

How to set up US SMS and MMS campaigns – in a few easy steps

A high-level guide to staying on the right side of mobile messaging rules and regulations



Introduction

Businesses that rely on mobile messaging to stay in touch with customers and employees need to know how to get swift campaign approval by the mobile operators, and to generally ensure their campaigns stay within the rules and regulations.

The good news is, whether you're using short codes, 10-digit long codes, or text-enabled toll-free, the set-up and compliance process needn't be arduous.

This guide takes you through the processes you need to know, step by step. It helps you put together an SMS or MMS campaign brief that has the best chance of gaining fast approval by the mobile carriers.

If you need more help or have questions about anything that isn't covered below, drop us a line.

[Get in touch](#)



Step 1

A sense check (before you even start)

If you're reading this guide, chances are you're in a hurry to get your campaigns up and running. But a little less haste at the beginning will mean more speed later on.

The area that causes customers the most headaches is the very initial stage – let's call it 'getting all your ducks in a row before you even get started'.

The first questions to ask yourself are:

- Does your proposed program have an acceptable use case?
- Do you have a call to action?
- Do you have a supporting website and terms and conditions?

If you're unsure about any of the above, [get in touch](#). We can help get all your ducks in a row so you sail through the approval process. We also have a guide to help you work out whether your use case is acceptable, and what specific compliance requirements are applicable. Click on the link below to read it.

[Get the guide](#)



Step 2

Get a number

You have three options here based on your need: a short code, a 10-digit long code (10DLC) or a toll-free number. Whichever type of number you choose, the carriers will require the program to meet compliance standards. That applies whether you choose to obtain your own number, or have OpenMarket obtain one for you.

Short codes are the gold standard for high-volume, large-scale campaigns that require a high throughput. If you currently have an approved short code in production and would like to adapt the use case, you can reach out to your account manager to do so. This only applies for programs that:

- a. are already approved by all carriers.
- b. include messaging that already fits your brand and use case.

For example, if you're a retail store and you already have a coupon messaging program, you could add a similar program.

If you need a new short code – you can either obtain it yourself directly from the [Common Short Code Administration \(CSCA\)](#) or have OpenMarket obtain it for you. We'll coordinate with each carrier and handle all the administration on your behalf.

We discuss how you can easily get hold of 10DLC numbers on page 8. To help determine which type of number is best for your program, you can talk to us or check out our [Short Code or 10DLC Tool](#).



Step 3

Build your program

It can be tricky navigating the paperwork when building an SMS or MMS campaign – knowing what information you need to supply and why. There are a few key questions to ask in preparation:

i. How will you tell your audience about the program?

This is your call to action. You need people to opt into your program, which means you need to think about how they're going to find out about it. You'll need to include some general information about how you'll advertise your program – for example, phone call, billboard, radio ad or pop-up website. At this stage, you don't need to be super specific about the ad's content. However you choose to advertise your program, there are some requirements the carriers want to ensure are disclosed. Missing requirements in your call to action will delay getting your program approved.

ii. How will customers sign up to receive messages?

Almost all mobile messaging programs require express consent from the recipients. This is called an 'opt-in'. So how are you going to get it? Does someone simply put their phone number into a form on a website (see next point, below). Maybe they send a keyword into a short code? A lot of businesses want to send messages today, but in order to keep the ecosystem clean and free of spam, a compliant opt in is an absolute must.

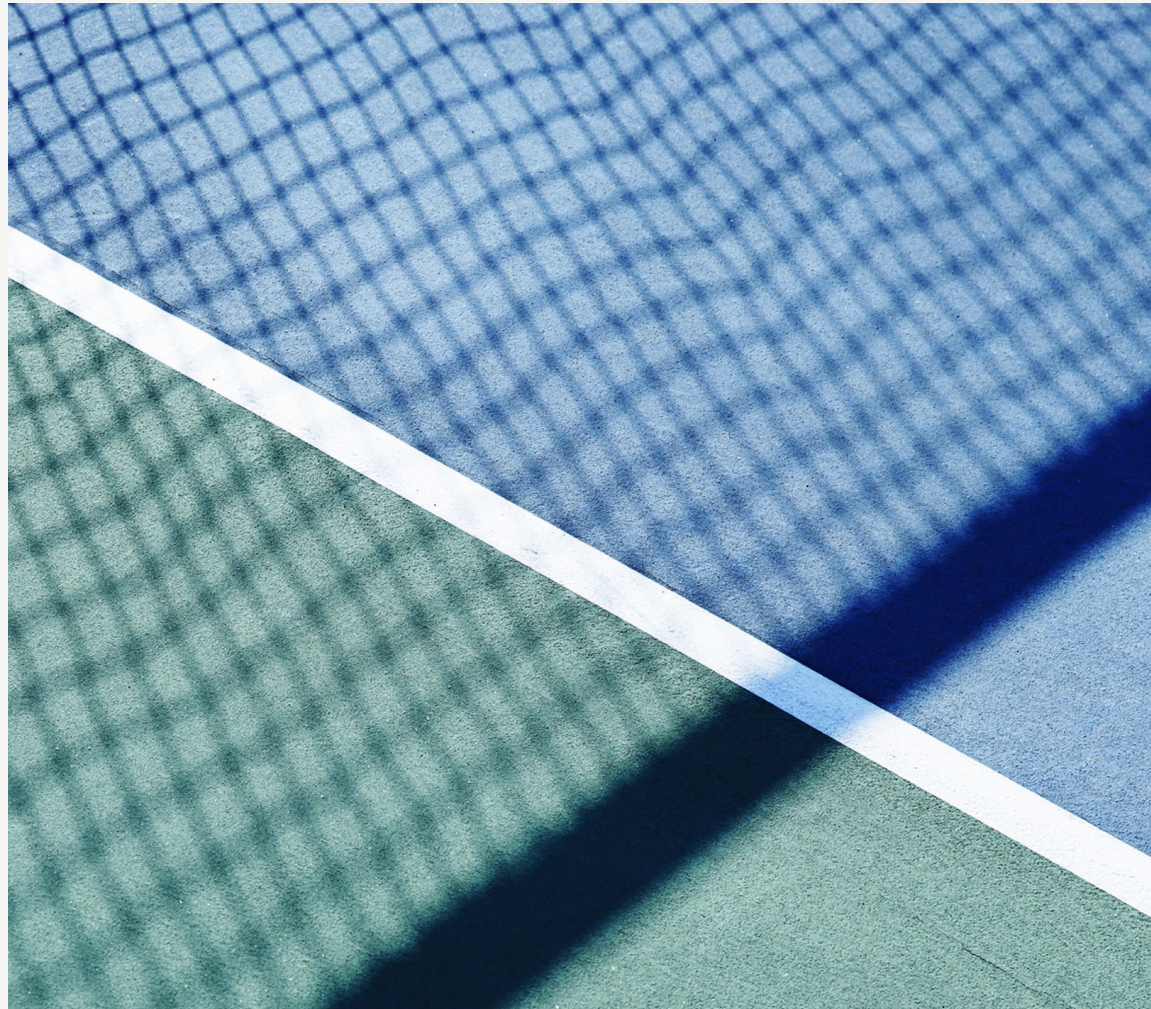
iii. How will customers find out more about the programme?

Every SMS and MMS campaign needs a corresponding website, including full terms and conditions. We've outlined the requirements below.

iv. How will you communicate with them?

You already know the content messages you want to send, but you'll need to prepare to have the three required messages set up. You'll need:

1. a confirmation message
2. a HELP message
3. a STOP message





Step 4

Submit your program

How you submit your program will vary based on your originator type. For example, if you choose a 10DLC number you'll go through brand registration first, and then program submission. We have an online tool which helps you do this step by step (more on this on the next page).

If you choose a short code, OpenMarket will double check to make sure you're meeting all of the requirements – as set forth by the carriers and industry bodies the TCPA and CTIA – to ensure it's set up to be approved. The carrier networks have the ultimate say on what will be allowed to run on their network, and a single minor issue can lead to delays. If you're an OpenMarket customer, we'll review your program to make sure it's fully compliant before submission.

While some aggregators can take months to get your short-code campaigns live, OpenMarket's review process can help you sail through the process so your campaigns get up and running in around two weeks.



Drilling down into 10DLC

OpenMarket has a 10DLC self-service tool that helps make the end-to-end campaign set-up process easy for you. It lets you:

- Acquire your number(s).
- Register your brand and campaign.
- Submit a campaign to the carriers.
- Link your source number to your messaging application.

The great news is, this process can be completed in minutes. The tool works as a one-stop-shop, giving you an overview of all your 10DLC campaigns, all your owned 10DLCs, and all other originators.

You can find out more about the 10DLC process [here](#). Or get in touch by clicking the button below.

Speak to an expert

You're ready to go!

We've thrown a lot of detail at you in this guide, but a little preparation will go a long way in ensuring a speedy provisioning process.

The more detail you can give up front, the less likely you are to face questions or objections from carriers when they review your request.

Need help getting your SMS and MMS campaigns up and running fast? OpenMarket can help.

[Get in touch](#)

We are OpenMarket

As an Infobip company, we help the biggest brands in the world use mobile messaging to connect with people in the moments that count. When they need to be helpful and responsive in real time. When customer experience isn't just a buzzword, it's an obsession. We'd love to do the same for you.

