

How to convince consumers in a maximum of 160 characters?

Issued by [CM Telecom](#)

28 Jun 2017

With SMS marketing generating up to 98% open rates starting at R0.17 per SMS, most marketers find it to be an effective mix to their digital campaigns such as Google Search ads to convince the receivers of an idea and have them take a certain action. For example, to buy a new dryer, sign up for an event or donate money to their charity. But how do you write a persuasive message that leads to the desired action when you are limited to 160 characters?



The benefit of [SMS marketing](#) is its high open rate of 98%, with most messages read within in just a few minutes after sending. However, you only have limited space to share your message. This means the reader won't process your message as thoroughly as, for example, a long article or an interview. Therefore, a little creativity is essential to get your message across. Moreover, you need to be aware of the consumer's decision-making process and how you can influence this using just a few words.

SMS demands other arguments

You want to convince the consumer to take a certain action, for example to visit your web shop to cash your SMS coupon? You'll have to address and influence values to change behaviour. This means you need to target either his noble values (for example preserving nature) or his instrumental values (like saving money). To effectively affect behaviour, you need to address one of these. Unless you want to send concatenated messages, that has to be done in a maximum of 160 digits.

But how can you accomplish this? In shorter messages, some simplistic arguments are most effective to influence consumers. For example, using sources with a certain authority or mentioning behaviour of others. Besides trustworthy and likeable sources, 'fear' can also be an effective way to influence the effect of your message. But make sure you don't overdo this, because then your audience will want to ignore your message. It holds true for all these arguments that they are more persuasive if you add an example.

Test your creativity

It's up to your creativity to jam all of this in one single SMS. Because short messages are typically not processed as thoroughly -as mentioned earlier-, it is not only important to use the right arguments to influence values. You will also have to write a brief and attractive message. Some basics to help you do so:

1. Don't use unnecessary words or passive language: you can save costs vs. save costs.
2. Address your reader personally so he is more motivated to read the message.
3. Be concrete in your language, so avoid words like 'try', 'soon' and 'good'.
4. If you mention arguments, consider that those containing the word 'because' are typically found more convincing.
5. Use a URL- shortener so you don't waste unnecessary characters for your message.

Examples

All that theory is nice, but of course we also want to give some concrete examples of such short persuasive messages that target either one of the consumer's values.

- "Change the world, start with yourself. Click here for a non-committal offer for solar panels and discover the benefits. [Hyperlink]"
- "Cut your energy costs in half. We will handle the transfer and offer you 3 free months if you sign up before April. [Hyperlink]"
- "Do you have the nerve? Show the world that you are different. Shop at [...] and create your unique look. [Hyperlink]"
- "Thousands of men said yes. Are you ready to try the latest in skin care? Money back guarantee. [Hyperlink]"
- "30% of species face extinction. Help us make sure your children don't grow up in a world without these magnificent creatures. [Hyperlink]"
- "[Newspaper name], because you also want to know what is happening in your own region. Sign up for a free trial week. [Hyperlink]"
- "80% of dentists recommend [toothpaste X] for sensitive teeth. Click here to receive your free tube of paste. [Hyperlink]"

Once you've convinced the recipient that your product meets his values, it is just as important to make it easy to perform the desired action. So, explain what they need to do and make sure they have all necessary resources at his disposal. So, provide a clear and working URL or explain the following process. As you've seen in the examples above, in spite of its 160-character limit, SMS still offers enough space to add this to your message.

Just like with all marketing tools, it holds true for SMS that you must have the courage to experiment. By [analysing the data](#) of your SMS campaigns, you will get to know your audience better and find out what messages are most effective in influencing behaviour. CM's [Marketing Campaigns](#) with built in [analytics](#) now makes it easier than ever before to target, reach and convert your audience. Curious? [Give it a try!](#) Alternatively, you can [contact us](#) here to learn more.