



MMS Manual

Everything you need to know about
integrating MMS into a robust digital
communications strategy



 MOBILE messaging

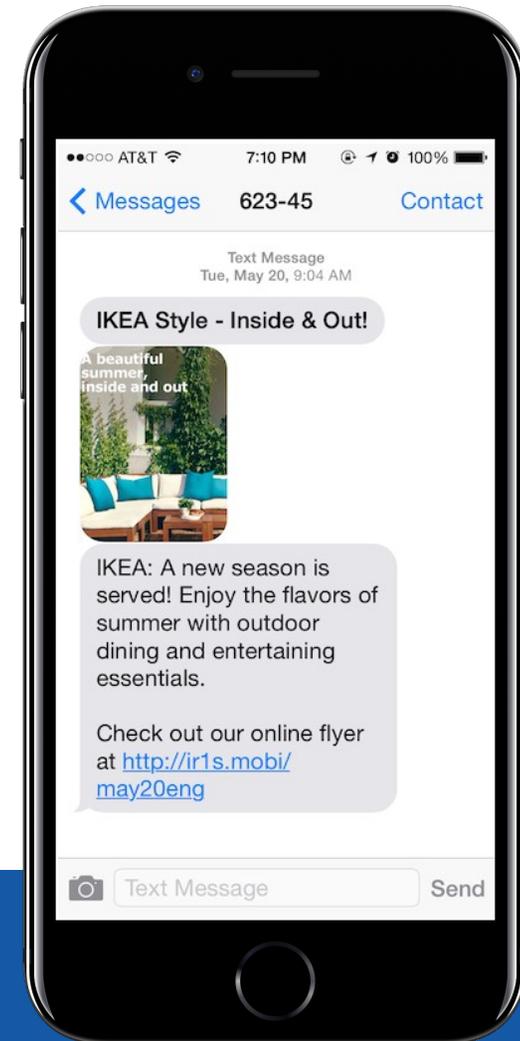
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What is MMS?

MMS stands for “Multimedia Messaging Service.” By utilizing MMS, marketers can extend the core functionality of MMS’s closely-related mobile messaging cousin, SMS. Whereas SMS lets marketers deliver a text message of up to 160 characters in length, MMS enables the distribution of multimedia content such as pictures, music or video. When executed well, the enhanced richness increases customer engagement, as campaigns can draw on combinations of various branded elements.

Though MMS has been around for a while, technological limitations previously prevented widespread adoption for brand-to-consumer communication. At present, telecommunication networks have sufficient bandwidth and the average consumer’s cell phone has sufficient technology to make MMS an easy-to-use standard for brand-consumer mobile dialogues.

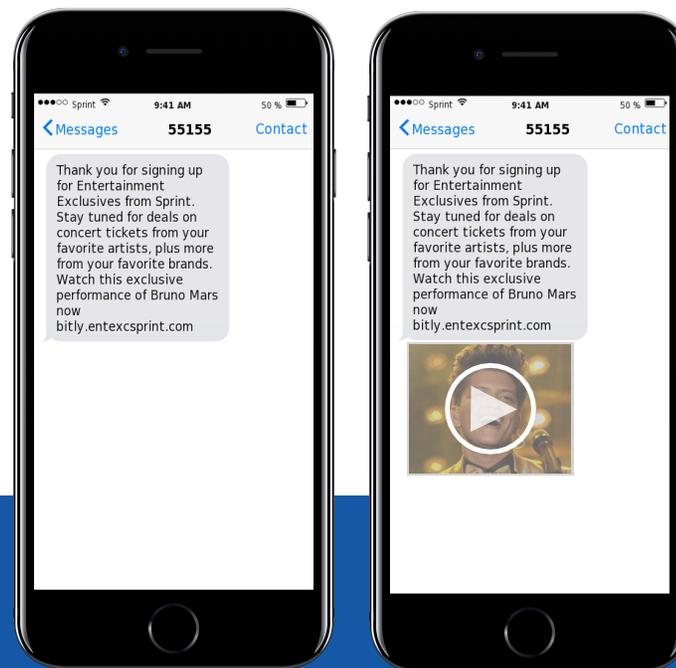


Fun Fact – Consumers have used MMS enabled phones since 2002. In 2016, 387.5 billion MMS messages were sent worldwide.

1 MMS Overview – A Look into MMS Messaging & How It Works

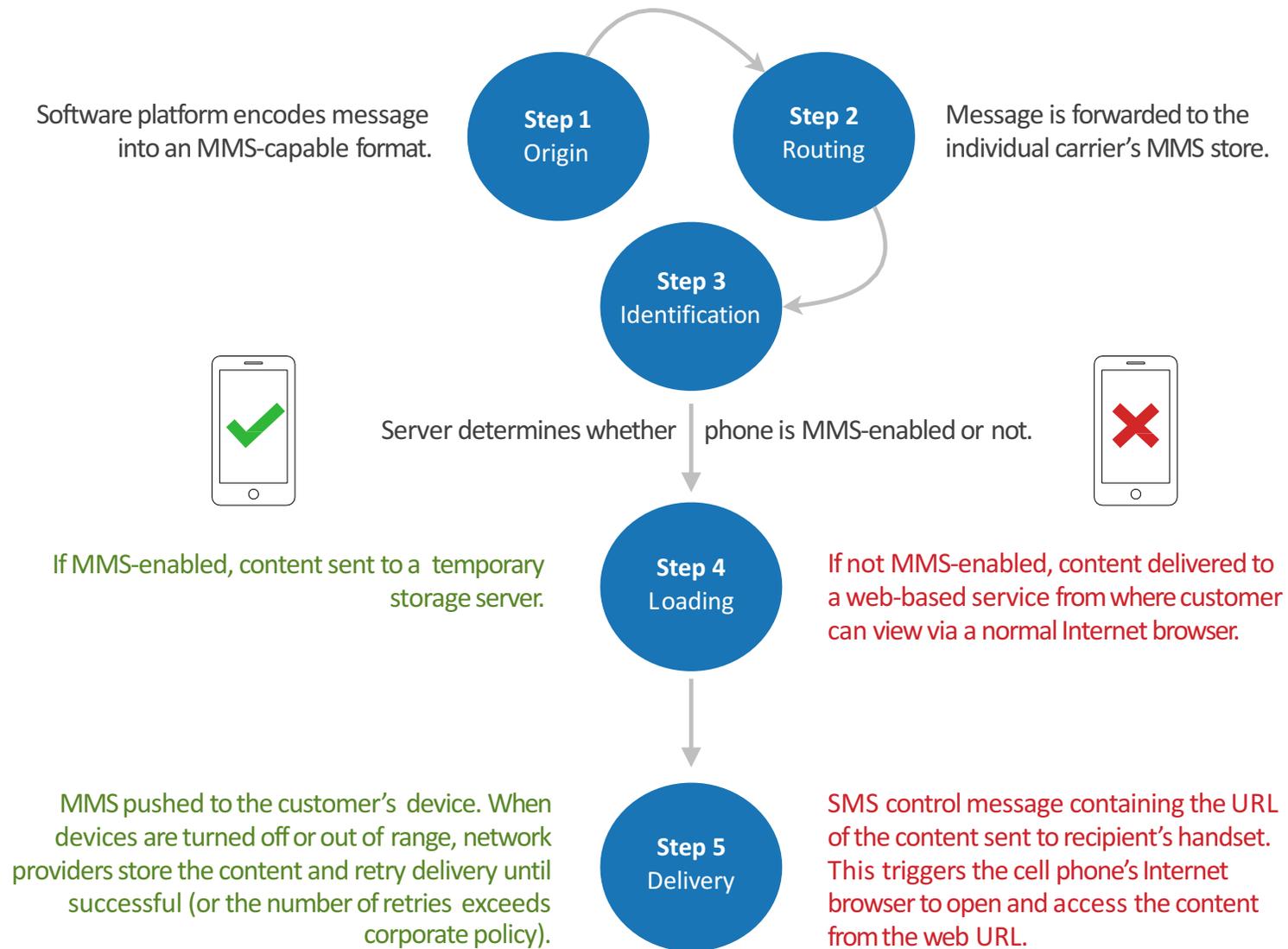
Best of all, just like SMS, MMS messages go to a customer's messaging inbox. This high importance placement on a mobile phone makes for extremely efficient and interactive communication. Customers read every MMS they receive – usually within minutes after receipt – and respond accordingly. Plus, MMS can go beyond standard pictures, audio or video. Marketers can launch campaigns that use GIFs, scannable coupons and any other type of rich media.

Like all direct marketing channels, marketers' biggest challenge with MMS is execution. Understanding key best practices and specifications before launching a campaign will result in much more compelling and actionable results. This eBook contains everything a marketer needs to know in order to create MMS mobile marketing campaigns that customers love.



Having Good Character – Whereas an SMS message has a limit of 160 characters, MMS messages can have up to 500.

1 MMS Overview – A Look into MMS Messaging & How It Works

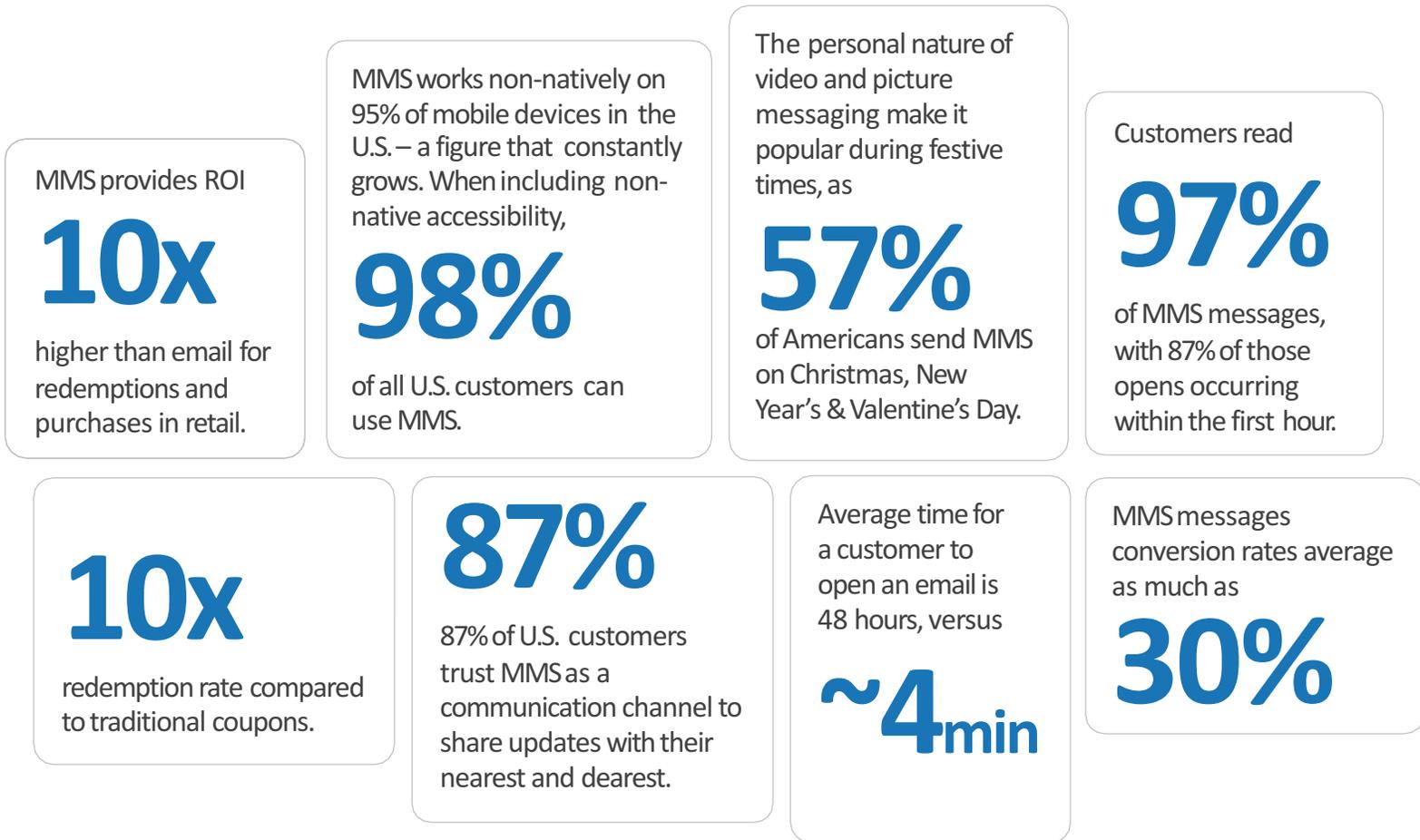


SMS & MMS Breakdown

Since SMS and MMS channels overlap considerably, it is important to grasp the differences and how to optimize cost and customer experience for both.

	MMS	SMS
Definition	Multimedia Messaging Service: text + rich media messaging.	Short Message Service: text messaging.
Transmission	Messages sent to a message center. Recipient receives content via their messaging inbox if the phone supports MMS. If not, customer views the MMS in a browser.	Messages centers send and receive texts. All messages retried in case of intermittent delivery failure.
Use Cases	Rich content results in high engagement rates. Ideal for creating higher touch interactivity.	Smaller file size results in speedy delivery. Ideal for instantaneous, interactive communication.
Size	500 characters with 3MB attachments.	160 Characters.
Technical	Requires content adaptation for different devices. Handset fragmentation and increased likelihood of user error requires more customer service expenditure.	Received on all phone types. No rich media available, unless executed through a link to an online site.
Cost	Higher volumes decrease variable cost. At scale, expect to pay pennies per message. This rate will decrease as the industry matures.	Higher volumes decrease variable cost. At scale, expect to pay fractions of pennies per message. This rate will decrease as the industry matures.
Infrastructure	Both SMS and MMS delivered via short codes (5-6 digits). Though long code delivery possible (10 digits), no regulation or support exists. Throughput for SMS is higher than MMS given the larger file size.	

MMS Maximizes Customer Reach and Engagement



MMS Content Incites A Customer Response

Customers are willing to spend up to

2.79 minutes

watching an MMS video that explains brand value

50%

of customers feel more engaged with a retailer after watching a video.

45%

of consumers are more likely to return to a retailer after seeing a video.

Consumers show a higher preference for MMS, as

34%

of shoppers use mobile for coupons and 47% want retailers to send coupons when they are in or near a store.

The numbers behind MMS paint the picture of a powerful opportunity for customer engagement. That said, reaching MMS's potential for success comes down to understanding how to execute well – just like any direct marketing channel. Effective execution requires grasping the core principles of how to smartly implement MMS. Let's explore them now:

Targeting and Personalization

Like email and SMS, marketers should deploy MMS as a data-focused CRM strategy. By targeting relevant content to specific customers and customer groups, marketers will immediately impact ROI. Personalized content produces a more pronounced customer response, which leads to increased purchase values and more frequent visits. In addition, targeting reduces the number of messages sent that miss the mark, which decreases cost. Any number of data fields can govern which customers receive what content, including behavioral, demographic and transactional information. Take advantage and reap the benefits.

Interest And Engagement

MMS gives marketers the power to craft a messaging strategy that weaves all types of rich media, including text, pictures, GIFs, audio, video and redeemable coupons. Compare and contrast different media types using A/B split testing to discover how and why customers react to branded content. This not only results in higher MMS open and redemption rates, but also produces an ideal forum to test what will incite action online and across social.

Immediacy and Interactivity

Thanks to the short code infrastructure, marketers can send an MMS to a large database of customers relatively quickly (file size differences mandate that MMS throughput < SMS throughput of course). Since MMS goes directly to customers' mobile messaging inbox, response time is far less than any other channels like email and social media. As a result, marketers using MMS should generate timely interactions geared toward inciting action. In doing so, they can take advantage of MMS's key benefit of interactivity.

Flexibility For Cost Savings

Marketers can use the fact that MMS and SMS go to the same inbox to their advantage. Due to MMS's large file size, per message costs will be higher than SMS. Thus, use SMS when multimedia communication does not need to be part of the exchange. Customers will receive a seamless experience while marketers will be able to maximize cost efficiency for their business.

Like any technology, MMS has a few technical specifications that marketers need to keep in mind in order to optimize customer experience. The two most important are content sizing and presentation.

Sizing

When sending MMS messaging, the content should be perfect. Don't let any messages fall prey to unattractive photo ratios or blurry pixelated text. Here's the basic information needed to ensure MMS delivers the most effective multimedia content to customers.

Aspect Ratio

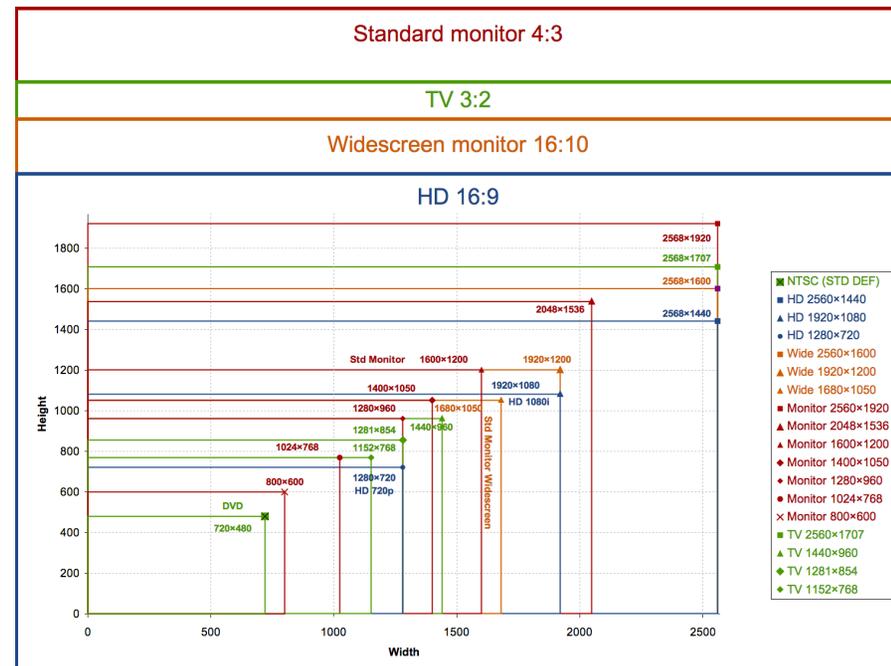
The Mobile Marketing Association recommends a 16:9 and a 4:3 ratio for the average MMS rectangle image. Marketers can also use a 1:1 ratio to produce good results.

Dimensions

In addition to aspect ratio, the Mobile Marketing Association advises the following width recommendations for different-sized images:

- **X-large:** 300 pixels
- **Large:** 216 pixels*
- **Medium:** 168 pixels
- **Small:** 120 pixels

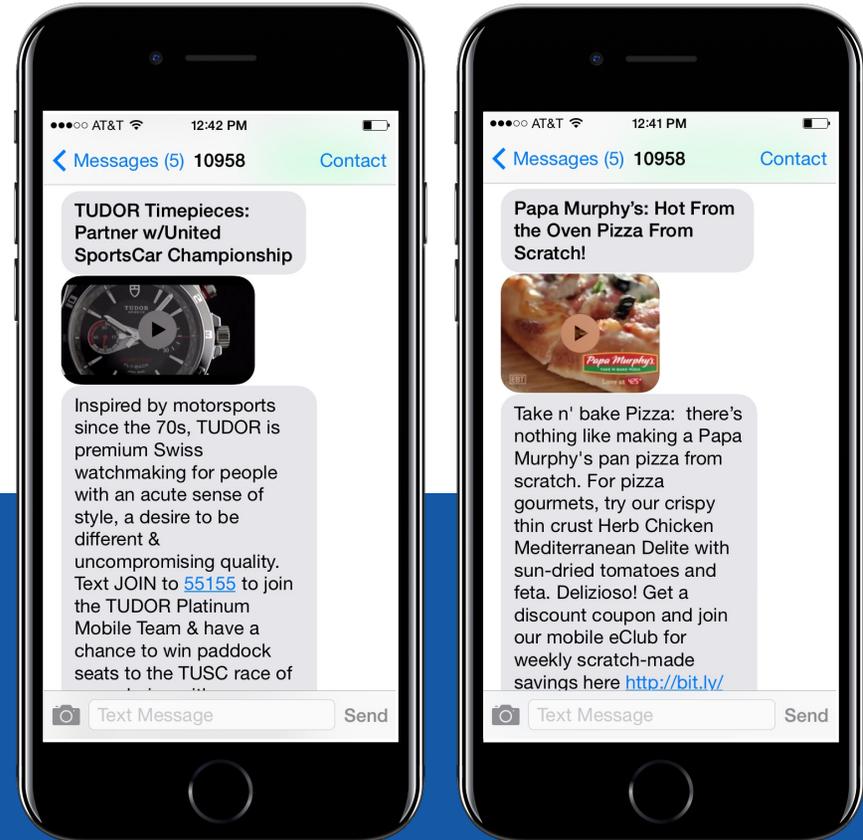
*The Large format is the one most recommended for best quality MMS campaigns; it has shown the most success across today's myriad of mobile device types.



Presentation

With the proper sizing nailed, keep these presentation details in mind to ensure MMS delivers the highest quality content.

- Avoid tiny text and graphical details. An MMS message goes through a lot of steps before it's finally perfectly formatted for the end-user's device. Once the image is sized down and compressed, you don't want to risk it becoming blurry on a lower-resolution mobile phone. Remember to test and retest your images.
- On video MMS, avoid fast-moving videos and rapid scene changes. You want to make sure that messages stick with your customers.
- If you're sending a video, be sure to take a look at the fixed frame. You don't want to have the video's one frozen frame be ineffectively used. You have a limited amount of space, so use that space wisely.
- While an MMS is technically unlimited in size, the MMA's recommended MMS message size is 300KB—this should be enough for a high quality rectangular ad and even animated images.



In these examples, note how the fixed frame image for a video campaign brands the customer experience to incite engagement.

Request our MMS Specifications Sheet for more detailed information on this subject

MMS's rapid growth among customers and clear value proposition for marketers make it an extremely attractive method for communication. But what does an actual deployment look like? Glad you asked.

Here are four case studies from brands across industries that demonstrate how to implement an MMS campaign. Read through each to understand the do's and don'ts that will result in an increased customer lifetime value.





BMW Takes Advantages Of MMS Hyper-Targeting

BMW, to promote a winter tires initiative, reminded customers via mobile messaging that better tread in the snow was a necessity, not a luxury. Instead of sending a vague, anonymous, mass-mailed print advertisement, BMW personalized a mobile message to each customer depending on the specifications of their owned car. Each message included a link to BMW's website where customers could discover alternate tires, compare prices and view different styles for their vehicle. BMW supplemented this MMS content with a mobile app that customers could download to further their experience. Interestingly, the BMW marketing team decided to optimize content for only ~20% of cell phone types. The campaign focused on delivery to the high-end smartphone market, rather than attempting to support every single phone type.

Results

- 1,200 messages sent
- 30% Conversion Rate
- \$45MM In Revenue
- Cost \$60K



Key Takeaways

BMW displays how to use multiple engagement channels, including SMS, MMS, Mobile Web and Mobile Apps, to create targeted customer outreach. By delivering a message according to a customer's specific BMW model, as well as following up with numerous access points for personalized customer interaction, the campaign generated a high ROI.

On the other hand, disregarding a portion of the market was unnecessary. Any customers without MMS/app-enabled phones should receive a text message with a link to where they could learn more about the promotion. By implementing SMS, given its ubiquity and correspondingly low cost, BMW could have increased conversion rate with minimal additional investment.

Express used mobile to launch a digital version of the company’s annual “Passbook of Savings” campaign. Customers opted in via a landing page to receive up to 8 MMS messages throughout the promotion. Express’s marketing team promoted this digital marketing initiative in stores and online with calls-to-action directing customers to subscribe with their smartphones.

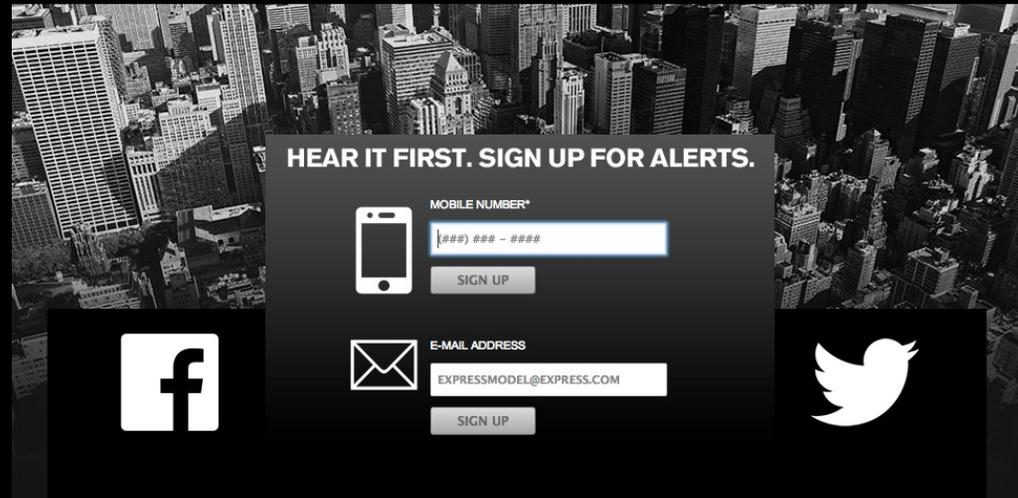
Results

Percent of Customers Who Went On To Purchasing After Receiving Message:



EXPRESS

BLACK FRIDAY EXCLUSIVE DEALS



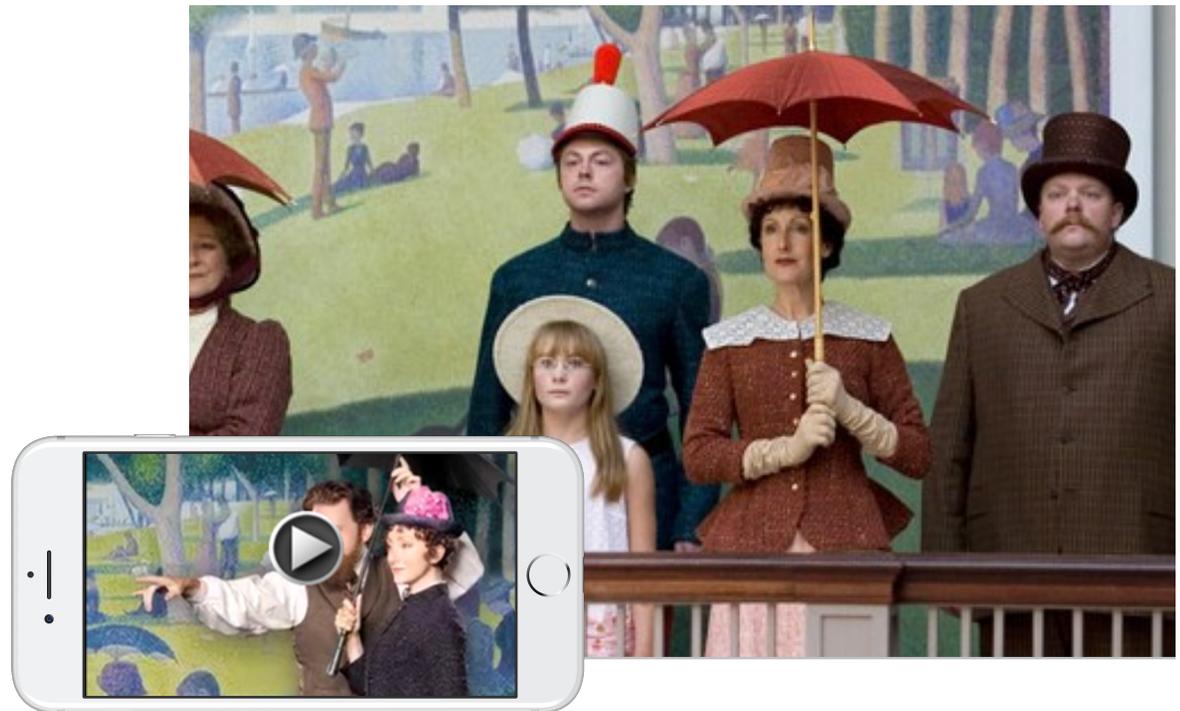
Key Takeaways

This Express campaign demonstrates a key benefit of SMS and MMS: the opt-in. By driving customers to subscribe, Express can use the scope and immediacy of mobile coupons to drive customers into stores, redeem promotions and buy additional apparel. Note also the importance of launching a promotion across a brand’s portfolio of marketing assets. By promoting mobile across online, print and social, customers will see value and develop trust, which greatly increases ROI.

In order to kick off the Chicago Shakespeare Theater’s production of “Sunday in the Park with George,” actors made a surprise live performance at the Art Institute in Chicago. The play took place in front of a life-sized reimaging of George Seurat’s *Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, from which was absent certain key elements from the original work of art. After the show, the cast and crew invited the audience to opt in to a mobile campaign to discover the secrets of the missing characters. Those customers who texted in received an MMS video message explaining how the missing characters had come to life in a play, as well as where to buy tickets to see the new show at the Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

Results

- 8 million impressions in 24 hours
- Broke an all-time record with the highest number of first-time guests in the history of theater
- Show extended for an extra week due to the high demand for tickets
- 14% who opted in shared content on Facebook
- 17% who opted in chose to receive future messages from the Chicago Shakespeare Theater



Takeaways

This well-crafted campaign shows how to use MMS to create an exciting, active conversation that conveys a compelling message to customers. Particular kudos go to the use of timing and relevancy, as the Chicago Shakespeare Theater quickly reached millions of viewers and built a sizable database of opted-in customers from scratch.

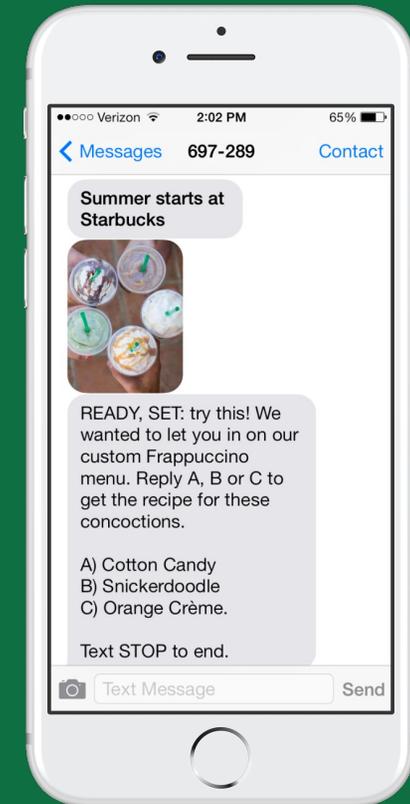
Starbucks Summer Promotion

Opted-in Starbucks customers received an SMS alert about an upcoming mobile trivia contest where they could enter for a chance to win a prize and receive summer deal alerts. Upon participating, Starbucks sent MMS compatible smartphones a multimedia message that contained a short video and information about in-store Happy Hour specials.

Those customers without MMS capabilities received a link to Starbucks social media, which allowed the company to track click-through rates across channels.

Takeaways

Starbucks demonstrates an excellent tactic for customer loyalty. By promoting a new initiative to existing customers, Starbucks puts its mobile program top of mind. This incentivizes referrals and viral sharing. In addition, the first message lets Starbucks gather information on whether to send the promotional video as an SMS link or MMS attachment. Thanks to mobile messaging's flexibility, marketers can deliver a message to any smartphone type in order to maximize reach and engagement.





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