

SMS Guide



mediaburst

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Introduction

Mediaburst sends millions of text messages every month for thousands of different companies.

SMS has been proven to help businesses increase sales, improve relationships with their staff and customers and ultimately grow their business. In fact, 84% of small businesses that have invested in a mobile presence have seen immediate, long-term benefits and new customers.

70% of people feel that SMS is a good way for an organisation to get their attention, which is why we've written this SMS Guide. It illustrates the things to think about when sending SMS to ensure you see the best results possible, as well as walking you through how you can use our products and what features we offer.

Whether you're already savvy with your SMS marketing or just thinking of getting into it, this guide will help you to understand the ins and outs of SMS marketing and how we can help.

This guide will cover

- How SMS can help you in your business.
- Sending SMS: adding contacts, collecting contacts and using keywords.
- The anatomy of SMS: character limits, from addresses, special characters, templates and branding.
- Personalising your SMS.
- Timing your SMS.
- Receiving SMS.
- Delivery reports: sent statistics, campaign results, feedback and tracking customer clicks.
- Our API: Clockwork

Read on for some fantastic ways you can use Mediaburst in your marketing.

Why use SMS in business?



91%

Smartphone users that always keep their phone within arm's reach.

150

Number of times the average person checks their phone per day.

68%

People who would like to receive offers to their mobile.

84%

Small businesses who have invested in a mobile presence have seen immediate, long term benefits and new customers.

57%

Consumers would be interested in a brand's SMS loyalty program.

98%

Text messages read, compared to 22% of emails.

There are officially more mobile devices than people in the world.

SMS coupons are redeemed **8%** more than email coupons.

19% URL click through rate through SMS compared with **4.2%** through email.

Text messages are read on average within **5 seconds**.

SMS produces engagement rates **6 to 8 times higher** than email.

Our products

T E X T B U R S T

Textburst is a simple web application which allows you to send SMS directly from the website. You can upload individual contacts or bulk upload from Excel so that you can send a message to 10 or 10,000 contacts at one time.

Once you've typed out your message and set your "from address" you can decide to send now or schedule for later.

Have a look for yourself:

www.textburst.com

It's free to sign up so there's no commitment!



Clockwork is our API, which lets you integrate SMS into your current system or website.

You'll either need to be a developer or have access to one to use Clockwork because you'll need to use our code wrappers or one of our plugins to connect your server to ours.

If you'd like to know a bit more about Clockwork, have a look at our website:

www.clockworksms.com

Sign up for free! The [Documentation](#) page will give you more information on our collection of code wrappers.

Who are you sending to?

So, first things first. Sign up for a free Textburst account. It's really quick and easy. No card details are required.

Now that you're ready to use SMS in your business you'll need to add some contacts. You can either add existing contacts or collect mobile numbers from existing and potential customers. Just always remember, whoever you are sending to, you must always have permission before you contact them.

The Information Commissioner's Office have some [useful guidance on electronic and telephone marketing](#).

Now let's get started!

How do I add existing contacts?

You might already have a list of contacts saved in Excel, which makes this extra easy for you!

Just log in to your Textburst account, click **Groups>Add new** to create a new group, give it a name click **Next Step** and then select the **Bulk Upload Contacts** option.

Select the appropriate column headers for your file upload and click the button to process. Once the process is complete you'll be ready to send messages to your new group.

If your contacts have come from another system, you might need to [format them for upload to Textburst](#).

The image shows two overlapping screenshots of the Textburst web interface. The top screenshot is titled 'Step 1 of 2 Add a Group' and contains a 'Group Name' field with the text 'My New Group', a 'Share this group' section with radio buttons for 'Yes' and 'No' (where 'No' is selected), and a green 'Next Step' button. The bottom screenshot is titled 'Step 2 of 2 Add Member' and contains the text 'Upload contacts, upload an existing contact or add a', a 'Bulk Upload Contacts' section, an 'Upload a CSV or Excel File' section with a link 'How to format contacts for upload', a file upload area with the text 'Select a file to upload, or drag a file into this box.', a checkbox 'I have permission to contact these people', and a green 'Upload contacts' button.

International dialling codes

Always ensure that mobile numbers are formatted correctly by dropping any leading zeros and adding the correct international dialling code.

Each country has a unique **international dialling code**.

We've listed a few below to get you started:

Country	Dialling Code
United Kingdom	44
India	91
Turkey	90
Israel	972
USA	1
Norway	47
Russia	810
Spain	34
Kenya	254

How do I collect more contacts?

If you don't ask, you don't get.

Ask your customers to fill out a form at the checkout or enter their mobile number when making a booking. Just make sure that you let them know that you'll be contacting them with new offers and updates.

Alternatively, a popular way of adding to your contact list is by using **Keywords** and **Shortcodes**. Textburst offer keywords on our shared shortcode, 84433 completely free.

Just a little way for us to say thanks for using Textburst!

Get savvy with Keywords

SMS Keywords are short words that can be sent to a Shortcode in order to trigger a response. Keywords normally also trigger an opt-in flow but can also be used for replies from customers who have already opted-in as a response to a question.

For example, a hair salon could advertise:

Text HAIR to 84433 to be added to our SMS insiders list and for 20% off your next treatment.

You can then set an automatic reply saying:

Thanks for texting in! Your 20% voucher code is HAIR20. Claim upon payment at your next appointment.
Text STOP to 84433 to OPT OUT.

This customer has now been added to your keyword group and you can text any future offers and updates to your ever-growing database knowing that the message is going out to those who really care about what you have to say.

Sending SMS

Character limit

SMS is an abbreviation for Short Message Service and as you probably already know there is a character limit.

One SMS is 160 characters. However, don't worry if you've got a lot more than 160 characters worth of things to say. You can send concatenated, or "joined up" text messages with Textburst. This means that you can string together three messages, which allows you to use up to 459 characters.

From address

Your **From address** is the first thing that your customers will see when they receive your message and we have three options for you, so make sure you choose carefully!

1. Use your company or promotion name

This ensures that your customers know exactly who the message is from as soon as they see it flash up on their phone. The only thing to consider is that your customers won't be able to reply so this option should be used for outbound SMS only.

2. Use your own mobile number or a work handset number

All replies would then come directly to this chosen handset. This also gives your customers the option to call the mobile number to contact you directly.

3. Purchase a Textburst number

These numbers look just like a normal UK mobile number and any replies that you get will be forwarded to the Received tab within your Textburst account. This option is great when you're expecting a lot of replies or even just to make sure all of your received messages are kept in the same place as your sent messages. Replies to your Textburst number can be downloaded into an Excel file and you can even reply directly from your Textburst account. Find out more in "**Receive SMS**" on page 14.

International characters

Textburst is being developed constantly. It's your product and you're the ones using the tool day in and day out so we love listening to you and moving in a direction that you're excited about. So, you asked to be able to send international characters through Textburst and that's what we gave you!

www.textburst.com/blog/international-character-support





Emoji

You asked to be able to send emoji within Textburst and we gave you that too!

www.textburst.com/blog/emoji

So now you can easily communicate with all of your global customers whatever their native language whilst adding a little bit of fun to your text messages.

Templates and Branding

Do you see yourself often typing out the same text message on a regular basis or ending each message with a similar sign off message?

To save you valuable time, Textburst has the option for you to add pre-written templates and branding, which can be merged into your SMS content and adapted as needed.

Talking about merging, you can also personalise your messages really easily with our merge tool but we think that's so important and exciting that we've given it its own chapter, Personalised SMS ...



Personalised SMS

If a customer frequently came into your clothes shop or a had a personal shopping experience booked with you then you'd be there to greet them by name and to make them feel comfortable and valued.

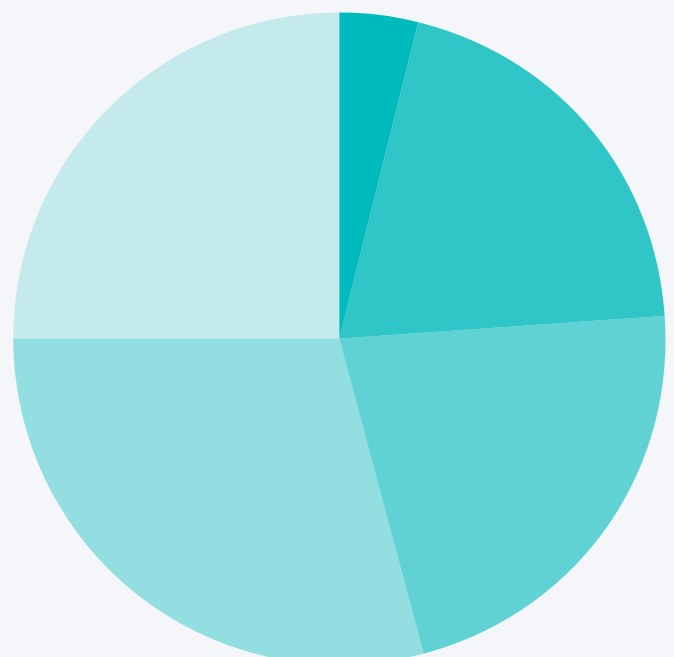
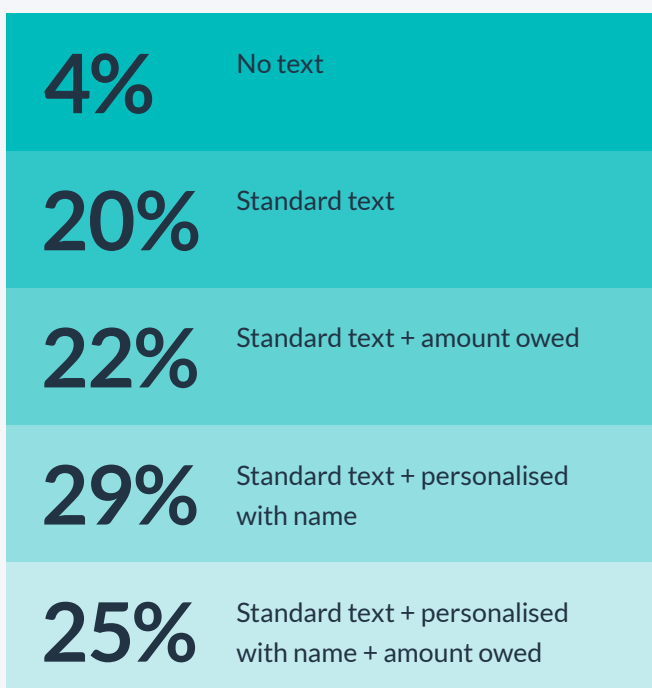
Your messages should treat them in exactly the same way, making them feel you have a personal interest, rather than them being "just another customer".

This is exactly why personalised SMS is so popular. It's even been proven to increase response rates.

Percentage of fines paid

A case study published by The Behavioural Insights Team looked into how sending text reminders for debts on overdue tax credits would affect response rates and ultimately the number of fines that were paid.

The result showed that not only was SMS really successful in increasing the number of payments made but personalising these text messages meant that this increased even further.



Using Merge Data

When uploading your contacts you can have up to four columns of data in your Excel or CSV file. Obviously your customer mobile numbers occupy one of these columns but you can enter any other personal data you'd like to use in the remaining three columns. This data could be anything from customers' names to an amount owed, a customer reference number or a product they've previously requested.

When composing your text message content you can "merge" in these details so that you can personalise your messages even when sending one bulk SMS out to your entire group.

The screenshot below shows how to format this within Textburst. Once sent, each of your recipients would receive a slightly different, personalised version of your message.

The screenshot shows a text messaging interface titled "Send a message".

To: New Members 14/09 - 17/09 ✕

+ [Group](#)

From: MBGym ▼

Your message

Hi #FNAME#, welcome to MB Gym 😊
Your Membership No. is #CUST#. See you soon!

Include 'Opt out txt STOP to 84433'

2 messages per recipient 123 characters left

[Send Now](#) or [Send Later](#)

Personalise your message...

- [Use Templates >](#)
- [Add Branding >](#)
- [Merge Data >](#)
- [Emoji >](#)

Two example personalized messages are shown in speech bubbles:

Hi Ellie, welcome to MB Gym 😊
Your Membership No. is 869142. See you soon!

Hi James, welcome to MB Gym 😊
Your Membership No. is 971253. See you soon!

Timing is everything

If you're spending marketing budget on SMS then make sure it's timed well so that you reap the rewards!

You have to make sure that you catch your customers at the perfect time and the perfect time depends on your business. If you're a coffee shop, sending texts at 2am on a Tuesday morning is a waste of a send. Similarly, a club promotion probably shouldn't be sent out on a Monday night when everyone's still recovering from the previous weekend.

Have a think about when you'd like to receive your text if you were a customer ...



You've rolled out of bed on a Monday morning still feeling the effects of Saturday night. On your way to work you get a text through from the coffee place around the corner from your office offering a free pastry with every coffee before 10am.



It's nearly the end of the week and you're trying to decide what's the easiest thing to make for tea tonight because you just don't have the energy to cook! Just then your local Chinese takeaway sends you a text offering free delivery and free spring rolls with every order.



You and your friends are chatting about plans for the weekend on a Thursday night and you get a text through offering free entry and half price drinks on Friday night at your favourite club.

Scheduled SMS

For those occasions when messages are time sensitive, compose your message as usual, then simply click the **Send Later** link, choose a date and pick a time. Your message is scheduled and will be sent at the time specified.

You'll even receive an email confirmation when the message has been sent.

Receive SMS

Why should you allow SMS replies from your customers?

- Quick, easy way for your customers to contact you.
- Cut down on “on hold” times and email queries.
- Reduce call centre costs.
- Gain real time feedback from your customers.
- Allow immediate responses regarding appointment reminders.
- Ask your customers questions with higher response rates.
- Increase customer knowledge.
- Develop a customer relationship.

As mentioned in “**From address**” on page 9, setting a “From address” as a name or word doesn’t allow your customers to respond but there are two ways in which you can enable replies. You could set the “From address” to a mobile number and have all replies sent directly to that device.

Alternatively, you can purchase a “Textburst Number”.

Textburst Numbers

These are virtual mobile numbers, which look like usual UK mobile numbers. Once set up, all replies are forwarded to your online account where they can be found in the “Received” section.

Messages sent to your Textburst Number will be charged at a standard rate message, which means for most people in the UK, this will be included in their monthly bundle.

Sounds good! How do I set one of these up? Setting up a Textburst Number couldn’t be easier! Just log in and follow these steps:

When logged in to Textburst, click on **Received** and follow the simple on-screen instructions to get your unique Textburst mobile number.

Textburst numbers are £5 to set-up and then £5 per month. They can be cancelled at any time.

Was my campaign successful?

There are four ways to measure the success of the SMS campaigns.

Sent statistics

Once you've sent your message out to your customers you can click into the **Sent** tab within Textburst.

Here you will see how many messages were delivered, undelivered or expired.

You can download and analyse these statistics to see how successful your campaigns are.

Track your customer clicks

Textburst allows you to shorten and track your links, so that you know exactly who's interested in what you have to say.

The link will be shortened to something that looks like: www.tb.mu/iiCPC9. This means that you're not taking up all 160 characters with a super long link and it also means that we can track those all important clicks and where they've come from.

It's a brilliant way to measure the success of your SMS campaign.

Campaign results

Another way to see if your campaign was successful is by the redemption rate of any offer or promotion you include in the SMS. We'd always advise, where possible, for you to have a clear call to action in your message to allow you to measure clear success rates, e.g.. "Call now" or "Click here".

For example, by giving your customers a code to use to claim a discount it means you can record how many times the code was used which means you can find a percentage redemption rate to show the success of the promotion.

Feedback

You can simply ask your customers when you see them in your store if they like receiving your text updates and what they'd like to see more or less of.

By asking for customer feedback, you're ensuring that they feel appreciated and heard and if you take on board the feedback that you receive it can be used to improve and benefit your business.

API integration

If you're a developer or have a developer at your company, our product **Clockwork** is here to help you integrate SMS into your company website or internal system.

Developers using Clockwork can use a choice of languages and they can choose one of our pre-written wrappers or one of our plugins.

Clockwork can send via HTTP or XML and we have wrappers for PHP, C#, VB.NET, Java, Python and Node.js. Each wrapper is publicly hosted on [GitHub](#) with example code – if you want to improve it, we're happy to take Pull Requests.

All wrappers can be found on Clockwork's documentation page.

www.clockworksms.com/doc

Clockwork customers can set their "From field" to their company name so that their customers or staff know exactly who is texting them straight away.

Clockwork allows developers to integrate their system or website into our platform to trigger texts to be sent automatically when actions are made such as customers signing up or making an order, when a delivery is on its way or when the company publish a new blog.

Clockwork also allows users to set up delivery receipts and stats can be viewed on the **Stats** page within Clockwork.

We're here to help

Speak to our friendly support team for help with setting up your brand new account:

hello@mediaburst.co.uk | 0161 359 3100

We're here to help you get all the information you need.

If you're looking at sending volumes of 1,000+ UK messages per month – give Jo, our Key Account Manager, a call to discuss rates:

jo@mediaburst.co.uk | 07530 022 326

Visit us: www.mediaburst.co.uk