

MAKING TEXTING SAFE FOR CUSTOMER CONVERSATIONS



Why are companies so reluctant to embrace text messaging for business? What can technology do to change that?



Mutare

The Explosive Growth of Text Communication

It should be no surprise that, for the 77% of American adults who now own a smartphone, text messaging is the #1 communication method of choice. With smartphone ownership rising 8 percentage points year over year and 81% of owners saying they “text regularly,” the number of text messages being sent and received in the U.S. has now topped 8 billion messages daily. And that’s not just for personal conversations. In a recent survey conducted by market research firm Instantly, Inc., 80% of respondents said they regularly use text messaging for business purposes.



From a business perspective, the imperative to elevate text messaging to the top of the customer engagement tool chest is clear. Text messages are fast, convenient, and inexpensive. But above all, they are read.

Text vs. Phone and Email – What Gets the Attention?

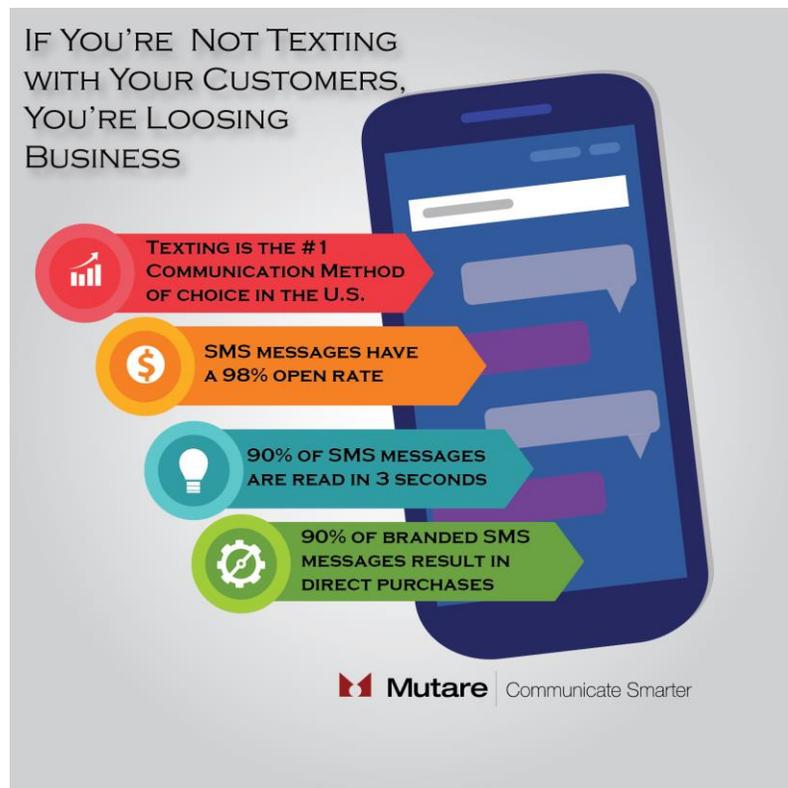
According to a report from Dynamark International, 90% of text messages are seen within three seconds with a 98% average overall open rate, compared to only 14% of business calls that are answered without being placed on hold or the 75% of emails that are never opened at all. What’s more, among customers who call a company for assistance, a full 75% are put on hold, and 1/3 of those callers say they would hang up immediately and search for another way to get their issue resolved (including turning to a competitor) rather than wait. Each lost contact, according to this [British Telecommunications Business study](#), costs a company tens of thousands of dollars as disappointed customers take their business elsewhere, share their displeasure through social media, fail to recommend your company to others, and undermine the value of sales and marketing efforts designed to create and sustain a loyal customer base.

According to Naven Gupta, Chief Product Officer at RingCentral, this “instant gratification” consumer culture can be traced largely to the demographic shift towards a younger, more text-centric population, combined with rapid advances in digital and cellular network technology that follows the needs of an increasingly mobile population.

“Having grown up in an all-digital world, sending 50-350 texts per week since middle school, their (millennials’) expectations for interaction mean organizations must be instantaneously responsive and highly personalized in communicating,” he says, adding, “The large size and purchasing power of the millennial generation, pegged at \$170B (comScore), makes this a valuable market segment.”

Other factors to consider when measuring the value of text messaging for business purposes:

- **Efficiency:** Phone calls, on average, take 2 minutes each of an employee's time, not including time lost due to work disruption. A text message, by contrast, requires approximately 5 seconds to send. So in the time spent on a single phone call, an employee could have handled an average of 10 two-way text conversations. What's more, employees can manage multiple text message conversations at once, further maximizing the value of time spent with customers.
- **Flexibility:** Digital conversations include the ability to embed links, contact information, click-to-callback numbers etc. so customers receive, and can save, all the data they need from a single source. This not only speeds issue resolution but creates a positive impression for your company.
- **Mobility:** employees engaging in text messaging need not be tied to their work phone, but can engage in conversations from any location.
- **Affordability:** Worldwide, consumers currently show a preference for chat applications over texting in order to avoid carrier data charges. However, competitive pressures in the U.S. have dramatically reduced the cost of text messaging to the point where, today, U.S. smartphone users are sending and receiving five times more texts than phone calls.



Why then, with so many positives, are companies so slow to add text messaging to their IT environment?

The answer can be summed up in one word: **Fear.**

Business Texting Fear Factors

Consider the following ways traditional SMS text messaging between employees and customers could harm your business:

- **Loss of data:** SMS text messages cannot be easily saved to a database, so valuable customer data is lost to the organization every time an employee communicates with a customer through standard SMS text messaging. What's more, that information is lost to the organization entirely if that employee chooses to leave the company.
- **Exposure of employee contact information:** Texting through personal devices also exposes the employee's phone number to strangers which creates a privacy risk.
- **Risk of HIPAA/PMI privacy breach:** Healthcare and financial institutions are particularly concerned about the security risk if medical, financial, or other sensitive information is shared through unregulated text messaging.
- **Lack of professional standards:** Text conversations are difficult to confine to business standards and hours which could undermine the company's reputation for professionalism. Additionally, complex text conversations through mobile devices can be easily marred by auto-correct or user error.
- **Worry over costs and time required to maintain a new communication channel:** Corporate IT departments are looking to streamline, not expand, their communications systems and so are reluctant to add more cost and complexity to that infrastructure.
- **No defined strategy for employee-to-customer communications:** Even those companies that hope to add SMS text capabilities to their communications arsenal worry about employee adherence to defined protocol when SMS communications have traditionally been of a more casual, personal nature.

There Is a Solution

If your organization is anxious to capitalize on the business-building power of employee/customer text engagement but you are worried about the potential drawbacks, there is one break-through application, specifically developed for professional-grade text message communications, that deserves close consideration. Mutare's Enterprise Text not only overcomes all of the above concerns, but does so with the full backing of one of the most respected enterprise communications solutions developers in the nation.

The Mutare Enterprise Text Difference

Illinois-based Mutare, Inc., recently released Enterprise Text, a true business-grade text messaging application that supports two-way text conversations between employees and customers while protecting the organization's professionalism, privacy, and control over the data and process.

Protected Two-way Text Conversations from Any Business Number, Managed from Any Employee's PC or Mobile Devices

Mutare's Enterprise Text enables individuals within the organization to engage in two-way text conversations from their PC or mobile device through the application's web-based interface or mobile client. Unlike other applications that require a new number for text conversations, Mutare's Enterprise Text can be applied to any business phone number, including an employee's direct phone line. Any text message received by their office number will appear on their PC and mobile client through their Enterprise Text application. Employee text replies back to the customer will be identified by that business number.

If the conversation includes personal health, financial, or other sensitive information, the employee representative can pivot the conversation to "secure" mode and continue without risk of HIPAA or other privacy breaches. The application additionally includes a switch to "after hours" response mode which sends a personalized auto reply to text messages that come in after normal working hours.

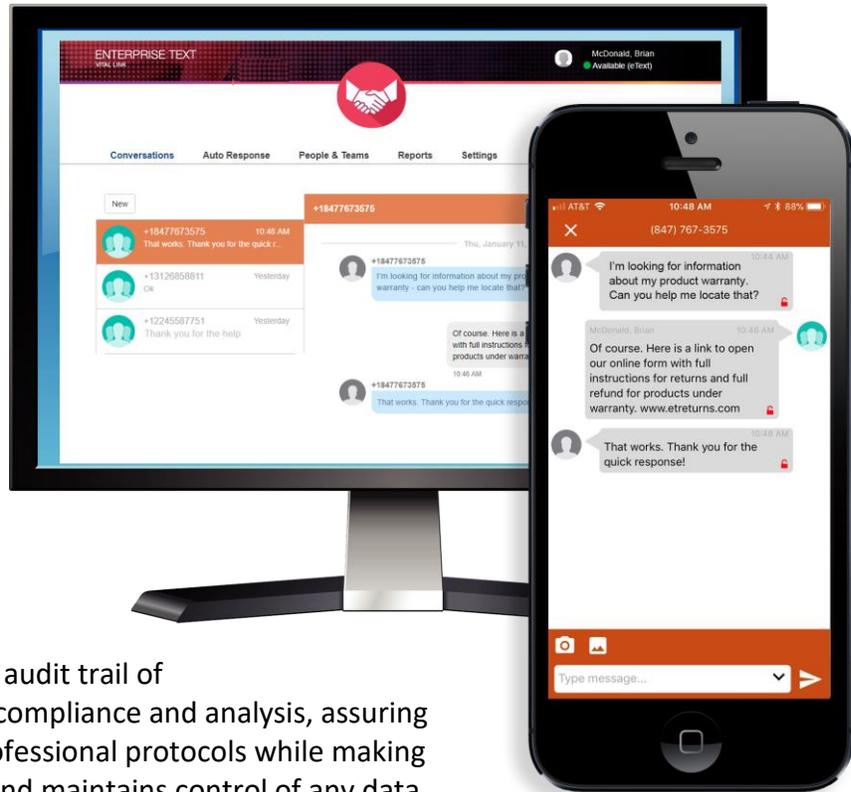
Enterprise Text gives your customers and clients a single point of contact and a more personalized experience for both voice and text conversations. What's more, it provides clear separation between business and personal messaging for mobile employees who can now use their personal devices for business purposes without risk of exposing their personal phone numbers. Messages can include links as well as file attachments so customers get what they need in a single text conversation. The result is swift and seamless engagement and issue resolution, as well as a positive customer experience.



"Enterprise Text gives your customers and clients a single point of contact and a more personalized experience."

Simple Interface for Multiple Conversation Management

Both the Web and Mobile Enterprise Text interfaces provide a summary view of all active conversations highlighting those that have unread messages. Employees and agents can quickly see and respond to incoming messages from multiple conversations, and then easily remove the conversation from view once it has ended.



Data Storage and Integration

Enterprise Text records a full audit trail of conversations for reporting, compliance and analysis, assuring adherence to established professional protocols while making sure the organization saves and maintains control of any data contained within those conversations. Additionally, the application can be integrated with an organization's CRM, EMR, or other electronic data management system for quick access to customer contact/account information as well as a history of past text conversations.

Complements Call Center/Team Operations

From the Enterprise Text Web portal, Administrators can easily assign groups of employees outside of your contact center to handle customer text messages, resulting in a more flexible, efficient and expanded customer service operation.

Who Should Consider Enterprise Text

Enterprise Text is ideal for organizations such as

- Banking
- Insurance
- Healthcare
- Legal
- Government
- Retail
- Travel and Hospitality
- Consulting
- Customer Service/Call Center

or any other organization/internal department that handles direct customer/client/patient relationships.

For more information, quote or demonstration, call or text us at 847-496-9000.

About Mutare

Through unified communication technology, Mutare creates customized software that makes communication easy, secure and efficient, with solutions for speech to text transcription, smart notification, secure mass notification and more. For more information visit us at www.mutare.com

