SMS Playbook

Retail & eCommerce Edition

Presented by:

Burst SMS

Contents

Who are we?

Burst SMS is one of the easiest to use SMS platforms in the world. We build simple, highly intuitive, and feature-rich SMS tools. Innovation is what we strive for, by building new features with our clients in mind. Our products are designed by us, but refined by our customers.

Introduction

Getting your customer's attention is challenging. Even if your brand is better than your competitor's, they may have a bigger budget and may be getting more attention than you. So how do you stand out?

And as they focus much of their energy and resources on email campaigns and online ads, you can make SMS marketing your secret weapon.

Drive traffic to your store with flash sales, offers, and promotions. And if you run an eCommerce store, send order, shipment, and delivery confirmations to help improve your customer experience and satisfaction.

A big budget isn't required, and not a lot of time is needed. If you want to explore the world of SMS and its benefits, then continue reading.

02 5 Reasons to use SMS for retail

1. Global Reach

All mobile phones can send and receive SMS as long as it has a cellular reception. That includes keypad phones too. Unlike popular chat apps like Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp, SMS doesn't require a Wi-Fi or mobile data connection to work.

Plus, **there are over 5 billion unique mobile subscribers in the world today** according to the GSMA. It may reach 5.9 billion by 2025, which is triple the number of Facebook users today.

Reference: GSMA

Unique Mobile Subscribers

Per Billion

2015	2016	2025
4.7	4.8	5.9
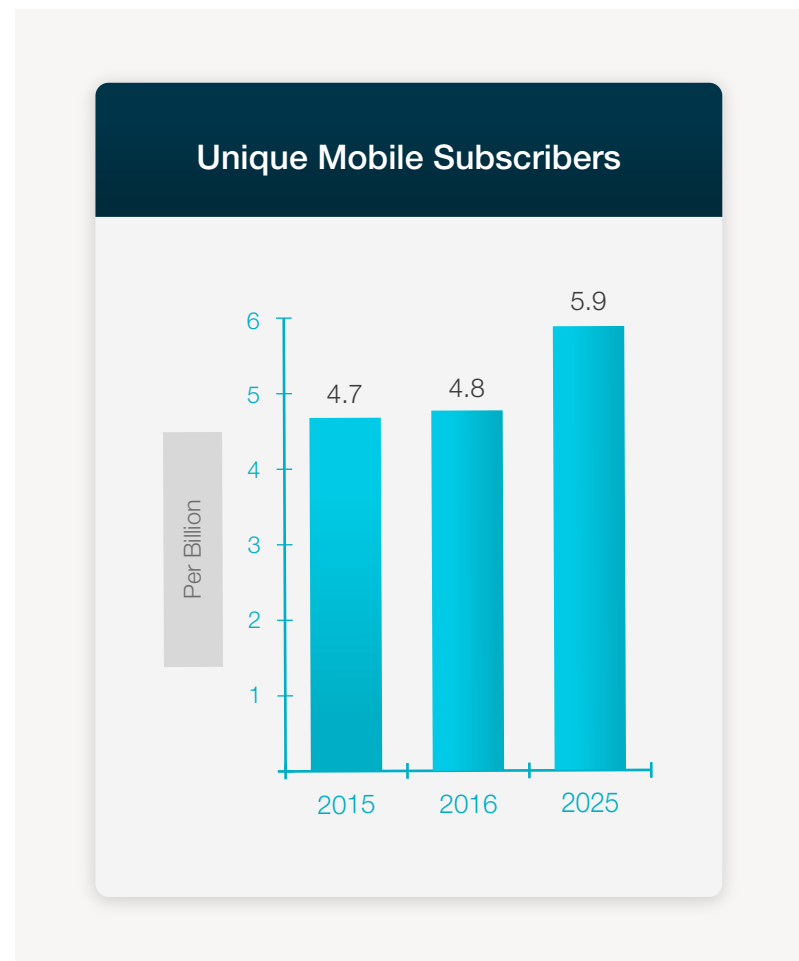
2. High Open Rate

SMS has a 98% open rate, and 90% of text messages are opened within 3 minutes after they're received. When someone receives an SMS they get a direct notification which is hard to ignore. They need to see it before they can dismiss it. At minimum, recipients see a preview of your message before they delete it.

Compared to email, the stats are unparalleled. In MailChimp's latest benchmark report, they found email open rates for retail and eCommerce businesses range from only 15-19%.

Reference: Mailchimp

SMS vs Email Open Rate

Open Rate (%)

SMS	Email
98%	15-19%
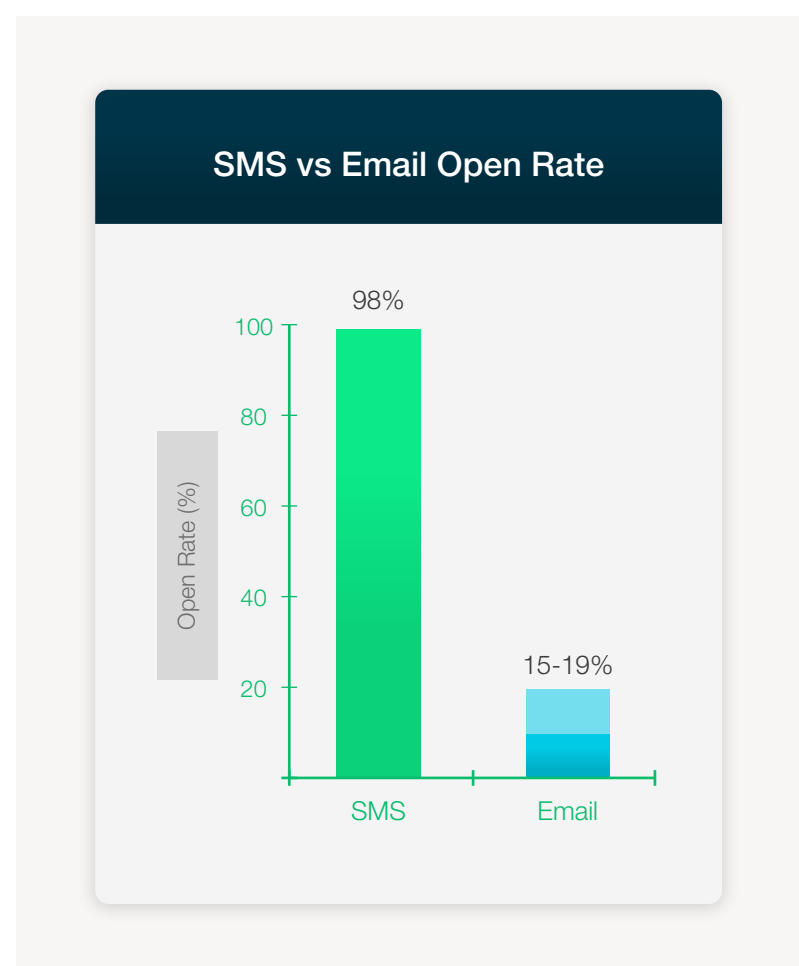
3. Reach Mobile Shoppers

Every year, more and more people turn to their mobile phones to research and purchase products.

Already for the 2018 holiday season, Adobe Digital Insights found that smartphones accounted for 30% of revenue, 49% of traffic, and 30% of purchases.
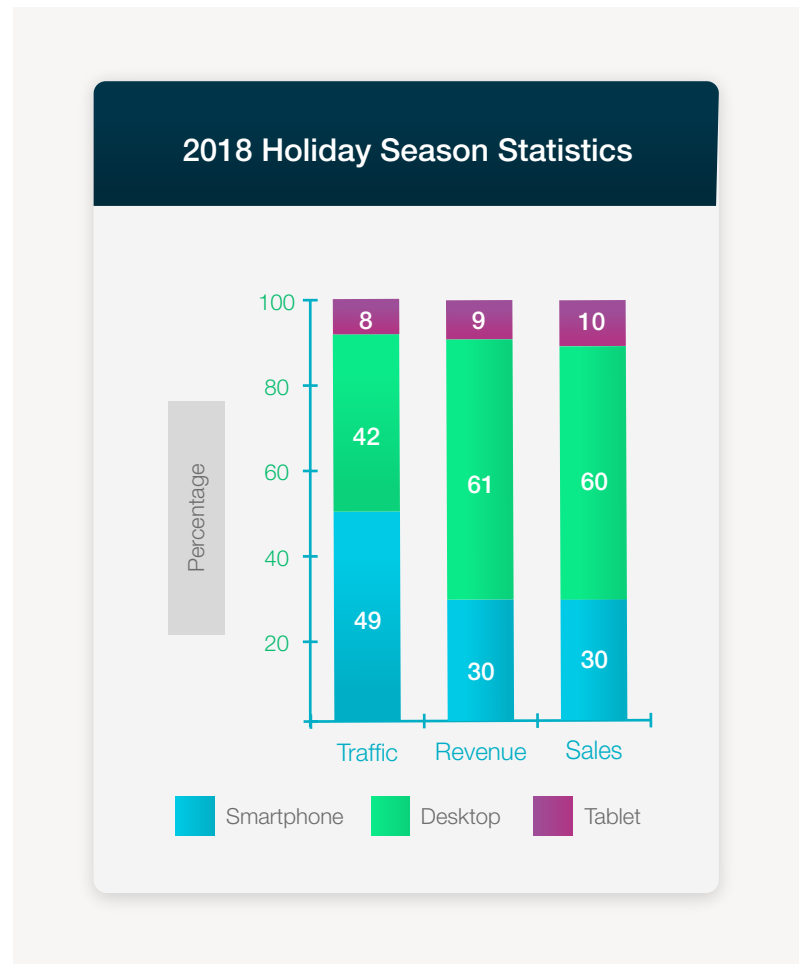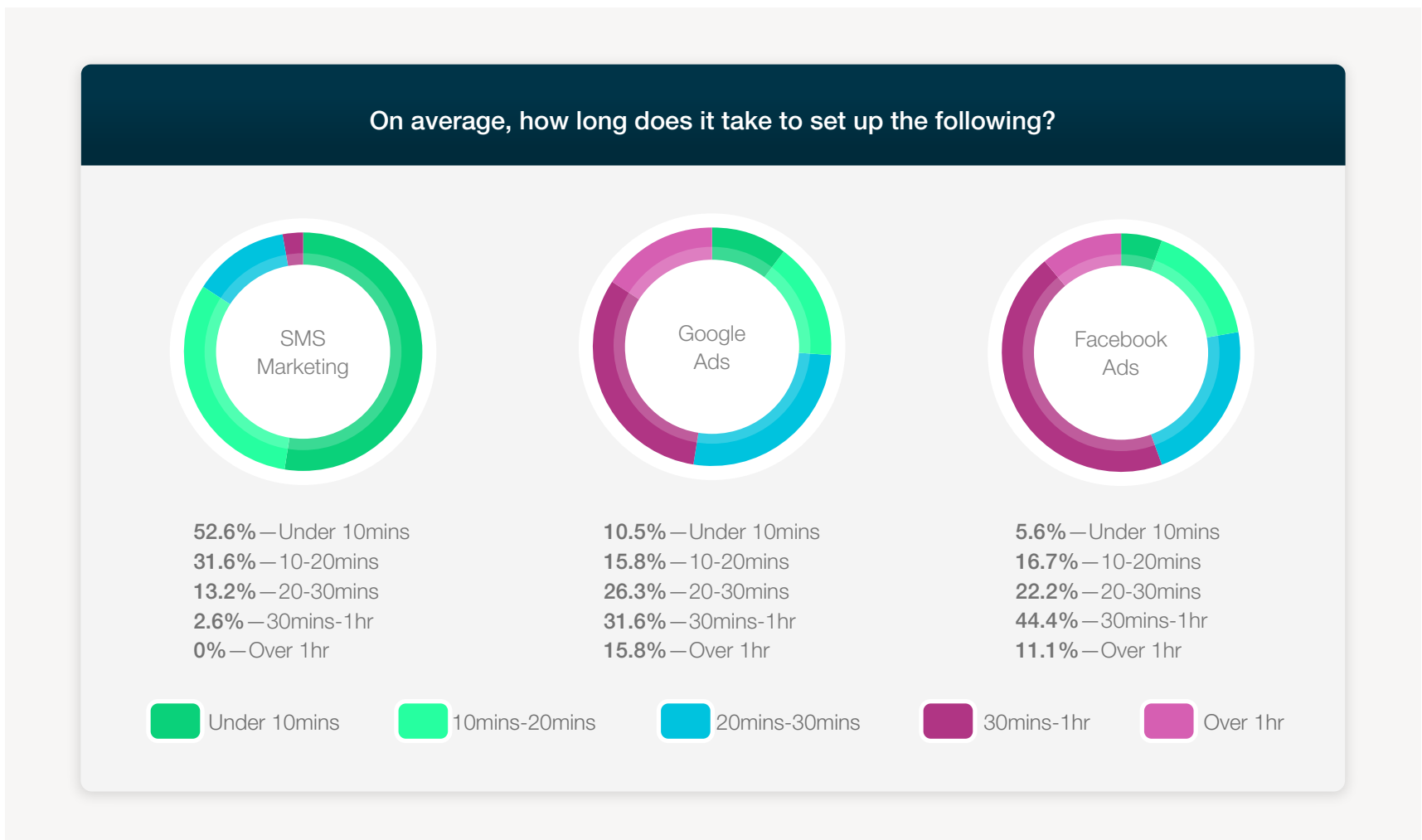
In Asia, mobile shopping is already widespread. During the 2017 Alibaba Singles' Day, 90% of sales came from mobile devices. In 2012, it only accounted for 5%.

References: Adobe • Alizila

2018 Holiday Season Statistics

Percentage	Traffic	Revenue	Sales
Tablet	8	9	10
Desktop	42	61	60
Smartphone	49	30	30

Smartphone · Desktop · Tablet

4. Quick and simple

In a recent client survey, our respondents felt that Google Adwords and Facebook Ad campaigns took much more time to set up than SMS campaigns. Over 50% of respondents reported that it takes them under 10 minutes to create an SMS campaign. That's likely because most campaigns are straight to the point and under 160 characters.

On average, how long does it take to set up the following?

SMS Marketing
52.6%—Under 10mins
31.6%—10-20mins
13.2%—20-30mins
2.6%—30mins-1hr
0%—Over 1hr

Google Ads
10.5%—Under 10mins
15.8%—10-20mins
26.3%—20-30mins
31.6%—30mins-1hr
15.8%—Over 1hr

Facebook Ads
5.6%—Under 10mins
16.7%—10-20mins
22.2%—20-30mins
44.4%—30mins-1hr
11.1%—Over 1hr

Under 10mins · 10mins-20mins · 20mins-30mins · 30mins-1hr · Over 1hr

5. Affordable and effective

If you breakdown the CPS (cost per send) / CPC (cost per click) vs average CTR (click through rate), the results may surprise you. Here's how SMS stacks up against the competition:

	Average CPS / CPC	Average CTR	Average Cost per 10,000 CPS / CPC
SMS (CPS)	**$0.049-$0.079**	**9.18%**	**$490-$790**
Facebook (CPC)	$1.72	0.90%	$17,200
Google Adwords (CPC)	$2.32	1.91%	$23,200
Google Display Network (CPC)	$0.58	0.35%	$5,800
Instagram (CPC)	$1.94	0.99%	$19,400
Linkedin (CPC)	$6.50	0.021%	$65,000
Twitter (CPC)	$0.80	2%	$8,000

CPS = Cost per send • **CPS** = Cost per send • **CTR** = Click through rate

References: Adstage • Linkedin • Wordstream

With an 98% open rate, you'll get your customers' attention for a fraction of the cost when you compare it to other forms of digital advertising. SMS also has a higher click-through rate, making it powerful tool that can help you increase your bottom line, especially during the holiday season.
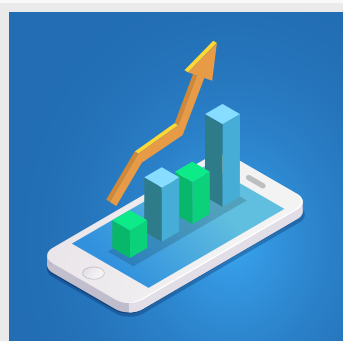
Want more SMS and mobile stats?

Check out our blog for more interesting SMS marketing, eCommerce, messaging, mobile, and global industry benchmarks.

Read More

05 SMS Templates

If you want to use SMS for your business, then it's important to know the ground rules. Otherwise, you may come across as spammy. Boost your bottom line, and improve your customer experience with these simple guidelines and templates.

Here are some tips:

• **Keep your messages under 160 characters.** People have short attention spans. Be clear about your offer, and have a clear call to action.

• **Identify yourself.** Customers need to know who they're talking to, otherwise it's spam. Build trust and brand recognition by clearly stating who you are.

• **Send messages at the right time.** Timing is everything. Avoid sending messages when they can't take action, like in the middle of the night.

It takes just 5mins to set-up a campaign. Just remember to clearly state your purpose within 160 characters. Send an SMS it even quicker with these retail templates.

Sales and Promotions

Drive traffic with coupons and offers

> Huge Summer Clearance Sale at SuitCo! Get 50% off select summer attire. In-store only. For more details, visit: TapTh.is/link
>
> Opt out reply STOP

> HomeStore: 25% off entire purchase in-store for Black Friday! Valid until stores close. Show this text to cashier to claim.
>
> Opt out reply STOP

> BigBookCo: Fall sale! Buy 1 book and get the 1 free. Ref code: BOGO18 in-store. Valid till 30/11/18. Restrictions apply.
>
> Opt out reply STOP

Notify customers when hot items are in stock

> GamerWorld: Super Mario Party is back in stock! Pick up your copy today before it's gone. Open Mon-Sat 10am-8pm & Sun 11am-6pm.
>
> Opt out reply STOP

Add a sense of urgency with flash sales

> Special Black Friday Sale for SMS subscribers: Get an additional 15% off all products online. Today only. Use SMS15: TapTh.is/link
>
> Opt out reply STOP

> TechShop Flash sale! For the next 3 hours, get 10% off all smart watches online. Don't miss this deal! Shop now: TapTh.is/link
>
> Opt out reply STOP

> Limited quantity skincare sets available now. Perfect stocking stuffers! Buy 2 and get 1 free! Shop now: TapTh.is/link
>
> Opt out reply STOP

Customer Loyalty and Gratitude

Offer a free loyalty gift and perks

> Hey Bob, thanks for being such a loyal customer. Here's something awesome: [Offer]. Just show us this SMS the next time you come by.
>
> Opt out reply STOP

> Hi Jane, thanks for choosing Bursty Retail. Your loyalty card is now active. Collect points while you shop and enjoy the perks!
>
> Opt out reply STOP

Celebrate big events with your customers

> Happy anniversary!
> It's been a year since you joined us, and we want to say thanks by treating you to [Incentive].
>
> Opt out reply STOP

> Hi Christopher, Happy Birthday! We have something special for your today. It's completely free: TapTh.is/link
>
> Opt out reply STOP

Order Confirmations

Delivery Notification - Step 1/3 - Payment Confirmation

" The Sports Store - Thank you for shopping with us. Your order is confirmed, and it'll be shipped soon. Details: TapTh.is/link

Opt out reply STOP

" The Sports Store - We've received your order, and we are preparing for shipment. Get your confirmation details here: TapTh.is/link

Opt out reply STOP

" We've received your order and we'll let you know when we ship it out. Order details: TapTh.is/link - The Sports Store.

Opt out reply STOP

Shipment Confirmations

Delivery Notification - Step 2/3 - Package Shipped

" [Beauty Store]
Hi Sarah, your order for our skincare sets were shipped! Track your package here:
TapTh.is/link

" Your package with ABC Mouse, XYZ Keyboard, and 2L Dishwa... is arriving tomorrow on 21/10/18. Track it here:
TapTh.is/link

" Great news. Your order has been shipped! It should arrive in the next 5-7 business days. - Beauty Store
TapTh.is/link

" Hi Jonathan, your package from The Sports Store is arriving tomorrow before 8 pm.
TapTh.is/link

Delivery Confirmations

Delivery Notification - Step 3/3 - Delivery

" Beauty Store: Your package was delivered. Thanks for shopping with us! Here's code for next time: SAVE10: TapTh.is/link

" TechStore: It looks like we just missed you. We will try delivering your package again tomorrow.

" CoffeeCo: We just missed you. Your package is at [Post Office] at [Address]. Pick up after 2pm. Bring a government-issued ID.

Feedback and Satisfaction

Gather feedback and increase your retention rate

> Hi Robert, you recently purchased a ABC Pillow from us. Tell us what you think! Reply with 1-5 (1=Bad; 5=Great).
>
> Opt out reply STOP

> Thanks for the feedback! Here's a promo code for your next online purchase: THANKS25. Expires in 7 days.
>
> Opt out reply STOP

> Hello! We hope you're loving your Badminton Racket. Please let us know what you think (There's a gift inside):TapTh.is/link
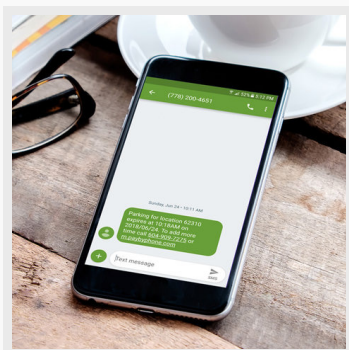>
> Opt out reply STOP

Abandoned Carts

Send a gentle reminder

> Hi Jordan, we noticed that you have items left in your cart. Order now and you could save 10% with SAVE10: TapTh.is/link
>
> Opt out reply STOP

> Hi Maria, we noticed that you have items left in your cart. Don't forget them while they're still in stock: TapTh.is/link
>
> Opt out reply STOP

How are businesses using SMS to talk to their customers?

It's always interesting to see how businesses market their SMS capabilities. But when it comes to sending text messages, what do they say and how do they say it? Here are some real examples.

Read More

09 How to Grow your SMS list

Like an email list, customers need to give you permission before you can contact them. Generally speaking, you can get permission by having customers do the following:

1. Text an SMS keyword to your dedicated virtual number or shortcode
2. Sign up from a website with a permission check box. This tick box should also not be pre-selected
3. Purchase an item from you (within the last 2 years)
4. Complete an offline form such as a survey or competition. Make sure it's clear that you will be sending them SMS
5. Give you their business card, but you still need to ask for their permission

Create an irresistible offer

To get new customers to opt in, you need to attract them with an irresistible offer. Everyone loves a good coupon or offer when they see one.

It should be exclusive and time sensitive. Without an expiration date, there's no reason for them to take action immediately.

And make sure it's easy to claim. If your customers need to jump through hoops, they'll give up and shop somewhere else.

Let them opt-in via text

If you want your customers opt-in via text message, you need an SMS platform like Burst. There are several benefits of doing it this way. It can be done from anywhere, and your customers don't need to visit a landing page and fill out a form. And they also don't need a Wi-Fi or data connection to text you. Only a cellular one.

But on your end, you'll also need a dedicated virtual number or a shortcode to receive SMS. Dedicated numbers look like regular numbers (+61 459 333 444), and shortcodes are usually 3-6 digits long (12345).

Customers text in a keyword of your choice to your dedicated number or shortcode opt-in. Once they do, take this opportunity to welcome them with an auto-response message and a coupon code.

Example offers

"Get 20% off your first purchase when you sign up for SMS alerts! Text 'JOIN' to +61 459 333 444 to sign up."

"For exciting weekly deals, coupons, and offers, text 'DEALS' to 12345. Opt out any time."

"Be the first to know about our one day flash sales! Text 'FLASH' to +61 459 333 444 to join."

How to promote it

We recommend using both online and offline strategies to get the word out.

Online:
• Social media
• Email newsletters
• Websites (Coupon sites like RetailMeNot)
• Digital ads (Google, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

Offline:
• Traditional media (newspapers, magazines, television)
• Billboards, public transportation ads
• In-store signage
• On your receipts

10 When to text your customers

When is the best time to send a text message to your customers? You don't need to search far for a reason to send an SMS campaign. Big events like Black Friday and Cyber Monday make obvious choices, but have you ever heard of Singles' Day or Splurge Day? Plenty of people celebrate these days, most visibly on social media. If you're keen, and if it makes sense for your store, take advantage of these days to connect with your customers. We found some that you might find interesting, but the list below is not exhaustive. Check out Days of the Year for more.

January
- New Year's Day
- Australia Day
- Hat Day

February
- Groundhog Day
- Chinese New Year
- Valentine's Day
- World Yoga Day

March
- St. Patrick's Day
- Mother's Day (UK)
- World Book Day
- International Women's Day

April
- April Fools' Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- ANZAC Day
- Pet Day
- Tea Day

May
- Mother's Day (AUS, US & CAN)
- Memorial Day (US)
- Star Wars Day

June
- Queen's Birthday (NSW/VIC)
- Father's Day (UK, US & CAN)
- Winter Solstice
- Splurge Day

July
- Canada Day
- Independence Day (US)
- Amazon Prime Day

August
- Horse's Birthday (AUS)
- Book Lovers Day

September
- Father's Day (AUS & NZ)
- Labour Day (US & CAN)
- Video Games Day

October
- Queen's Birthday (QLD/WA)
- Thanksgiving (CAN)
- Halloween (US & CAN)

November
- Melbourne Cup
- Veteran's Day (US)
- Remembrance Day (UK & CAN)
- Thanksgiving (US)
- Black Friday
- Cyber Monday
- Singles' Day

December
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day
- Summer Solstice
- New Year's Eve

Other
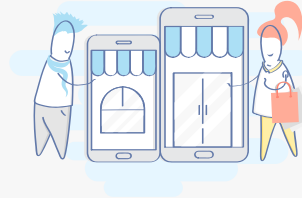- Customer birthdays
- Customer anniversaries
- Company milestones

11 More ways to use SMS

URL Tracking

With a built-in URL tracker, you can see who clicked your links, and what your overall click-through rate is. Use it to help retarget customers and plan your next SMS campaign.

Personalisation

Personalise your text messages with custom variables. They can be anything you want them to be: gender, age, subscription type, location—essentially any selection of data that's important for your business.

SMS Keywords

SMS Keywords trigger different functions when customers text in with one. Functions include sending automated responses, adding a contact to a new list, forwarding the text to another mobile number, and much more.
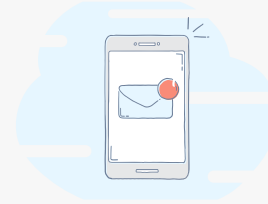
Email to SMS

Send and receive SMS from any of your favourite email applications. Use it to answer customer enquiries, and keep records of your conversations.
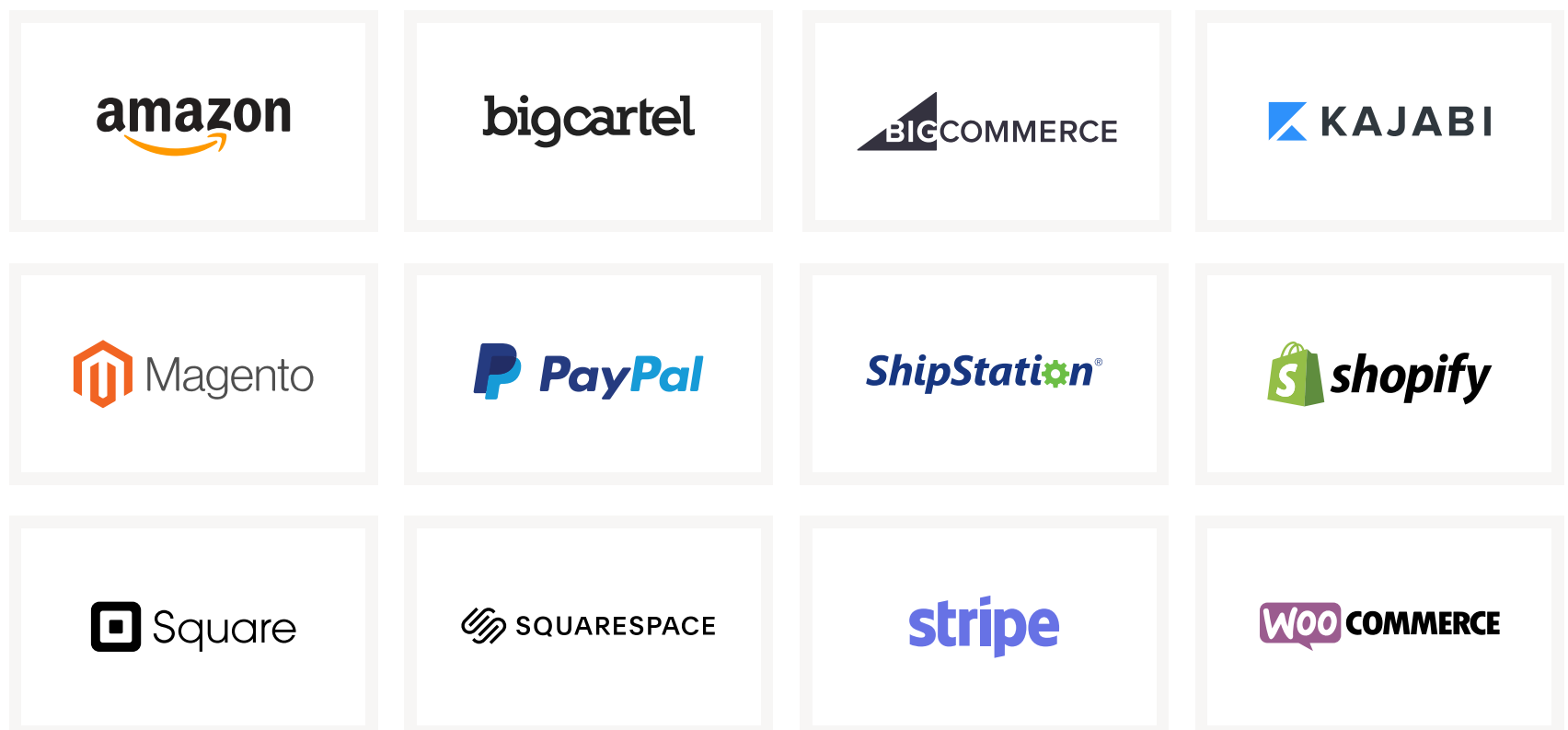
Integrate your favourite eCommerce and web applications with Burst SMS using Zapier (a quick and easy to use web integration service) and start automating your workflow. Instead of manually sending a text message when one of your customer's order status changes, let Zapier take care of it for you. No coding knowledge required. Just a bit of creativity.

Zapier Integrations

Burst SMS can easily integrate with these eCommerce tools (and 1,100 more apps) with Zapier.

amazon	bigcartel	BIGCOMMERCE	KAJABI
Magento	PayPal	ShipStation®	shopify
Square	SQUARESPACE	stripe	WOO COMMERCE

13 Final Notes

This is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to SMS marketing for retail and eCommerce businesses, but we hope you found the inspiration you were looking for. There's so much you can do with SMS on a strategic level. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to reach out. Our team is happy to answer them.

Important Checklist

When it comes to choosing the right SMS provider, in addition to your custom wishlist – it's important that they offer the following services to help your campaigns succeed:

☐ **Real-time Support**
(Ex: Live chat and local phone support for emergencies)

☐ **Real-time Reporting**
(Ex: Message deliveries and bounces)

☐ **100% Delivery Guarantee**

☐ **Personalisation, Keywords, and Auto-responder Options**

☐ **Built-in URL Tracking**

☐ **Message Scheduling**

☐ **Compatible SMS Integrations**
(Ex: Decrease development hours by making sure your provider has readily available integrations with your current apps)

You should also look for a provider that gives you continuous strategic knowledge to help your campaigns improve over time.

Get Started

We are Burst SMS, and we provide one of the most intuitive and feature-rich SMS services in the world. Whether you want to build a sophisticated SMS application, set-up reminders and confirmations, or have only 5mins to send a bulk message - we have a service that specifically caters to your needs. On top of this, **you can try us free for 14 days through our free trial.** There are no obligations, and you will be given full account access during this trial.

Simply click the link below to get started or head to: www.burstsms.com.au/register

⊙ Access Free Trial

Contact Us

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