



Integrated Mobile Marketing 5

Copywriting for Text messages.

How do you get 4 elephants into a Mini?

So starts the widely known joke that many of us pondered as kids. For many copywriters the challenge of squeezing our message into the limitations of an SMS can seem just as daunting.

With only 160 characters to play with, including spaces, it is certainly a challenge. Or to put it another way, an outstanding opportunity to show our linguistic creativity!

First of all start with some basic, good practice questions.

- Have we clearly stated our objectives for the campaign?
- How will we decide whether it has been a success or not?
- What action do we want them to take that will lead to that success?
- Now we have established **our needs**, what do we know about **our customers** needs?
- Do we have a message structure that we would like to follow i.e. offer, then contact details?

Then consider these 3 guidelines:

- If there is an action required write this first
- Try and outline the benefits our customers will receive, not the features they will buy.
- Use emotive and colourful language where possible

Once we have our concept clear we need to focus on making the language of the message extremely

compelling so that it grabs people and drives them to take action.

For example, would it be appropriate to start with a line that instantly grabs peoples attention:

Congratulations! You have been chosen...
Exclusive offer just for you...

For the body of the message we should use descriptive words as much as possible. For example 'come for a coffee' could be replaced with 'the rich dark aroma of our finest coffee will set you up for a fantastic day'

'Check out our newly opened gym' could be replaced with 'Leave our new gym feeling amazing and looking great'

Or a recent message for Wall St Institute's English language school, replaced 'Improve your English language skills' with 'Better English, better job, better life'

All of these messages have been changed to reflect the emotional benefits tied to the product or service being promoted.

Finally once we have our objectives clear and our wording right we need to try and get it down to 160 characters. This takes patience but gets easier with practice. One advantage we have over traditional copywriters is that people have become used to abbreviated English being used in messages. This means, that within reason, you can butcher the language to get your message across!

Common abbreviations are things like 'ur' instead of 'your', '2' instead of 'to', but in English you can often save space by removing the vowels;



"4 x mple mst people can still undrstd this msg"

Finally, test the message. It may make perfect sense to you, but make sure you send it to someone who knows nothing about your campaign and ask them to give you their thoughts.

Then just sit back and wait for the results.

Hopefully with these few ideas the exercise will become less daunting and you will be able to answer:

2 in the front, 2 in the back and their trunks in the boot!

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