

COLUMNS

Missed opportunities of mobile messaging

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By A LUXURY DAILY COLUMNIST

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There is no shortage of articles on how to make the best use of the mobile medium, replete with key factors and catchy acronyms. (Yes, I am guilty: [The 3 Rs of mobile marketing](#).)

But here are a few simple ideas that I do not find in the wild. They are borne of my incredulity over our collective lack of manners.

Check it out

When was the last time a checkout person said “Thank you,” instead of “Here you go” as they handed you the receipt?

If the promised delivery date is missed by several days, or the product is back-ordered, incorrect or unsatisfactory, should not “I am sorry” be part of the response?

In addition to the normal offers and announcements, the mobile medium is the perfect place to thank customers and apologize for errors: Thank you for your recent purchase. Thank you for being a good customer. We appreciate your business. We are sorry for the

recent problem.

For in-app purchases, it should be extra easy to trigger a push notification.

For SMS, you may need to **connect the data dots** to tie subscriber number to purchase history, but that is priority #1 for delivering relevant messaging.

For customer service issues, request a phone number in “Contact Us” forms and call centers.

If you are concerned about the number of text messages that may result from these random acts of good manners, the **CTIA rules have relaxed**.

Specifying the number of messages an SMS subscriber will receive is no longer required. You may simply state that messages will be recurring, or approximately X or up to Y. For the federal requirements, get a great summary of the **TCPA rules from Tatango here**.

You can also prioritize a service message in place of an offer, as you might with a transactional email over a promotional one.

Key words

On the other hand, we will need to be prepared for the customer to continue the conversation.

What happens when customers respond to an apology? This may mean that you need to read and route responses. But would you not rather manage an issue via private message than over social media?

Consider offering a keyword to facilitate response management in your SMS error message: “I’m sorry, we didn’t understand your response. If you have a service issue, please reply with SERVICE (space) and an explanation of your issue. Thank you.”

Other options: send users to a mobile-optimized “Contact Us” form or have an intern read the MO messages.

In your app, a drop-down menu can be used to route responses.

If you do not have an option to “Contact Us” in your app, it is time to consider it. How can we have the most personal channel to date and not facilitate dialogue?

THAT IS MY curmudgeon’s guide to mobile messaging.

Say “Thank you.” Say “I’m sorry.”

Provide a channel for dialogue and listen.

Do not miss an opportunity to provide superior, personal customer service. Your competitors are not doing it.

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