

How to Grow Your Business With FREE SMS/Text Message Marketing

**A Step by Step Guide to
keep in touch and send
special weekly offers to
your customers - for Free!**

By Steve Solem – <http://www.ravedesigns.com> - 717-983-8586

Why Text Message Marketing?

To start with, there are over 320 million cell phones in the US, and according to a recent study*, almost 3 out of 4 adults in the U.S. send and receive text messages - and use among teenagers is even higher still.

When you send text messages to the customers and prospects on your list, they are received almost instantly and they're usually read within minutes. According to another study**, 97% of all SMS messages are read and 83% of those are read within the hour!

Compared to email which many people don't have and which some people only check once a week, these are some remarkable numbers!

Note: the terms "text message" and "SMS" both refer to the same thing. Text messages sent via mobile phone.



*<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1716/adults-cell-phones-text-messages>

**<http://www.opusresearch.net>

How SMS Marketing Works

One of the best ways to promote a business is to develop a prospect or customer list that you can send news items and valuable offers to over time.

Traditionally this is done via direct mail or email (and those are still great ways to promote your business!), but SMS is a great relatively new technology that allows you to send short text messages to people on your list for only pennies a message (but I'm going to show you how to do this free!) – and they're received almost instantly!



How SMS Marketing Works

Most businesses use SMS marketing to make a special offer to their customers to encourage them to join their text message list, and then provide them with special offers on a regular basis.



A restaurant might offer free food as in the example above, or a small percentage or dollar amount off a customer's bill. Once on their list, customers will receive special offers on a regular basis, usually once or twice a week.

How SMS Marketing Works

In order to sign up to receive these special offers, customers simply send a text message with their mobile phone consisting of a “keyword” to a special “short code”.



In the Redbox example here, the keyword “Deals” is sent via text message to the short code “727272” and the customer is then signed up to receive special offers on a regular basis.

How SMS Marketing Works

In order to automate the process of signing up people to your sms messaging list and send them special offers, most businesses will want to use a text message service provider.

Service providers like Trumpia or Sumotext for example will give you access to their online software to manage your sms lists, shortcodes and allow you to send messages to your customers.

You'll typically pay a monthly fee to send a certain number of text messages a month or they'll charge you a certain amount of anywhere from \$.10 - \$.20 per message sent.

How SMS Marketing Works

Service providers do offer a number of features and benefits that may make it worth while for you to consider using and paying for on a monthly basis.

The primary downside to using this free method I'm about to describe is that you have no way to backup your subscriber list and your efforts depend on the service we're using being available to you now and in the future – but if you just want to test the waters or don't feel you need the additional features a service provider offers, the free method I'm going to share with you here may be all that you need to help you start profiting with sms marketing.

Are you ready to start getting more business marketing with text messages?

Turn the page and let's get started!

How To Send SMS Messages for FREE!

Ok – the first thing you’ll need to do here, is signup for a free account at Twitter.com.

Don’t worry, your customers don’t need to use Twitter themselves – we’re just using it to be able to send them free updates from you via SMS/Text messaging.

A screenshot of the Twitter website's sign-up page. The background is a dark blue world map. In the top left corner is the Twitter logo. On the right side, there are two input fields for 'Username' and 'Password', a 'Sign in' button, and a 'Remember me' checkbox. Below these is a link for 'Forgot it?'. In the center-left, the text 'Follow your interests' is displayed in large white font, with a subtitle 'Instant updates from your friends, industry experts, favorite celebrities, and what's happening around the world.' To the right of this text is a section for new users: 'New to Twitter? Join today!' followed by three input fields for 'Full name', 'Email', and 'Password', and a yellow 'Sign up' button at the bottom right.

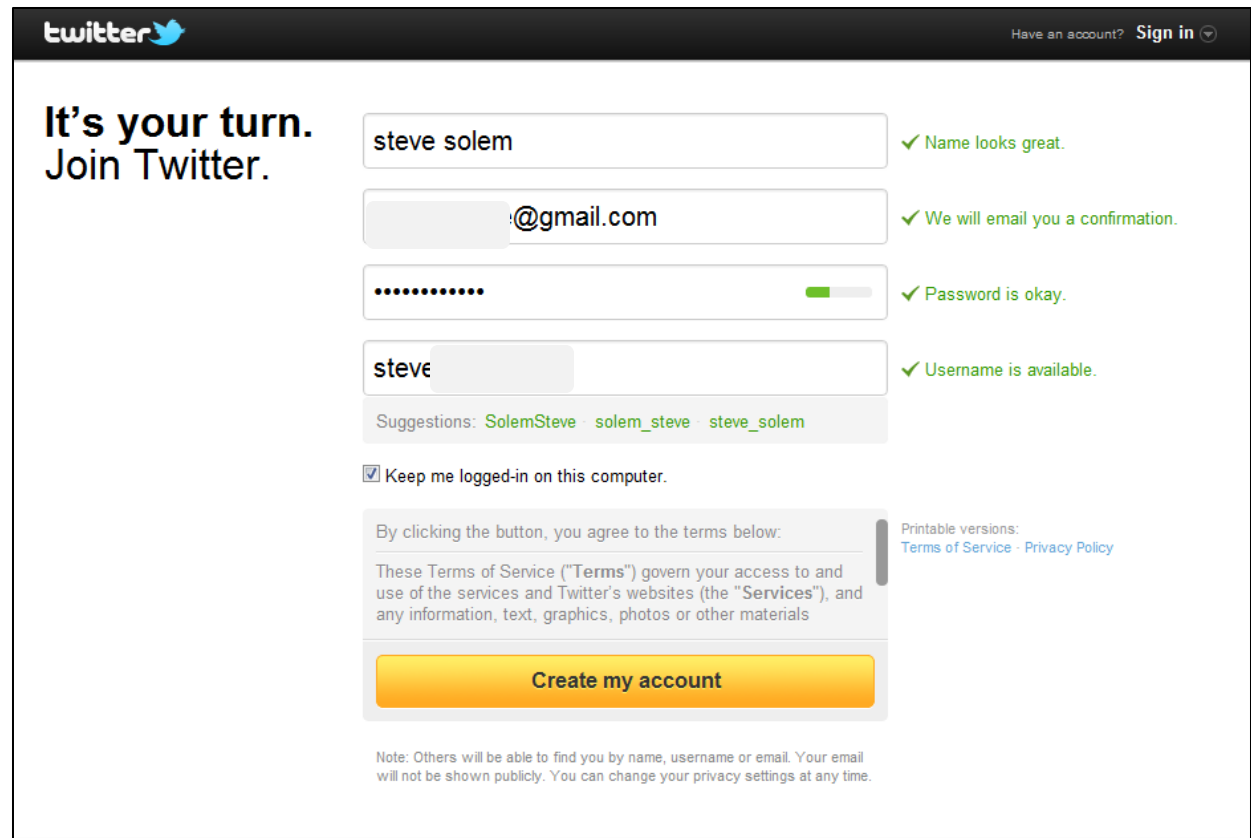
Just enter your full name, email address and a password and click the “sign up” button on their website.


How To Send SMS Messages for FREE!

You'll verify your information on the following page, and be able to select a username for your new Twitter account.

For your username, choose something that includes your business name and add a word like "deals", "offers", "specials" or "VIP" to it.

If you own a restaurant called "Christine's" for example, a user name like "ChristinesVIP" might work well.



twitter  Have an account? [Sign in](#)

It's your turn.
Join Twitter.

steve solem ✓ Name looks great.

@gmail.com ✓ We will email you a confirmation.

..... ✓ Password is okay.

steve ✓ Username is available.

Suggestions: [SolemSteve](#) [solem_steve](#) [steve_solem](#)

Keep me logged-in on this computer.

By clicking the button, you agree to the terms below:

These Terms of Service ("Terms") govern your access to and use of the services and Twitter's websites (the "Services"), and any information, text, graphics, photos or other materials

Printable versions:
[Terms of Service](#) - [Privacy Policy](#)

[Create my account](#)

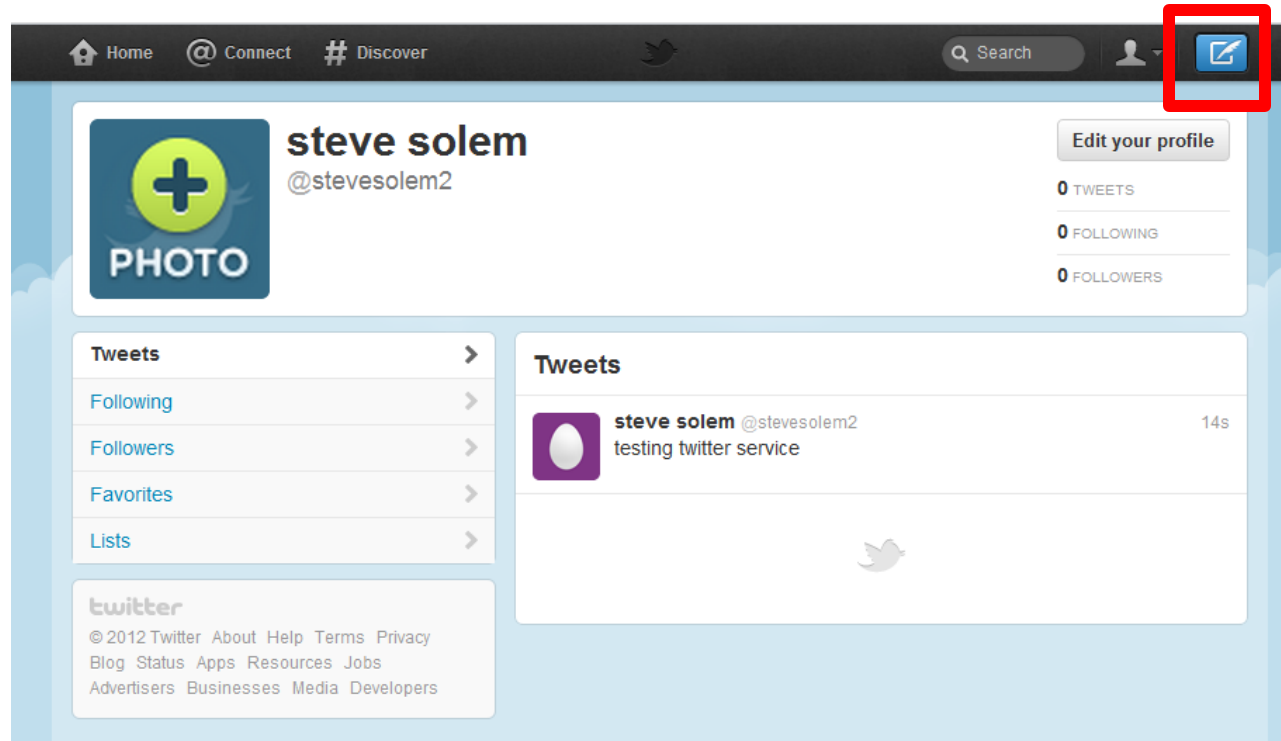
Note: Others will be able to find you by name, username or email. Your email will not be shown publicly. You can change your privacy settings at any time.

Click the "Create my account" button then follow the prompts on the next few screens to complete the setup of your new Twitter account.

How To Send SMS Messages for FREE!

Once you're inside your new Twitter account, click the "compose new tweet" button in the upper right to compose a new message.

You only have 140 characters to work with, so brief descriptive messages work best when messaging your list.



How To Send SMS Messages for FREE!

Now, whenever you want to send a promotional message to your sms list, you'll log into your Twitter account and simply compose a new "tweet". What you say in your text messages will depend largely on the type of business you run.

If you run a restaurant, here are some sample messages you could send to your list that are 140 characters or less.

- "Free dessert with any dinner entrée purchased today! Show this message to your server to receive discount. Valid 1/12/12 - 5pm till closing."
- "Buy one pizza get one half price today! Show this message to cashier to receive discount. Valid all day today - 1/12/12 ."
- "Lunch special today only – 1/12/12 - Save 25% off your entire lunch order! Show message to your server to receive discount."

How To Send SMS Messages for FREE!

If you run a retail store like a clothing or shoe store for example, here are some sample messages you could send to your list that are 140 characters or less.

- “Save 20% on every item in the store today! Valid all day tomorrow 1/12/12 - Show this message at checkout to receive discount.”
- “Buy any two pairs of shoes today, get one pair free! Offer good tomorrow only 1/12/12 - Show this message at checkout to receive discount.”

You get the idea here – simply present a basic, money saving offer – include the terms such as when the offer is valid – and ask users to show the offer to their server or the cashier to receive their discount.

How To Send SMS Messages for FREE!

Creating your initial signup offer

Now that you've got the hang of sending short text messages through a special Twitter account, we have to create an offer that will encourage people to signup to receive these short, promotional messages from you. Most businesses will use in store flyers, table tents or point of purchase signage to ask customers to signup for your VIP club to begin receiving special sale and discount notices.

Many people will signup just to be able to get special offers from you in the future, but many businesses choose to offer a freebie of some sort, like a free beverage or \$2 off today's purchase, to encourage customers to signup for their messaging list. As with most of your marketing activities, you may want to test first and see how many people join your list without a special incentive, then offer an incentive for a week and see which method gets the most customers to signup for your text message list.

In order for people to receive your messages on their mobile phones, they will need to send a text message that says "follow (your twitter username)" to short code "40404"

On the next page are a couple of flyer ideas that you could modify and use.

How To Send SMS Messages for FREE!

FREE Beverage of Your Choice!

Join our text message VIP club today to get advance notice of special offers and valuable discounts and we'll give you a free beverage of your choice!

Just text the message "follow ChristinesVIP" to 40404 and show your server to receive your free beverage today.

We'll send you special VIP offers once or twice a week and you can unsubscribe at any time

Join our VIP club today for FREE!

Join our VIP club today for advance notice of special offers and valuable discounts!

Just text the message "follow ChristinesVIP" to 40404

We'll send you special VIP offers once or twice a week and you can unsubscribe at any time.

How To Send SMS Messages for FREE!

Here's what it looks like to signup

To use the example I gave earlier, tell your customers to text "follow ChristinesVIP" to 40404 in order to receive special offers and VIP discounts.

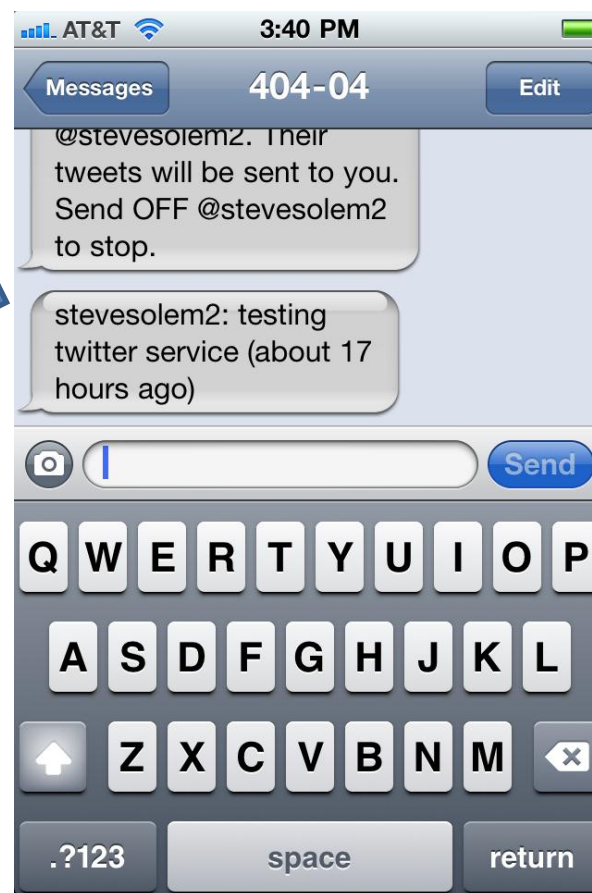
In the example shown to the right, I sent the message "Follow stevesolem2" to a test account I setup and twitter immediately responded by sending a confirmation message.



How To Send SMS Messages for FREE!

After Twitter sends their confirmation message, their system will deliver the most recent message you posted to your new sms VIP list subscriber.

If you've been sending offers on a regular basis this will most likely be an older, expired offer, but the next time you send a message, your subscribers will start receiving current offers from you.



You Now Know How to Send SMS Messages for FREE!

Here's a quick recap of the entire method

1. Create a special Twitter account for free to be able to post short, promotional messages for your business.
2. Create promotional signage telling customers how to signup to receive special offers from you via text message
3. Start signing up customers to receive your special offers via twitter
4. Sign in to twitter once or twice a week, on a slow business day for example, and update your twitter status which will automatically be sent to your followers via text message. Note: In order to keep people interested and on your text list, I would contact them at least once a week, but no more than 3x a week. Twice is probably the ideal number.
5. Enjoy your new business from your loyal VIP customers!

Can We Help You With Your Marketing?

I've given you detailed instructions here that can easily have you up and sending your own special offers and promotions via text message to your customers – but I know business owners are often so involved in the day-to-day operations of their business it's tough to make time for anything else – even something that can dramatically increase your business like sms marketing can.

So if you'd like help getting started with sms marketing for your business – just let me know and I'll be glad to help with your initial setup of this free system or a more fully featured one that you can manage yourself. I can also take care of writing and sending special text offers to your customers on a weekly basis and creating signage to help you signup customers for your text message marketing list.

Steve Solem

<http://www.ravedesigns.com>

admin@ravedesigns.com

717-983-8586

About the Autho



Steve Solem

<http://www.ravedesigns.com>

admin@ravedesigns.com

717-983-8586

Steve Solem is an author and web designer and has offered his website design services at <http://www.ravedesigns.com> for over 12 years now.

He publishes a blog where he shares great marketing ideas and technology at <http://www.expertmarketingadvice.com> and he loves working with small businesses to help them identify excellent marketing solutions and become more profitable. Be sure to visit his blog for more free marketing resources like this free text messaging guide.

He currently resides in Lancaster, PA and loves that his business allows him to work with clients all over the country and from all parts of the globe.