

Why SMS beats email in the current climate of crisis

 By [Greg Chen](#)

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In a time of email fatigue, as we are bombarded by Covid-19 corporate messaging, communicating with customers via SMS can be far more effective.



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Messaging really is all about timing. Even in the most normal of circumstances, it's all about ensuring that a message reaches its intended audience as efficiently - in its most accessible format – and as fast as possible. And it's also about the time it takes for your message to grab your customer's attention. Time, as they say, really is money.

But now, we find ourselves thrown into a new reality, where we are bombarded non-stop by Covid-19-related messaging, and timing on all fronts becomes part of a company's very survival.

This is where the power of SMSes comes fully into play. While the messages they carry may be limited to 160 characters, if worded correctly they will grab a consumer's attention far quicker than long-winded emails. Plus, if there really is more to be said, the SMS can include a link to a personalised website to take the consumer quickly to individualised deals at a time when every cent is being carefully monitored.



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In a time of Covid-19, cost is increasingly becoming a very critical factor in the decisions we make, including how we access information. As disposable income becomes tighter, consumers will limit their spending, which includes the amount they may be willing or able to spend on data – an email necessity. And, of course, during lockdown, many consumers will be severely constrained in their ability to access WiFi hotspots.

SMSes, on the other hand, neither require customers to be online, nor do they cost money to receive. Technology today also enables highly individualised messaging that is tailored specifically towards the recipient, engaging them on a very personal level.

Plus research has shown that 98% of all SMSes are opened, with a click-through rate of 19%, versus only 3.2% for email campaigning and marketing.

Granted, an SMS that contains a click through to a website will rely on a consumer having access to data – a cost to the consumer. But it is completely possible for the organisation sending the message to take on the data costs themselves, or even have their web-based communication zero-rated with mobile networks.

Many people may consider SMSes to belong to the technology of the past. They have, after all, been around since 1992. But the bottom line is that new technologies are not necessarily always better. Layer on top of that the extremely tough conditions that Covid-19 now places on society, and clearly what we need first and foremost are robust systems that the majority can access within the shortest period and with the least cost. Now, more than ever, SMSes just make good business, communication and common sense.

ABOUT GREG CHEN

Greg Chen is the CEO and co-founder of Mbbiz. He has a long history in the South African mobile space and is passionate about the role technology can play in engaging the country's people across the spectrum

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