

7 text messaging tips to better engage leads and clients

No other communication channel is as used today as text messaging, at least in terms of volume. Texting is also highly personalized because your brand is getting all of the recipient's attention. Here's how to make your efforts count



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Is it even worth including the statistics on how much we use text messaging?

[Texting](#) is now a central part of client outreach in the real estate industry. Agents use texting in [lead generation](#), lead nurture, escrow dealings and general business communications.

Most major software providers offer text marketing, and some even provide methods to send video over text as part of long-term campaigns.

However, one could argue that it's grown without guidance and lacks the volume of [best practices](#) synonymous with email marketing. Plus, has it been in play long enough for us to fully understand how it can be best leveraged?

Here are seven tips for engaging with your clients using your thumbs and a small digital keyboard.

1. Ask first

You likely know the answer, but ask your leads and clients if they prefer to be reached by text.

The idea here is twofold:

1. It lets them know you care about efficiency by not wanting to communicate through a means they don't prefer (email and [phone](#), for example).
2. It provides you accountability when sending them critical business information via text by eliminating losing the message in some other communication channel — the more centralized your discussions, the better.

2. Respond, even when you can't

Clients don't always need the complete answer, but they do want to know you've heard them.

It seems logical to not respond to a request if you don't have the answer; it could even be considered a polite way not to waste a

person's time. But this is real estate. People are emotional, and they love to waste your time.

[Use a text](#) to let a client know you'll get back to them soon with more information or a complete answer if it's going to take some time for you to find. Keep that promise to always be there for them. Buyers can be incredibly pushy in competitive markets like this current one, so let them know you're there for them.

3. Keep it brief

It's tough to keep it concise in any context, but remember the intent of [text messaging](#) is short concise communications. Don't abuse that. When sending messages to your clients — whether part of a broad campaign or to request something during escrow — don't give your clients a reason to respond with anything but the answer. Don't ramble. Limit the exposition. In short, just get to it. Clients will appreciate your honesty in a professional setting. And if you're worried about sounding abrupt, say nice things to them when on the phone or in person.

4. Differentiate leads

Consider using text to reach all new leads, such as those who come through a less-qualified source, such as a website squeeze page or email subscription.

Inman contributor [Beverly Whipple](#) noted, "[Studies](#) say that 67 percent of people would rather text with a business about appointments and scheduling than by email or phone, and that 98 percent of text messages are read by the end of the day."

Because texting has such an [impressive read rate](#), you have a better chance of engaging than via phone or sending another email to a crowded inbox.

“Think about it,” [Inman Contributor Pat Hibban said](#). “Would you be more likely to read a text from an unknown sender or to answer a call from an unknown number? If you’re anything like me, you read nearly every text and hardly ever answer calls from an unrecognized number.”

[TapText](#), Shaker, Inside Real Estate’s kvCORE, [TopProducer](#), [LionDesk](#) (now part of Lone Wolf) and [Ylopo](#) are a few CRM and marketing tools that leverage text campaign automation with the kind of granularity needed for this use.

5. Earn a review

After giving your client a couple of weeks to breathe post-closing and move-in, use a well-timed text to entice them to leave you a review, [a valuable branding effort](#).

One reason texting is such an effective way to get people to react is that it can directly link to apps, websites and other forms of content. Recipients have to do very little to engage with your business.

Whipple wrote that she [takes advantage of texting](#) and short codes.

“I emailed and mailed each client a code (ReviewBeverly to 39200) as well as a personalized letter with an incentive of a \$5 Amazon gift card if they used the code that month to leave me a review of my services.”

Short codes, when accompanied with a keyword, allow text recipients to access any incentive quickly, and it will enable the sender to measure effectiveness easily.

[RealtyFlux](#) is a texting-specific marketing tool for agents that uses short codes.

6. Respond to remote marketing

You can’t be everywhere at once, but your signs, brochures and listing ads are often visible all over your market.

There was a time when you could only “closely” measure the efficacy of such marketing. The web and texting have dramatically changed that. [TexttoAd](#) is one of many services that links text campaigns to physical marketing efforts.

When a consumer calls a number, the service sends recipients a summary and an image of the property with a call to action: “click to preview.” The agent is also sent an alert with the buyer’s number for personal follow-up.

Listing agents are alerted as consumers click links and view pages, and the service stores the person’s phone number for future promotional leverage. Open houses, price drops, listing brochures and new listings are a few examples of worthwhile follow-ups.

7. Use it for video

Short succinct videos make for excellent text content, especially if they’re personal or [pointing out a unique feature on a home](#).

Multimedia messaging service, or MMS, is the technical protocol term for sending rich-media of any type in a text platform. Again, because our phones’ native text apps are so often accessed, why not use them for some of your most valuable content?

Again, don’t overdo it. There’s no reason to send lengthy explanations or over-produced content. Be clever and insightful.

No other communication channel is as used today as text messaging, at least in terms of volume of data. It’s also highly personalized because your brand is getting all of the recipient’s attention, at least for a few moments.

So what will you do with those precious seconds?