

Vinyl Fence *Tip*

Practical and Proven Ways to Sell More Vinyl Fences

From your friends at National Vinyl Products

How to unleash the power of texting



You already rely on texting as a convenient way to send quick messages to your family and friends. But did you know that you can use texting to build your fencing business?

While your marketing emails can linger unread in an inbox, and your phone calls can go unanswered and your voicemails ignored, your texts demand action.

According to a recent report published in *smallbiztrends.com*, American consumers read 90 percent of their text messages *within just three minutes*. A growing majority of consumers report that they prefer texts over other communication forms for reminders such as delivery notifications or service appointments.

American adults spend an average of three hours and 35 minutes on their phones each day, and, unlike email, texting is available outside of Wi-Fi range. *People usually check a text message as soon as it pops up*. By comparison, they may check their email inboxes only twice a day.

And texting is the preferred mode of communication among your younger customers. A 2019 study of 4,000 Americans under the age of 35 found that 75 percent prefer communicating via text over other forms of communication. They cite the convenience of texts, and they like the fact that they can respond to them whenever and wherever they want. How can you unleash this power of texting for your fencing company? Here are six ideas:

1. Offer it to your customers.

No one likes random sales texts from unknown phone numbers. In fact, federal regulations require that consumers sign up for text message business communications.

When you reach out to your target market about this convenient service, their positive response shows they want to receive messages from you. Another benefit is that you're not wasting their time or your money bothering people who aren't interested. Use your website, email list, and social media accounts to build your text list.

2. Keep it short and simple.

One of the main reasons customers like texts is that they are brief. Most consist of just a sentence or two. That means that customers can read your message, respond to it within minutes and get on with their day.

Don't write a text as you would an email. You don't need a headline, introduction or formal salutation. In fact, the more concise, the better. You can even create and save templates that are ready to send out for common questions.

With SMS (Short Message Service) marketing, you can send a text message of up to 160 characters to another device. Offer relevant links if customers need or desire more information, and continue to use emails or voice calls for longer conversations.

3. Don't overdo it.

Yes, there can be too much of a good thing. Your customers will turn on you if you flood their phones with too many text messages. They can block you or unsubscribe just as quickly as they signed on with you in the first place. Companies that have the most success with texting focus on providing value with each message. Save your texts for important updates and reminders only. Here are some examples:



- New products such as new colors or fence styles
- Delivery of a fencing order
- Installation or service appointment reminder
- Discounts, coupons or coupon codes
- Special events at your fencing showroom
- Birthday shout-outs to previous customers
- Thank yous for a recent purchase

3. Make it interactive.

Engage your customers with creative texts. Be conversational and ask them questions. Include a link to videos or photos that show more about your fences. You also could try a toll-free SMS reply option as an incentive for customers to investigate further.

According to research by EZ Texting, customers are 10 times more likely to redeem a texted coupon than a coupon delivered in another way. *That's engagement!*

4. Explore your options.

Setting up a text marketing system for your business is easy and does not take much time. Some platforms offer free trials. With many systems, you can be up and running in about 15 minutes.

Prices for SMS marketing platforms are affordable, but they do vary among the providers. You can pay a few cents per text with some platforms, or you could try a bulk package that allows you to send hundreds of messages each month for a low, flat rate.

Typically, free monthly plans limit you to very few messages and no keywords. On the other end of the spectrum, there are expensive plans that allow thousands of text credits and an unlimited number of keywords. As you get started, you could try a pay-as-you-go plan with a price that depends on how much you use it.

5. Keep track of your success.

Most SMS marketing platforms include tracking services with their plans. These services allow you to see statistics on texts sent, messages received and overall engagement. With this data, you can see what works and revise what doesn't work.

Now that you know more about how to use texting for your fencing business, here is a word of caution:

Yes, texting has its place, but it should not replace your other forms of business communication. Your older customers may still prefer a personal phone call, for example. Emails are still relevant for newsletters and many customer service purposes geared toward any generation.

However, if you are looking for an inexpensive, convenient and timely bang for your buck, give texting a try for your fencing company.



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