

MOBILE

Kiehl's drives customers to bricks-and-mortar with SMS

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By KAYLA HUTZLER

L'Oreal-owned Kiehl's is implementing location-based SMS messaging to offer busy consumers news and sales at their local Kiehl's stores with the purpose of driving in-store purchase.



The skincare line announced SMS messaging to consumers in an email alert July 26. Excluding a few iPad and iPhone apps for its Hong Kong, Singapore and Korean audiences, this is one of the first mobile efforts from Kiehl's to consumers in the United States.

“Not only is SMS viable, it often is most important for brands because of its reach with more than seven in 10 mobile subscribers texting on a regular basis,” said Jeff Hasen, chief marketing officer of [Hipcricket](#), Kirkland, WA.

“SMS is most valuable when it is used as a CRM tool in addition to a means to provide an offer,” he said.

Mr. Hasen is not affiliated with Kiehl's, but agreed to comment as a third-party expert.

[Kiehl's](#) did not respond by press deadline.

Kiehl's in your palm

Kiehl's sent out an email July 26 to newsletter subscribers alerting them of new events from the brand, including a new spa and in-store exhibit ([see story](#)).

The bottom of the email contained a small message about the new SMS services and allowed readers to click-through to a [full page site](#).

On this site, consumers can sign up with their mobile phone numbers and email.

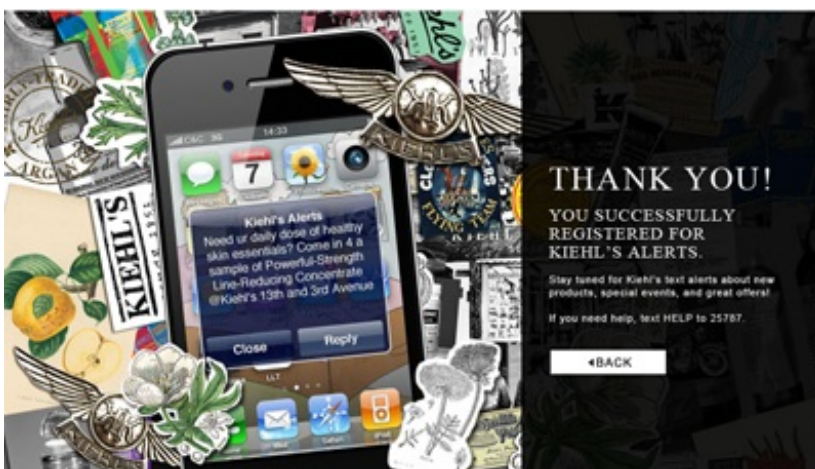


A Kiehl's fan can also simply text the keyword KIEHLS1 to the short code 25787 to register for the messaging service.

The SMS alerts will give shoppers insider information about new products, special events and offers when they are near Kiehl's stores and products, per the brand.

After registering, consumers receive a welcome text that explains they will only receive a maximum of three messages per month and offer an opt-out option.

The text also prompts consumers to send the letter "Y" back if they wish to receive location-based offerings.



SMS smarties

SMS messaging has not been at the forefront of many luxury campaigns in the past few months, but Mr. Hasen believes that the Kiehl's initiative has the underpinnings to be successful.

“The most successful SMS programs take into account location and relevance,” Mr. Hasen said.

"Brands should always remember to integrate SMS and mobile offerings with larger-picture marketing campaigns," he said.

Many brands have already used SMS messaging campaigns successfully as part of multichannel campaigns.

For instance, Jaguar pushed new models by using short codes in its television advertising ([see story](#)).

In addition, LVMH's Hennessy is promoting its collaboration with the artist Kaws for a limited-edition bottle that can be previewed by scanning 2D bar codes and SMS calls-to-action ([see story](#)).

Brands can leverage the dollars they are already spending on other marketing materials by adding a call-to-action that is more measurable, according to Mr. Hasen.

In addition, to make SMS campaigns more effective, brands must ensure that the call-to-action is prominent rather than hidden or easily ignored.

“SMS has never had the 'cool factor' appeal because of its 160-character limitations,” Mr. Hasen said.

“But, rather than taking a seat in the back, SMS is the workhorse for hundreds of major brands and it often leads the consumer to richer brand engagements on mobile,” he said.

Final Take

Kayla Hutzler, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York