



BUSINESS TEXT MESSAGING

Playbook

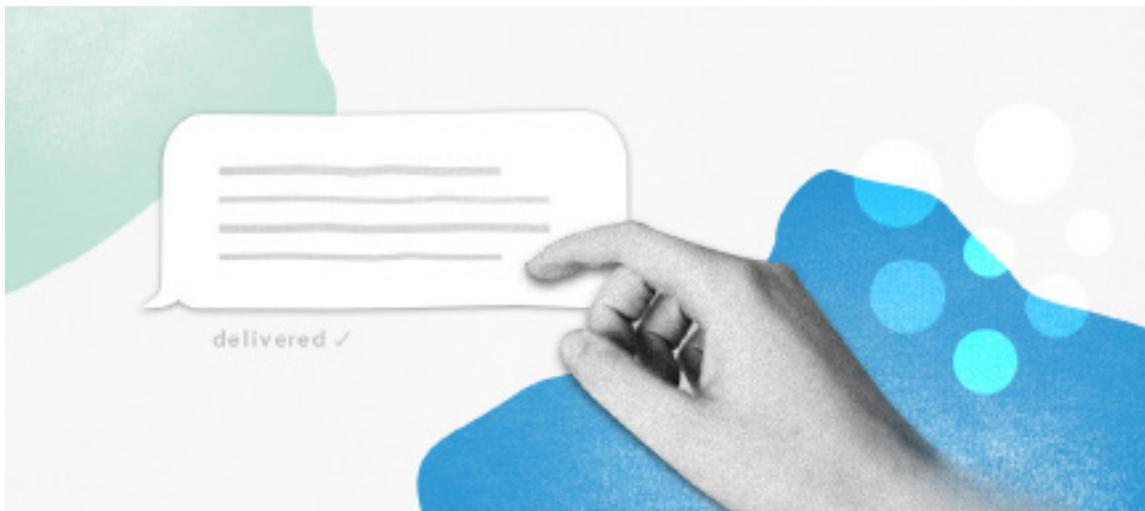
68 percent of Americans under 30 prefer texting over any other method of communication.

Texting is king

It's no secret that people love to text. In fact, according to a Gallup poll, 68 percent of Americans under 30 prefer texting over any other method of communication. But consumers don't just want to text with their friends and family. Recent research has found that 90 percent of consumers want to use messaging when communicating with a business.

One of the main reasons consumers prefer texting is that it's easier and less intrusive than other communication channels, and because it's asynchronous, you don't have to worry about waiting to connect. The message just goes through and each party can reply when it's convenient for them. This can save valuable time that had previously been spent playing phone tag.

Businesses that aren't providing their current and potential customers the ability to interact via text message run the risk of driving them to the competition. With the upcoming launch of Podium Messenger on mobile, we're making it even easier for your business to stay connected with your customers through their preferred method of communication.



Setting up **text messaging** for your business

Before getting started there are a few things we suggest doing to ensure that you are successful. The first is setting up your Google My Business listing to accept text messages from mobile searchers. Check out this [blog post](#) for instructions on how to set up Google Click-to-Message for your business.

Next, you'll want to find a solution that can enable your landline to accept text messages. This will help you maintain continuity and consistency with your contact information, which is an important factor in where your business ranks in local search.

Once your landline is set up to accept text messages, you'll want to publish that number wherever your contact information is displayed with instructions to "call or text us." Some places to include it are on your website, on all of your business directory listings, and even in your email signature.

Finally, you'll want to implement a customer interaction platform to help you manage all of your text message conversations. Businesses that are using Podium to message their customers have improved satisfaction scores by 26 percent and reduced call volumes by 15 percent.

Best practices for text messaging with customers

One of the reasons many businesses are reluctant to start texting their customers is because it's new and they don't really know where to start.

But don't worry. We're here to help you identify moments during your customer journey that would be optimal to text with your customers and provide you with some tips to ensure you are successful.

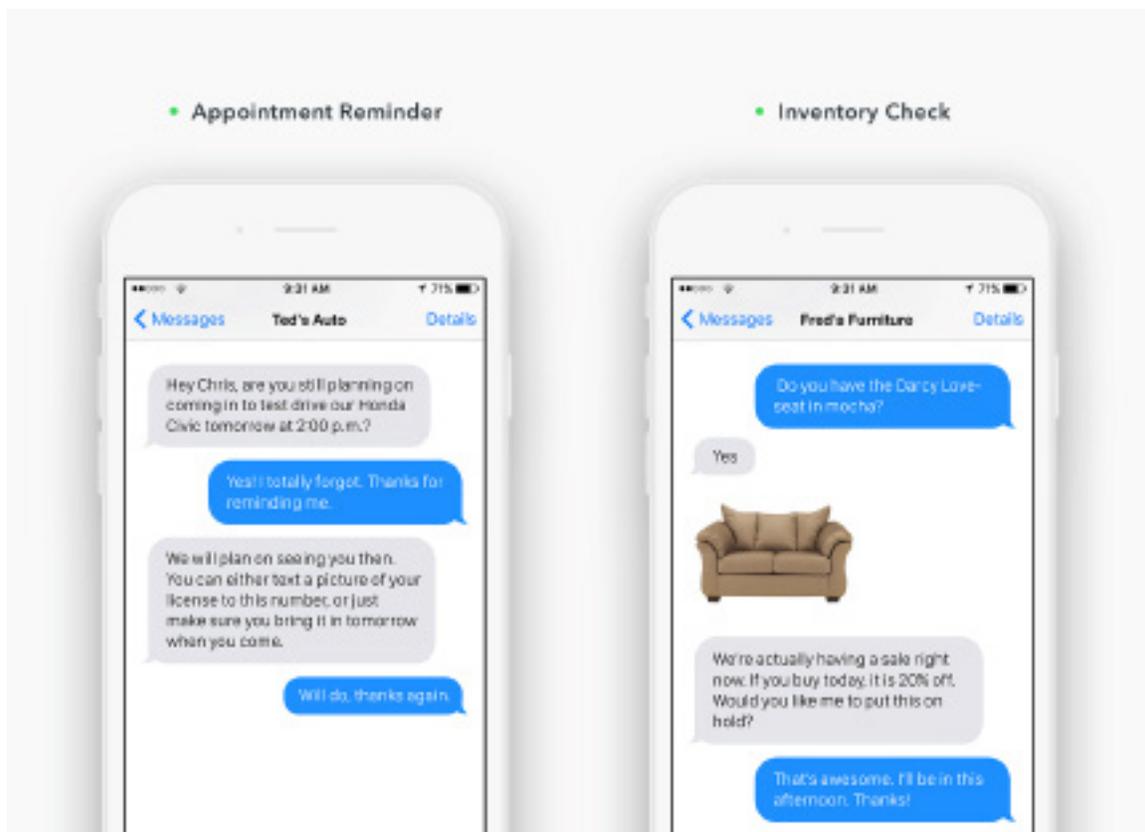
1. SET APPOINTMENTS AND SEND APPOINTMENT REMINDERS

One of the biggest frustrations for anyone who owns a service business or operates a medical or dental practice is when customers or patients don't show up to appointments. This can cost a single medical practice as much as \$150,000. Time is money and missed appointments result in wasting both.

But you can eliminate a large number of appointment no-shows by texting out appointment reminders and setting appointments with your customers. This is much less intrusive and time-consuming than having your staff call out and remind customers about upcoming appointments.

2. INVENTORY CHECK

It can be frustrating for customers if they drive all the way to your business only to find out you didn't have what they were looking for. Giving your customers the option to text your business can be very helpful in this situation. Now customers can send you a quick message to check on inventory. Your employees can then send a picture of what you have in stock, providing a better experience for your customers.



3. LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO UPSELL

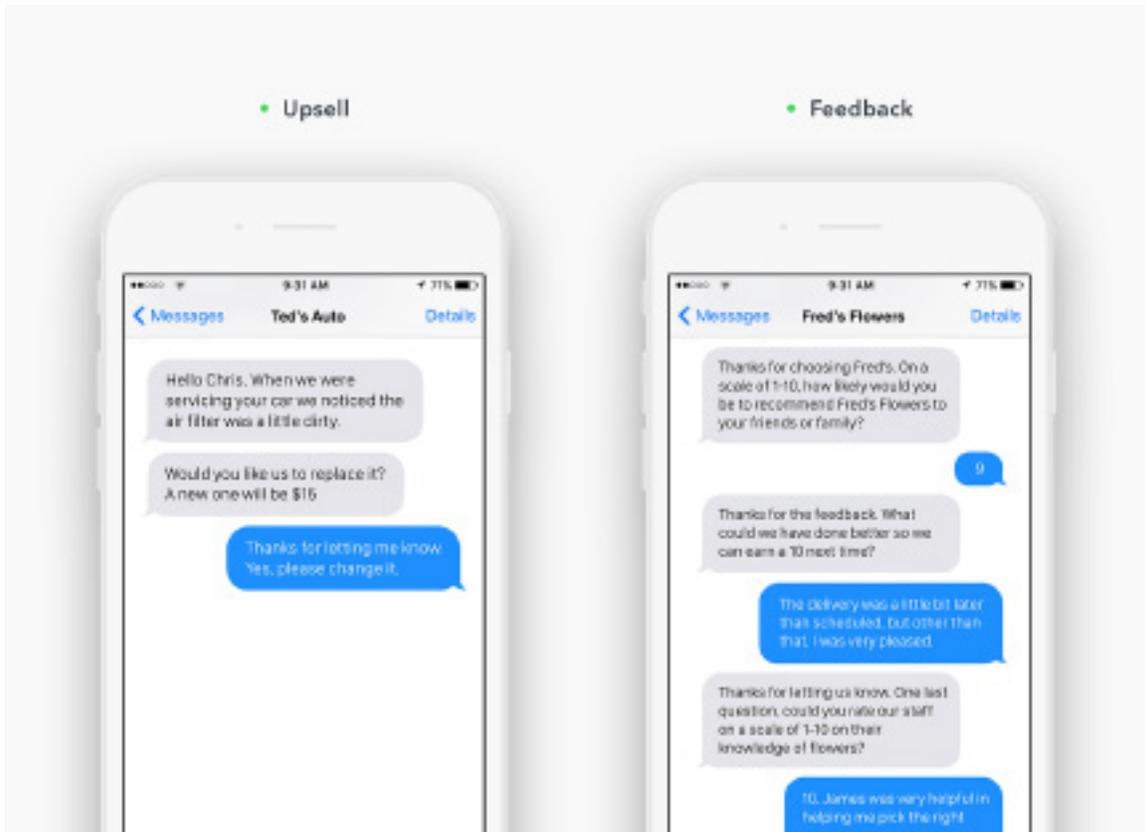
Having a texting relationship with your customers will also give you the opportunity to upsell them from time-to-time. This will provide your business with incremental increases in revenue that will not only improve customer satisfaction but also boost your bottom line.

4. ASK FOR FEEDBACK

A number of our customers have started to replace traditional customer satisfaction surveys with a text message-based survey. These customers see a higher open and response rate because text messaging is more conversational and less intrusive than a survey.

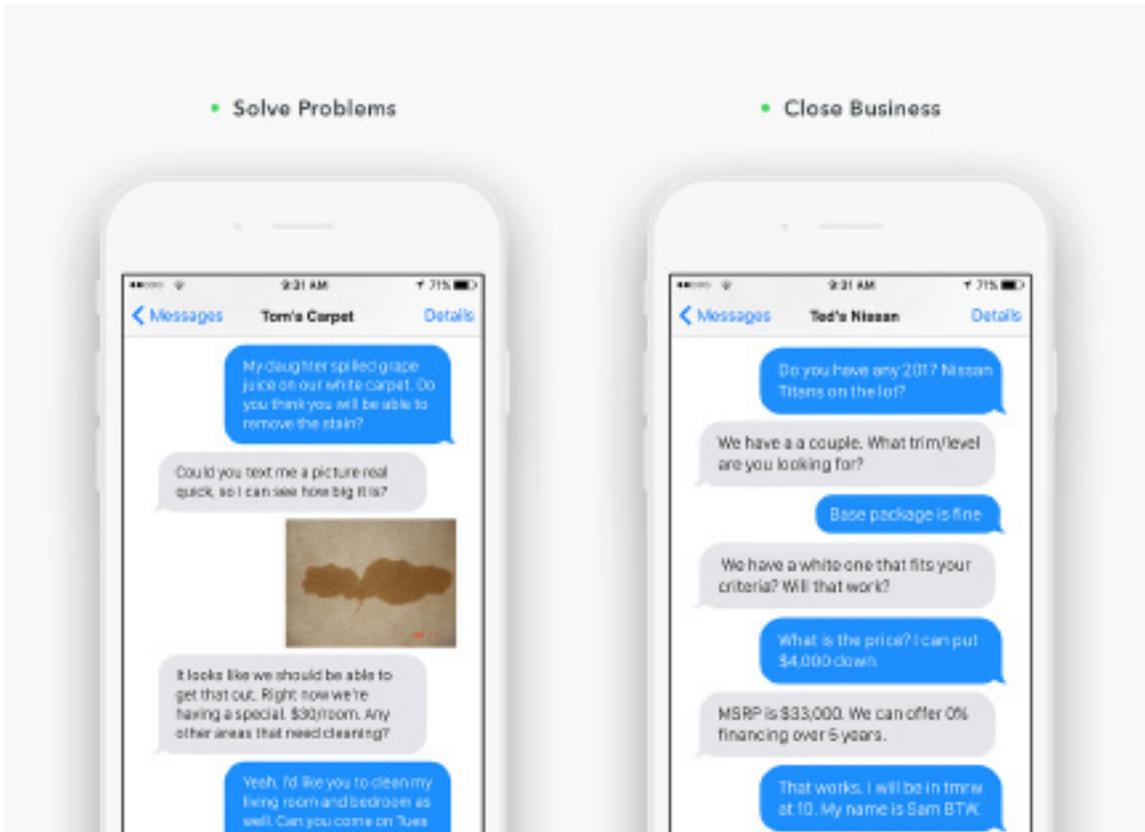
5. BE A RESOURCE TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

Not all of the questions your customers have will warrant a phone call. Some are simple and can often be answered with a very short text. Because texting is more visual than a phone call, it allows your customers to send pictures of a problem they might be having. This can eliminate a lot of confusion that might arise if they were to try and describe the problem verbally.



6. CLOSE BUSINESS

This might sound crazy to you, but it's not uncommon for Podium users to make a sale in a text message conversation – even for big-ticket purchases like a car. Oftentimes, this person is a really hot lead and wants to be connected to the right product or service quickly. If your business isn't making it as easy as possible to engage with customers, you could be losing out on these 'easy' sales.





CONCLUSION



7. COLLECT REVIEWS

Finally, you should invite all of your customers to review your business via text message. Podium's platform makes it easy for your business to connect your customers directly to review sites they are already using like Google and Facebook. Building up your online reputation is important because it makes it easy for consumers to find your business via online searches, while also helping to influence purchase decisions.

Podium Messenger makes texting with customers a breeze. 90% of consumers want to use messaging to talk to businesses. With Podium Messenger, stay connected with your customers and answer questions in real-time via text message – all from one centralized dashboard. ■

Call or Text us at [1-833-276-3486](tel:1-833-276-3486)





podium.com

1-833-276-3486