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SMS marketing mistakes that cost customers, and what to do instead

SEO & Marketing

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SMS marketing mistakes that cost customers, and what to do instead

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The short answer: the costliest mistakes in an SMS campaign are nearly always the same: sending to people who did not agree, not saying who is sending, asking for replies nobody receives, long messages that cost double, links that look like fraud and the wrong time of day. All of them are avoided with a two-minute check before you confirm.

The mistakes and what to do instead

Mistake	Why it costs you	Instead
Sending to numbers that never agreed	Complaints, opt-out requests and your brand linked to spam.	Only people who agreed. See **consent**.
Not saying who is sending	The customer does not recognise the message and deletes it.	Your company name at the start, or a **Sender ID**.
Asking customers to reply	The sender cannot receive replies: the customer answers and nobody reads it.	A phone number, e-mail or website in the message.
Long messages or too many accents	They split into several parts and cost double or triple.	Short text; check the parts before confirming.
Unknown shortened links	They look like a scam, and many people will not tap.	Your own domain, with a campaign page. See **links in SMS**.
Several offers in one message	The customer remembers none of them.	One offer, one deadline, one way to take it up.
Sending at night or very early	It annoys people and brings opt-out requests.	Business hours; schedule if you prepare out of hours.

Mistake	Why it costs you	Instead
Repeating the same campaign in one week	It wears out the list and lowers the response to the next ones.	Change the offer or let time pass.
Hiding an offer inside a notice	It is the content that counts: it becomes marketing, and the customer feels misled.	Notices for notices, offers for people who agreed to them.
Not removing people who opted out	They receive messages again and rightly complain.	Up-to-date groups and the **opt-out list**.

Preparation mistakes

1. **Not testing.** Always send the final message to your own phone and read it as a customer would, link included.
2. **Relying on a name that is not there.** `{$contact_first_name}` only works for numbers saved in your contacts with a name. Everyone else gets the text without the name. See **personalised SMS**.
3. **Forgetting the balance.** If credits run out midway, the campaign stops. Add up the credits first and buy in one go.
4. **Reading "Sent" as "read".** Sent means the message left for the mobile operator. Results are measured by responses. See **how to measure**.
5. **Sending with no goal.** "So they do not forget us" is not a campaign. Each send should carry a concrete offer, event or piece of news.

The two-minute check

1. The right group, with only people who agreed?
2. Your company name right at the start?
3. One offer, one deadline, one way to take it up?
4. A contact and a way to opt out?

5. How many parts? Can it be cut to 1?

6. Is the send time within business hours?

7. Did the test arrive properly on your phone?

Keep the checklist handy.
The SMS Center saves your message templates; a sheet next to your computer with these seven questions does the rest.

A word that is not allowed stops the campaign.
If the SMS Center refuses the text because of a word, rewrite it instead of trying to disguise the word.

RECOMMENDED

Want campaigns without these mistakes? See how SMS Marketing helps.

See the SMS Marketing page →

SEE ALSO

- SMS campaign copy, before and after: turning weak messages into ones customers act on
- SMS good practices and consent: who you may send to and how to let people opt out
- How many credits an SMS uses: 160, 153, 70 and 67 characters explained
- Links in marketing SMS: your own domain, a landing page and not looking like a scam
- How often to send marketing SMS without wearing out your list
- The SMS opt-out list: how unsubscribing works across every send from your account

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