

How to Use Text Messaging to Engage Customers

Conversational text messaging is the personal way to engage your customers. Since over 85% of customers would prefer texting versus email or phone calls, you'll be communicating with them in the way they prefer. Even better, texting is such a natural way to converse; you'll get 6x the responses you'd get with email.

With SMS text messaging you can begin and continue more conversations as you build customer engagement and loyalty while you deepen your profiles of your individual customer's preferences.

A Retailer Drives Repeat Business with Conversational Text Messaging

Fashion Era's month-over-month revenue growth had stalled during the last two quarters and the retailer knew if they could drive more repeat business, they could get their numbers back on track. Email offers weren't producing the response they needed so the marketing team decided to try conversational text messaging to increase customer engagement.

Here's how they did it.

First, they created an automated text messaging campaign, including business rules to capture data and trigger campaign steps based on the behavioral patterns of their audience.

Then they created personal discount codes and URLs for their contacts so that anytime a customer used a code or clicked on a link, they could track their behavior.

Here's how it worked for John, a sometime customer of Fashion Era:

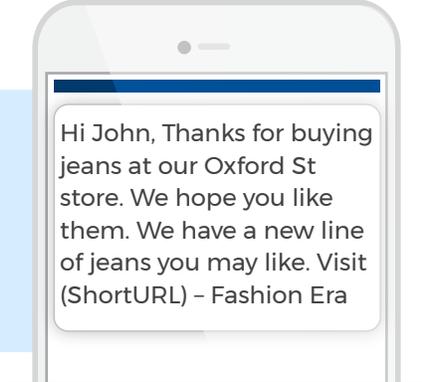
John signed up for Fashion Era's company blog. After responding YES to a text opt-in, he is sent the following text message.



Hi John, thanks for subscribing to our blog. As a reward, get 25% off any purchase this month with Coupon Code #9899
- Fashion Era

Like most of us, John is always looking for a good deal on jeans. When he is near a Fashion Era store a week later, he drops in to check out their jeans. He finds a pair he likes, uses his personal discount code, and buys them.

When John uses the discount code to make the purchase, it triggers a set of follow-up messages thanking him for that purchase and offering more items similar to his recent purchase.



Hi John, Thanks for buying jeans at our Oxford St store. We hope you like them. We have a new line of jeans you may like. Visit (ShortURL) - Fashion Era

John happens to be waiting for a meeting when he receives this text, so he clicks on his personalized link and checks out a few items. The person he's meeting arrives so he moves on with his day.

The next day, he's sent another message with a thanks for checking out the website and a discount code.



Hi John, Because you look interested in our new line of jeans, here's a Coupon Code to get 15% off your next purchase. Use "SPCMEJ" at checkout
- Fashion Era

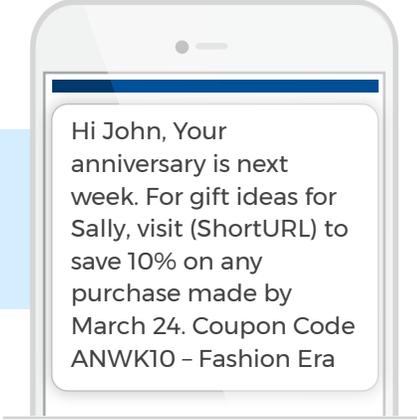
These types of messages and triggers are sent via an automated campaign. John will continue to receive offers and discounts, invites to new items, and more over time.

Using Personal Data for Engagement with Text Messaging

John also receives simple surveys to capture more insights about important things in his personal life.

For example, John was asked for his wife's name and their anniversary date in survey messages. He was also asked for his birthday, favorite clothing items and favorite color. That data was captured and used to create triggers for other messaging offers.

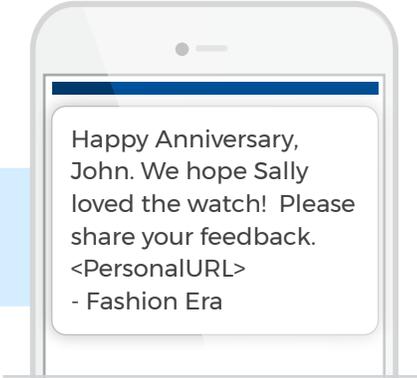
A week ahead of his anniversary, John receives this text message.



Hi John, Your anniversary is next week. For gift ideas for Sally, visit (ShortURL) to save 10% on any purchase made by March 24. Coupon Code ANWK10 – Fashion Era

It just so happens that John had forgotten his anniversary, so he's grateful for the text message reminding him. He drops into Fashion Era after seeing a watch on their site that he thinks Sally will like. He uses his discount code to purchase it.

On his anniversary, he receives this message.



Happy Anniversary, John. We hope Sally loved the watch! Please share your feedback. <PersonalURL> - Fashion Era

He clicks on the link and is asked 2 questions; did his wife like the gift, and when is her birthday. Fashion Era will remind him about that date too.

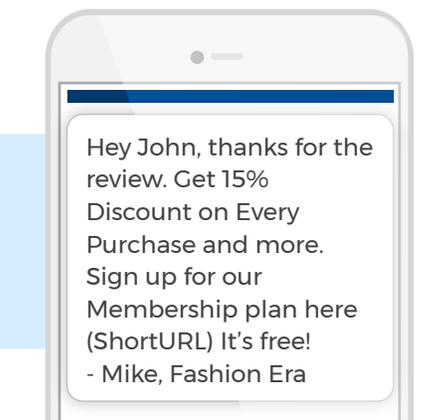
Rewarding Buyer Behavior with Text Messaging

Customers who review products at Fashion Era's site are also sent a thank you message for their reviews, along with a discount code. Any reviews, positive comments on Fashion Era's blog or other interactions are rewarded.

On the other hand, if a customer is upset with a purchase or the company, they are sent a series of messages surveying their dissatisfaction and offering discounts and special offers. Depending on their responses to the survey, they may be sent to a customer service agent for an outbound call to discuss their situation.

In John's case, he reviewed the company after their anniversary text, thanking them for caring about him and saving his marriage.

He then receives this message, which gives him an offer to sign up for Fashion Era's Loyalty Plan.



The Bottom Line

Thanks to conversational text messaging, Fashion Era was able to personally engage their customers and drive repeat business. Their text messaging campaigns increased their sales, revenues, and bottom line. They also increased customer loyalty and brand satisfaction, especially for customers like John, who now won't miss his wife's birthday or their anniversary ever again.