FAQs

Why should we add text messaging to our communications strategy?

Text messaging works! When it comes to requesting info, reminders or special offers from trusted organizations, many people today prefer text messages to email. Text messaging is the most convenient, simple and popular way to send and receive quick and timely bits of information to a targeted group of people. Here are some statistics…

- 90% of text messages are read within' 3 minutes of receipt.
- Texting is the most widely-used and frequently used app on a smartphone
- Text messages have a 98% open rate, while email has only a 20% open rate (Mobile Marketing Watch)
- Text messaging has a 45% response rate, while email only has a 6% response rate
- On average, Americans exchange twice as many texts as they do calls (Neilsen)
- 55% of heavy text message users (50+ texts per day) say they would prefer to receive a text over a phone call (Pew Research)
- It takes the average person 90 minutes to respond to email, but only 90 seconds to respond to a text message (CTIA)
- Over 80% of American adults text (Pew Internet)

What does GivBee allow us to do?

GivBee enables your organization to easily create and manage your own custom SMS communications and build and manage your text opt-in list. The system makes it easy for you to send texts to the people in your audience (donors, volunteers, attendees, etc.).

With GivBee, you can compose and send a text message to a group (or groups) of people in just seconds. Text messages can be designed to deliver a simple 160 character message (with or without a web link) or an interactive, self-running bot-style text exchange. The system can be configured to capture profile information on each recipient, auto-insert each recipient's first name into messages (to make them more personalized) and automatically send messages or links on-demand when the person texts key words (ie. Donate, Directions, Agenda).

Is it okay to start texting our existing database of contacts?

No. You cannot simply import your contacts list and start sending everyone text messages. A person must first opt-in to your text service before you are allowed to send them text messages.

How can people opt-in to our texting service?

There are several ways a person can opt-in to your texting service.

Self opt-in methods:
- ▪ **By phone** – Person texts your opt-in keyword to short code 444999
- ▪ **By web widget** – Person submits their mobile number through a text widget on your website.

Other opt-in methods (a person within your organization adds a person to your opt-in list with their explicate permission):
- ▪ **Online or paper form** – Person ticks a box on a form "Check this box to opt-in to our texting service. Up to 3 msgs/month. Msg and Data rates apply. STOP to quit."
- ▪ **Email** – Person requests/confirms opt-in via email. "Please add me to text service."
- ▪ **Verbal permission** – During event checkin or phone call, your staff member asks, "Can we add you to our text service?" The person gives permission.

How should we utilize a texting system like GivBee?

There are probably dozens of ways your organization can use GivBee to simplify communication, increase participation, and get people to take action. It is up to you to decide how and where to focus first.

This whiteboard exercise can help you figure out where to start:
1. First, write down all categories of people to whom you currently send emails or try to connect with via social sites (eg. donors, volunteers, students, customers, staff, attendees, chaplains, parents, teachers, etc.)
2. Beside each group name, list out the types of communication you send them (invitations, donation appeals, news, reminders, call for volunteers, special offers, discounts, inspiring stories, calendar of events, last minute reminders, videos, links to forms, alerts, prayers, contests/sweepstakes, meeting minutes, real-time event information, instructions, etc.)
3. Now, add a checkmark next to each content type where you see text messaging as a better or complimentary means of communication -- keep in mind that texts are usually easier to setup and send, get much higher 'read' rates and higher response-rates.

Your narrowed list should reveal your top candidates for both audiences and content. To refine your strategy, think about the kinds of text message content each group would prefer to receive in as text messages and consider what would make people take the step of opting-in.

What are some effective strategies for getting people to opt-in?

Here are some opt-in strategies that other organizations have used to great success…

1. **Opt-in people as they register/check-in for events** – Build the 'opt-in' option into your registration process and explain why they should opt-in.
2. **Offer cool giveaways/opportunities/content "for opt-ins only"**
   Special promotions: **"***Are you part of our text service? You can get $5 off.*"
   At an event: "*To be eligible to win this signed guitar join our texting service tonight!*"
   "*When you join our text system, you get early-bird access to XYZ. Here's how…*"
3. **Conduct opt-in campaigns via your other communication systems (email/social)** –
   Use your other outreach systems to explain your texting service and the benefits of opting-in. Make opt-in instructions clear and easy (include a link to a widget).
4. **Make the text opt-in part of other sign up processes or purchase processes (membership/volunteering/classes/tickets)** – Explain why it's important for them to also join texts. Opt-in each person as part of a specific texting group (eg. volunteers) and remember to utilize texting for that group when it makes sense.

Will you use GivBee for communication with class members or event attendees? If so, use words like "Highly recommended…" next to the opt-in wizard on your sign up page. After all, if the person is not opted-in to the right text distribution list, they are going to miss important messages fro you.

Is my opt-in keyword case sensitive?

No. Your opt-in keyword is not case sensitive. However, when you display your opt-in call to action on digital or print media, it is best practice to show the opt-in keyword in all caps and quotes. Like this: **Text "ZIP" to 444999.**

How can we edit our opt-in confirmation message?

By default, your Opt-In Confirmation message looks like this:
> "You have joined {{ORGANIZATIONNAME}} text service.
> Up to 3 msgs/mo. Msg&data rates may apply. Reply HELP for help,
> STOP to cancel. Text YES to continue."

A person with GivBee, can make slight adjustments to the opt-in message for you but the basic elements of the opt-in message must remain intact. Contact Mike at this email if you need to make a change: Mike@givbee.com.

How can people opt-out?

A person can instantly opt-out simply by texting the word **"STOP"** in the text thread**.**

If you want to remind people how they can opt-out from your text service, add the instruction "STOP to quit", in the message.

You can also manually remove a person from your GivBee service by clicking the Manage Opt-in List button, searching for the person by mobile number, email or name, then clicking the delete icon.

What time of day is best for sending texts?

10am – noon and 3pm-5pm are often the best times for sending texts. However, the best time for sending your message depends heavily on your target audience and the content/context of the message you're sending. It's usually a bad idea to send texts early in the am, late at night and during dinner.

Tell me about text-based donations.

Text-based giving is a convenient, alternative way to give for donors.

The potential for fundraising via text is in direct proportion to the size of your opt-in list and how it is promoted. Your best bet is to work hard on getting people to opt-in to your text service and try to segment people into groups (via widget and import) so your appeals can be targeted and timely.

Whether or not people follow through with a text-based donation depends on a number of factors…
Is your donation web form simple and mobile optimized?
Is your appeal timely/compelling?

Is you audience already opted in? If so…you can push a message to them.
If your audience is NOT opted in --- what is the best way to convince them to opt-in?

How is GivBee text-based fundraising different than other text-to-give systems?

GivBee is a text-based communication system with tools for conducting fundraising campaigns (donate and pledge) via text.

Text-to-Give systems are strictly limited to fundraising – the donor texts a number (usually 5, 10 or 20) to a short code and that amount is donated (charged to their phone bill).

Here are other ways GivBee is different from text-to-give systems:
- Your GivBee account is integrated with your NeonCRM account.
- Engaging a text-to-give system is very costly.
- With GivBee, donors can give any amount they want (not a fixed $5, $10 or $20)
- With GivBee, donations are NOT charged on the donors phone bill. Instead, the donor makes a donation via your webpage or a custom PayPal payment page.
- Donations made with GivBee go to your organization directly. It can take months to receive funds through text-to-give systems.
- GivBee does not collect a percentage or charge fees for donations.
- With GivBee, you have permission (and tools) to continue to reach donors via text.
- Donor contact information and texting data belongs to you.

Can text messages be personalized with the person's first name?

Yes. GivBee can be set up to insert a recipient's first name into a message if his/her first name is in the database.

Here is how to personalize a text message:
1. Click the Edit Message button next to the message you want to personalize.
2. Insert your text cursor into the message box where you want the person's first name to appear (usually after the word "Hi")
3. Click "Insert a Variable"
4. Choose "First Name" from the options.
5. {{FirstName}} will be inserted into the message where your cursor was positioned. When your text message is sent to a recipient, their name will appear in the message if their name is found in the database.

A message written like this:
> Hi {{FIRSTNAME}},
> Our big gala is just around the corner. As a member of our text service, you get $10 off the price of admission. Reply NEXT for a code.

Will appear like as a text message:
> Hi Robert,
> Our big gala is just around the corner. As a member of our text service, you get $10 off the price of admission. Reply NEXT for a code.

Why should we use web widgets?
1. Widgets make it quick and easy for web visitors to opt-in to your text service

2. Widgets make it easy for people to access specific content or user experiences (Donate, Get directions, Get texts for this upcoming event, Take a quick survey, Enter to win!, etc.)
3. Widgets make it easy web visitors to join a specific "text distribution list" within the system (eg. Enter your number into this widget to receive texts on our upcoming classes.)
4. Widgets make it easy for your staff members to opt-in people during phone conversations and live events (via iPad, phone or PC) - "May I add you to our texting service?" If he/she says "Yes", then the staff member simply uses the widget.

Please share texting best practices.

- When writing your call-to-action, use this format: Text "KEYWORD" to 444999
- *Practice respectful texting by* living up to your frequency commitment (ie. up to 3 messages/month)
- With opt-in information, always include your opt-in language: "Up to 3msgs/month. Msg and Data rates may apply. Help for help. Stop to quit."
- Test your messages on your own phone before hitting 'send' to a list.
- Consider the time of day before hitting SEND (not too early, or too late)
- Don't wait too long to opt-in new opt-ins. If a person opts-in to your texting service by giving their permission by phone or email or a registration form that is not auto-opting them in, don't wait to long to actually execute the opt-in. You want to sign them up while it is fresh in their mind and the timing is relevant. If you wait too long, they may have no memory of when or why they joined your text service…worse-yet, they mistake your opt-in message for spam…and your NEVER want that.
- Always promote safe and responsible texting.
- Write your messages in a friendly tone – not too formal.
- When possible, insert the text "Reply STOP to quit" into your push messages, to remind people how to opt-out and to keep your opt-in list up-to-date.
- Strike a balance – Mix special value and/or fun content with donation appeals
- Optimize your web forms (ie. donation page) for the best possible mobile experience
- Create and leverage the power of targeted distribution lists (General, Donors, Volunteers, Staff, Alumni, etc.). Don't send every messages to recipients for whom the information is not relevant.
- Review your initial opt-in greeting message regularly. Is it current?
- When possible, include info about your policy/philosophy – "We do not bombard our opt-ins with messages and we never give out your number!"
- Tell people about your content when they opt-in – "We send texts about…"
- Optimize your payment web page for mobile users – needs to be easy to navigate on a phone and as few fields as possible.
- Convert embedded links (eg. donation URL) into shorter link using short link services such as bitly.com
- Don't make every one of your texts about donating. Mix it up with content that make people click through to learn more about the great things you're doing or events on your calendar.

Can you share some other marketing/promotion strategies?

- Texting campaigns work best when they are part of a larger strategy. For maximum punch, coordinate texting with your other efforts: Twitter/Facebook/Instagram), email campaigns, blogs, signage
- Incorporate your texting call to action on all of your website, ads, literature, PR, articles, etc. -- Text "ABC" to 444999
- Give your audience compelling reasons to join. Ask yourself "What would make me agree to join?"

- If you're doing a TV or radio spot…your text call to action can be easier to remember than your URL or phone number.
- Get creative and run different 'promotions' for joining throughout the year
  - "Join our text service now to win a pair of season tickets – giveaway this weekend!"
  - "Opt-in today at this event for a chance at this signed guitar!"
  - "Opt-in for a discount on your next class!"

Can you explain what widgets are for and what we can do with them?

GivBee provides two types of widgets:

1. **Opt-in Widget** (found in the gray area) works like this:
   1) Person submits their phone number
   2) Person receives the opt-in confirmation
   3) Person texts "YES"
   4) Person receives your opt-in greeting message.

   Use the Opt-In Widget when you want your page visitors to be funneled through your opt-in greeting message and don't need to add the person to a specific "group".

2. **Text Message Widget** (found in the blue area) works like this:
   1) Person submits their phone number
   2) System checks to see if the person is already opted-in.
      a. If the person IS already opted-in, the message assoc. to that widget is sent.

      b. If the person is NOT already opted-in, the system first sends opt-in message, then sends the message assoc. to that widget.

   Use the Text Message Widget when you want to deliver a message on a specific topic or action and/or want to add people into a specific distribution list "Contact List". Examples of Text Message widgets:
   - "Donate by text" widget on the donation page.
   - "Volunteer by text" widget on your volunteer page.
   - "Let us text you info on a specific topic" widget on the landing page for that topic
   - "Get Event Texts" widget on a page for your upcoming event.

When should we ask for name and email address in the widget?

Capture the name, email and other profile information via a widget when you want to identify the person and their text activity by more than just their mobile number.

Widgets are a simple way to capture user profile information too – instead of having people enter their name and email by text response.

Can we add a widget to our Facebook page?

Widgets cannot be embedded into your Facebook page but you can point to your widgets from your Facebook page by posting a link.

Beyond fundraising, how else can we use this texting tool?

GivBee users are doing all kinds of creative things with the tool. Here is a list of some we know about...

- Send Reminders and Invitations
- Streamline Event Communication with attendees, exhibitors, staff
- Share news and info with members of a class
- Communicate with internal teams such as staff, volunteers, sales
- Send coupons, discounts, offers
- Sell tickets
- Conduct polls surveys and quizzes
- Run giveaways, sweepstakes, contests
- Conduct text-based walking tours and treasure hunts
- Deliver alerts

What is the fastest way to grow our opt-in list?

1. Make opt-in part of other 'sign-up' processes (Events, Volunteering, Training)
2. Conduct fun, compelling contests or giveaways, deals, etc.
3. Build it into all of your existing promotions (Social, Email, Print, PR, word of mouth, snail mail, Radio, TV) and give the viewer a compelling reason to join.

Can I use GivBee as a way to communicate with our internal teams?

Yes. Several GivBee clients use the system to send reminders and news to their internal teams such as "Staff" or "Board of Directors" or "Volunteers".

With GivBee, team managers don't have to use their personal phone number and recipients don't have to suffer through the "reply to all" issue that is so common with group texts.

What is the Groups (Contact Lists) feature and how do I use it?

The Groups feature enables you to organize your opt-ins (contacts) into targeted lists.

By creating Groups, you can send messages to people based on their role, category or interest.

A contact can be added to multiple Groups. But if you send a text message to multiple groups, any contact who appears on multiple selected groups will still only receive the message one time.

In GivBee, click the Manage Groups button to see your list of Groups. Then, click the Group name to edit (delete, add) the members of the group.

Note: When a person opts-out of your text service, they are also removed from all Contact Lists.

What are Activity Reports and how do I use them?

Activity Reports are auto-generated contact lists based on text message interaction. People are added to Activity Reports when any of these occur:

1. You send them a text message (using the Preview & Send tools)

2. They enter their mobile number into the widget associated to the text message
3. They text the shortcut keyword for the text message (eg. DONATE or VOLUNTEER)

An Activity Report is basically an auto-generated list of contacts that is created when people interact with text messages within your system. So, if you want to send a text message called "Gala Thank You" to the people who attended your Gala and you had the foresight to "opt-in" people to your text service by using a widget tied to a "Gala Welcome" message…when it comes time to send the thank you message, you can check the box for the "Gala Welcome" Activity Report

Note: When a person opts-out of your text service, they are also removed from all Activity Reports.

What should I write in my opt-in greeting message?
The Opt-In Greeting message is the message sent to the person's phone when they first text your opt-in keyword, then reply "YES". To edit the message click "Edit this Campaign" button on the main GivBee screen.

Here are some ideas for the opt-in greeting:

- **Keep it simple and general** – "Thanks for joining! On occasion, we will text you…"
- **Include a menu of shortcut keywords** – Thanks for joining. Text any of these words to access these options…PLEDGE to make a pledge. VOLUNTEER to donate your time.
- **Donate up front** – Thank you for joining! Tap here to make a donation: URL.
- **Collect profile info by using an Inspire & Engage type of message experience** – "What is your name?" Bob. "What is your email?" Bob@yahoo.com etc.

How can the texting service be used for our events?
1. Promote an upcoming event by sending a reminder in the days leading up to the event – "Don't forget, the big day is this Friday! We can't wait to see you!"
2. Consider offering the people on your text opt-in list a special discount or potential prize if they "Register now by tapping here".
3. Track it! Set up a special redirect page on your site and/or text coupon code for those who respond to a text message registration.
4. When event registrants opt-in to texting, save them into an event-specific text group – so you know where they came from (widgets can accomplish this).
5. "Pledge by text" may work better than "donate by text" because it can be much quicker than filling out a form. Speaker: "Let's all make a quick pledge right now! 10 seconds is all it takes!"
6. Utilize texting to streamline communication with diff groups (event attendees, staff, volunteers). Communicate before, during and after the event.
7. Familiarize yourself with the Event Thermometer tool.
8. Send event follow ups – "Click here to see the great photos: *link*" or "We fell short of our goal. Will you please help us get there. Click here to donate now: URL "
9. Be realistic. Mobile-based donations are usually one of many donation options at an event and other ways to are more immediate.
10. If a speaker is making a fundraising appeal…he/she needs to do it deliberately by taking a long pause…asking people to take out their phone. Give them time. Show the instructions on a screen.
11. Party goers who are having fun need to be persuaded to take the time. Show the simple instructions on a big screen. Quick mentions will fail every time.
12. Pledging requires follow up. This can first be done by text "Thank you for your pledge last night. Click here to turn it into a donation."
    - Have a cool giveaway for your event? Run a text based Raffle! "For your chance to win this cool item, join our text service and follow the prompts…" Or "Be entered to win this XYZ by texting KEYWORD to 444999 by 10pm."

Can you give us some advice for using GivBee at our events?

Have people opt-in to your texting system as they register for the event (whether they register by phone, email, online, etc.).

Assign a person to 'opt-in' people to your text service they are standing in the check-in line. The widget makes it an easy job. Adding a fantastic giveaway or fun offer is a cool thing to include too.

If you have captured the first name of the people who are opting in to your text system for the event, consider using the "Insert First Name" feature when sending the text so it reads: "Hi Tom, may we count on you for a donation? Tap here to give:…"

One way that texting can have a big (but not always obvious) effect on fundraised, is bringing more people to your event – selling more tickets, reminding people to sign up, generating buzz, etc. By building your opt-in list today, you are able to increase your event size tomorrow.

If you are using text-based giving at an event, think about this…

- Will your attendees take the time to enter CC details in their phone when they are enjoying themselves? If not, maybe GivBee's pledge feature your best choice.
- Are there many other options for donating during your event? If so, donate by phone is going to require creative strategy
- Get people to opt-in during registration and check-in, then push out a compelling pledge appeal during the event. To do this, have a staff member walk down the line of people waiting to check-in holding an iPad (open to the widget page) and say "I'd like to add you to our text system". You will find that most people will gladly opt-in to your service this way.
- Have the speaker take a long pause and provide direct instructions like, "I want everyone to take out their phone and do the following…!"
- Show a large graphic (eg. slide) with instructions
- Display the built in Donation (Pledge) thermometer up on the big screen.
- Send a follow up text the next day "Thanks for coming and your pledge! Tap here to turn your pledge into a donation: URL" or "We raised $XX last night but we know that several of our attendees were having too much fun to pull out their credit card. We hope you'll do it now…"