

The seven deadly sins of

Mobile Marketing

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There has never been a more exciting time to be involved in mobile marketing. Momentum is building and the results are raising eyebrows even among the most battle weary marketers.

There's huge scope to generate wondrous, never dreamed of response; but ignore a few simple guidelines and mobile can be the most damaging venture of your career.



Attention Please...

Getting the undivided attention of your average consumer is tough. There are so many things that are far more important to them than what you have to say.

You're up against formidable competitors that you haven't the faintest hope of challenging. These aren't your commercial adversaries; they're just a bunch of companies trying to do the same things as you.

No, these competitors make up everything that's actually important in life. A few pertinent examples...

- Lunch
- Football
- Wine
- Catching the train
- Getting the lawn mowed



Sorry, you're not important

Consumers simply don't care what you have to say and frankly you have the slimmest of chances to get their attention, let alone getting them to part with their cash. So you see the mountain that marketers have to climb. It's pretty daunting and most companies fall at the first hurdle.



You're also disappointing

And the news doesn't get much better. You're going to disappoint them – 100% of the time.

Make no mistake, when your text lands with its shrill alert on your targets' phones, the first emotion will be one of disappointment, possibly twinged with annoyance. You've disturbed their day with a marketing text. Thanks. Your text will probably be seen as spam. (OK it might not technically or legally be spam but spam is in the eye of the beholder.) Text is a personal medium. The rules are different. This is not email. Mobile is more personal.

So, no matter how brilliantly you've put together your offer, or how cleverly you've compressed your message to just 160 characters, your text sadly is just an unwelcome intrusion.



Drama Queen

Isn't this all a bit melodramatic? Not a bit of it. The more cynical you are, the better chance your campaign has of being successful. Think like a consumer.

“Why on earth would I possibly respond to this text?”

“What's in it for me?”

“Why would I stop what I'm doing and respond?”

If the answer to those 3 questions isn't immediately strong, logical and persuasive then the battle dear reader is lost.



Onwards and upwards....

So the challenge is to use mobile as way of cutting through the stuff that's important to us and make your prospects pause, just for a nanosecond and consider what on earth you've interrupted their day with.

Well you've made a start by considering the direct marketing channel with the highest delivery and

response rates of any communication medium. But that in itself by no means guarantees you success. In fact, get it wrong and with mobile you can do far more damage far more quickly than the worst email or mailing campaign imaginable. One false move and you're doomed.



And so to battle...

So the road to a successful mobile marketing campaign is long and pot-holed. The purpose of this guide is to highlight some of the more obvious pitfalls waiting to derail your campaign

Armed with this knowledge you're much better prepared for battle and you've just massively increased the chances of success.

So here they are; the seven deadly sins of mobile marketing...



1. Forget a call to action...

We kick off with perhaps the most blindingly obvious sin that a surprising number of marketers commit. Having sent out a superb offer, cunningly targeted and with real appeal, you forget to tell the customers what they have to do next or include any contact details.

So the eager customer is hooked and wants to take you up. But he can't. There's no reply option, number to call or website to visit. A splendid own goal and the type of mistake that you're only likely to make once. Better still though, don't make it all.



2. More haste, less speed...

Mobile is unlike any other marketing channel. It's quick to deploy. Really quick. You can have an idea in the shower and have the campaign landing on customers' phones by 9.30 the same morning. This most nimble of direct marketing channels has impatient marketers rushing to get their campaigns out in double quick time.

On more than one occasion though we've had panicked managers on the phone asking (more in hope than expectation), whether it's possible to recall a campaign

once it's been dispatched. The mistakes are normally minor such as quoting an incorrect phone number or web address but nonetheless render the whole campaign an embarrassing cock up.

So the golden rule is to send yourself and your colleagues a test sms. Pretend you're a customer receiving it. Does it make sense? Are the details correct? How could it be improved?



3. Don't allow them to unsubscribe

A short cut to the gates of mobile marketing Hades is to fail to offer your customers a way to get the hell off your list. I've found the worst sinners in this area are the mobile phone networks themselves. As an Orange customer, they're entitled to send me text messages, letting me know about their 'exciting' new packages. What is not acceptable and indeed illegal, is to fail to include an unsubscribe option on the message itself.

The rules on this are outlined very clearly by the ICO (Information Commissioner's Office.) website. They state that you must "give them the opportunity to opt out of receiving further marketing messages each time."

So by omitting an unsubscribe option, you're not only infuriating your clients but you're also breaking the law. Eeks! (Text Marketer customers have use of a free unsubscribe service which comes with every account.)



4. Treat everyone the same

Mobile marketing has been around for over 10 years but it still operates in the shadows of mainstream direct marketing, a fact that has always bemused us mobile industry types. It still acts as an 'also ran' behind the might of email or direct mail.

Targeting and customer segmentation have long been the bedrock of any direct marketing campaign and quite right too.

What's often missed though is that with mobile you can segment your customers into far smaller and precise categories.

There are no creative costs, you've got 160 characters to get your message across and that's it. Whereas, with a mailing campaign you can only logistically offer 3 or 4 different creative executions, with mobile you can run as many separate offers as you wish.

So the opportunity is to give your customers services that are as closely targeted to what they want as possible.



5. Pester Them

Your message is an intrusion, unasked for and unwelcome. So the reason for the disturbance had better be good. If you're wily enough to have presented an offer to the right customer at the right time and they've responded positively, then you've done incredibly well. You can so easily undo all the good that you've done for your business and brand by pushing your luck.

The logic goes that as they've responded once, then surely they'll be up for a similar offer a week or so later?

Unlikely. Having won trust and confidence, it's all too easy to blow it by blasting out a similar message that worked so well last time. Consumers are weary and cynical, so less is most definitely more.

There's no hard and fast rule on the optimum period between texts, but 2 to 3 weeks would seem to be a sensible average.



6. Just Sell Sell Sell

Although mobile marketing is the most responsive direct marketing channel, you can do much more with it than just sell your wares. You can gain so much more trust and authority by mixing up your messages with other information that might actually be useful. So instead of just seeing your sms campaign as a route to sales, you should also view it as a way of 'adding value' to what you already do.

One Text Marketer customer, Jim Bailey, runs the Vauxhall dealer in Torbay. He mainly uses sms to send out service and MOT reminders. In addition he also sends out 'motoring tips' at certain times of year, reminding people to check washer fluid, anti freeze and oil levels etc. This might sound a tad trite but

the reaction from his customers has been surprising positive. He has spontaneously received thanks from customers about this service and even generated some free pr in the local papers.

So if you use sms to do something slightly unusual, based upon delivering a service rather than just selling, then you might just end up with something that customers see as useful.



7. Develop a pointless app

99% of apps are useless and get used just once. This was the stark finding of Blackberry, who reported that the vast majority of the 200,000 odd apps are rubbish. Every company and brand it seems, has felt it an imperative to launch an app and be seen as a front runner in new technology. This has mainly been driven by brand managers and their agencies, massaging egos with little thought about how their new baby is going to be useful. They also conveniently ignore the fact that only 25% of their target market will actually be able to download or use it.

Unless your app is providing something genuinely useful to the customer, then it's really not worth going through the pain, cost and distraction of developing something that most users will think is pants.



So there they are...

By no means an exhaustive list, but we hope a useful guide to help you avoid some of the more obvious mistakes.

We'd be delighted to discuss your campaigns with you in more detail. We don't have all the answers but you can be sure that we'll have an opinion.

Having been around for over 11 years our advice is soundly grounded in experience and common sense, so please get in touch.

Thanks for reading.



About Text Marketer Ltd

We're a provider of business sms services. We aim to give our customers the best sms tools at the lowest possible price. We help companies get up and running with their mobile marketing and always have a view on the best way forward.

Some companies use our web based software to run all their own bulk sms campaigns. Some companies use our SMS API, allowing them to 'text enable' their own software, service or web site.

Over 110 marketing agencies have used us to help develop ideas for their clients.

We've been around since 1999 and have picked up some useful experience along the way.

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