12 months this prompt increased customers' avg. number of visits by 50% - reducing the time between visits by around 3 weeks.



Three steps to success with an SMS campaign



The thing about running a successful SMS Marketing campaign is that it is amazingly simple. Fastsms provide everything you need to get up and running at an extremely affordable price.

All the software, information and 24/7 support is completely free - you really do only pay for the messages you send.

There's nothing to install or download, you just visit our website and login to our completely cloud based messaging platform.

So if you're ready for all SMS has to offer your business just follow these simple steps:

1. Create a free account with [fastsms](https://www.fastsms.co.uk)
2. Have a look around the system and ask any questions you have through our 24/7 Live Chat support
3. **Return to Step One** in this guide and follow it through to success

About fastsms Ltd

Fastsms is the UK's leading provider of professional SMS solutions. We've been at the forefront of the SMS industry for well over a decade and during that time we've worked with some massive household names who have seen astonishing results through SMS Marketing campaigns.

A family owned and operated business, fastsms values simple, transparent pricing where everyone should have access to all features and as much support as they need - this is why we offer 24/7 support completely free of charge via phone, email & our extremely popular Live Chat.

Pop by our website for a chat and we'll be happy to talk you through your options.

Website: <http://www.fastsms.co.uk/>

Blog: <http://www.fastsms.co.uk/blog.html>

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FASTSMSUK>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/FASTSMS>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/fastsms>

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