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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

FRANK DAPPAH

Frank is a serial entrepreneur who, over the last ten years, has started and still runs three successful startup companies in the areas of software, insurance, and real estate.

He currently resides and works in Charlotte, North Carolina.

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To the men and women out there on the frontlines of this current health crisis - paving the way for non-essentials like myself to earn a living, I say:

THANK YOU!



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A NOTE TO YOU, THE READER

In this book, I will try to share with you some of my experiences and successes in relation to the topic of marketing and corporate communications. I will talk about sales and marketing, as well as customer service.

All these topics will be discussed in the shadow of SMS Marketing: The use of (mobile) text messaging technology as a communication tool between your organization and its customers, prospective customers, employees, and investors.

As advantageous and as potentially profitable as it may be, I want to let you know that SMS/text messaging as a marketing tool is heavily regulated here in the United States and around the world.

Most major governments have over the last twenty years or so, developed various laws and regulations around the use of SMS technology by major corporations and small businesses.

In light of these facts, I urge you to consult the websites of the government agencies in countries you wish to deploy SMS campaigns to ensure you are compliant with all applicable laws.

Also, please know that I am not a lawyer or legal expert, especially in the area of SMS marketing. I am therefore in no position to guide you through the potential (legal) pitfalls associated with the commercial use of SMS technology (text messaging).

I am but a student and interested observer of all things business-related and by writing this book, I am only attempting to share with you what I have learned about text message marketing as it relates to business.

Neither I nor my publisher is responsible for any potential (adverse) legal or business ramifications that may arise as a result of you or any of your associated persons putting into action any of the information contained in this book.

Goodluck
Frank

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PREFACE

A LIFE OF CONNECTIONS

I have known all my life that the entrepreneurial path is the one for me. Even as a child, while other kids obsessed over specific occupations, I knew that when I grew up, I would pursue a life in which I would make my living building things and working for myself.

I was unsure what form this passion would take. Heck, I feel as though till today, there are times when I am unsure what I want to do next. I am of course talking about specifics here. My passion for developing products and services and building companies around my creations is consistently unwavering.

I believe, in my early years, watching my father live his life in this manner was a great influence on my childhood aspirations. My father was a tinkerer just like I believe I have become today.

He had this little cookware company he built from the ground up with the help of my mom.

I used to get a kick out of seeing them work together. Back then, I did not fully understand or recognize what a special thing they had. I did not get it. I could not have known what a rare thing theirs was.

For a long time, my main prerequisite for dating was simple: You had to be somewhat of an entrepreneur too. For me, this is the only kind of marriage/partnership that makes sense. This was the only arrangement in which I could be myself. I could live life as the real me.

Over the past ten plus years, I have devoted myself to doing what I love the most. I have spent the better part of a decade founding various companies, developing products and services; and making a living doing that which I love the most. I have been blessed immensely.

At some point, after a handful of wins - Even more losses- I started to think about what some of the major patterns are in what we do as entrepreneurs.
What do I mean? Well, I have been thinking about the circadian rhythm of success and business.

What are the things that we can point to as the rhythmic flow that contribute to success? Not on a personal level, but as a factor of enterprise. If building businesses were like baking a cake, what were the major ingredients that must be present to allow greater chances for success? And what are the repeatable processes that point to wins, or at least increases our chances.

Now, as you can imagine, this is a complex question that deserves an even more complex answer, or answers. As I started to look at my failures in business as compared to some of the wins I have had, I noticed a few repeatable phenomena that were present within the confines of my wins but conspicuously absent in a great deal of my losses.

I started to note and decided to write about my findings, experiences, views, and so on.

I founded a publishing company, OSTRICH PUBLISHERS, for the sole purpose of getting my literary works published.

I have, via OSTRICH, published dozens of books. My favorite topic, however, is the topic of Collaboration.

I think this is one of the most important aspects of business. Some do it well, others struggle to make meaningful, profitable connections with others.

The thing is, collaboration, “working together”, making connections, this is the thing that most successful people know how to do, and most successful - all successful businesses and organizations are built on.

My foray into entrepreneurship was through the sale of individual insurance plans. I started a small agency in my home city of Charlotte, NC. Originally, my plan was to build a broker-type deal where I would create this dynamic, highly predictable platform.

One that other independent agents could plug into and build or grow their businesses. This seemed like the natural thing to do. So that is what I did. I first spent a year or so doing all the prep work one does when starting a new business.

Then there were the type of things unique to starting a business in a highly-regulated space like insurance. There were various licenses I had to obtain, permits, various insurances, and so. Once I was ready to get started, I secured some office space and I was set to bring on new clients and agent-partners.

I like to say, all the time, that my experience running an insurance agency has thus far been one of the most thrilling, eye-opening things I have ever done in my life. Through my Startup, I got to get a front seat view of how entrepreneurs behave. I also got to learn how to connect with people.

Actually, if I were to pick just one thing - the most important thing I have learned so far after four or so startups? I would say "Learning the power of communication". That's correct.

Humans are such dynamic creatures. We are all unique in our own way. We all have these rich, full backstories that influence everything we do. Most people think that human behavior is guided by what people want, hope, and dream.

The truth is a bit more complex than that. Most people behave in ways that can be categorized into two distinct piles: Our behavior during our "young adult" years is fueled by what we enjoy doing, and what we hope to do.

We go to class every single weekday because we hope to be successful one day. What we really love to do at this stage is to spend time with our friends, check out new movies, and so on.

We categorize everything we do into our wants and needs - with our needs typically taking a backseat.

As we get older, we start to try to spend a bit more time doing what we need to, as opposed to what we enjoy doing. Once we start to age, we start to focus on "what needs to be done".

All the while being guided by our past experiences. We also spend a lot of time, during all stages in life doing what we are used to. This third factor weighs heavily not in what we do, but the way we do the things we need, want, must do.

These phases are important to know and understand as an entrepreneur as knowing and understanding them will help you figure out how to reach your potential customers and most importantly the way and manner in which you communicate with all you do business with.

CHAPTER ONE

COMMUNICATION IS EVERYTHING

Sales and marketing, customer service, public relations, and corporate communications. What do all these things have in common? These are all essential elements of any successful business.

Whether you work for or run a business of any kind or size, you and your team must effectively execute each element, each department in order to be able to extract any type of value from your business. This is just one of those realities of business.

The other crucial underlying factor, one other thing all these have in common is communication. Almost every vital activity in your business, the functions that have a high impact on your bottom line as well as brand identity will be communication-based.

In fact, I like to think that just like with any other type of relationship, the connection you have with your customers, employees, partners, and investors will be either made stronger, weaker, or unchanged as a result of the ways and manner in which you communicate with all stakeholders and beneficiaries of your business.

Almost all successful businesses and the men and women who run them understand this fact. We

must constantly communicate our brand strategy with our investors and partners. We must create healthy lines of communication with our customers, and when it comes to sales and marketing, we must employ many channels of communication to help us reach our desired audience.

As many organizations around the world work to constantly find new ways to communicate, over the years, various channels have emerged with great promise. Almost every single small- to-large corporation and nonprofit organization now recognize the importance of having some kind of social media presence.

Every single fortune 500 company now engages with its audience via platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and the rest. And they do not stop there. Companies spend quite a lot of their time and financial resources to uncover new ways to connect with customers.

Over the last ten years, SMS or text messaging has emerged as one of the ways in which firms connect with their audiences. Although a legacy technology, SMS has until now been thought of as a casual means of communication between

acquaintances. No one in the corporate world considers SMS as a legitimate means of communication. That is until now.

So, what changed?

A shift in attitudes towards digital communications, the popularization of mobile technology, and a shift in global consumer demographics all but a few of the reasons why organizations of all magnitudes and stripes are now open to new ways to connect with the world around them.

When incorporated into your business strategically, Text or SMS message marketing can help you create meaningful connections between you and your customers, as well as your desired audience.

The trick is

As I have mentioned before, due to the heavy regulatory burdens and the infrastructural restrictions associated with text, small businesses for the most part have either shied away from the use of text or do so in extremely limited capacity.

Some small business owners are typically unaware of the potential text holds in terms of

growing their business. Many are unaware of the evolution of text technology, the power of text, ways to ensure regulatory compliance, the vital role text messaging can play in their sales and marketing activities, examples of firms out there winning over new customers and meeting the needs of their existing customers via text, and so on.

Breaking things down

In this book, I shall do my absolute best, based on my own experience to help a clear picture of the enormous opportunity text messaging holds for your business. I will do my best to address most of the areas of this versatile technology and its uses to spur growth within your business.

In my view, as a small business owner myself, the key to unlocking growth in any organization is when all involved in the business are well aware of their responsibilities to ensure that they employ a communications strategy that places their customers at the top of the list as far as importance goes.

For my fellow salespeople, I would love to stress that what we do is really about communication. That is

especially what sales is: reaching people with messages that meet their needs and wishes. And having a multichannel approach only helps strengthen our brands.

CHAPTER TWO

SMS FOR ALL

*My belief is that communication is the best way to create strong relationships - **Jada Pinkett Smith.***

What would you say if I told you that as a marketing tool, SMS or text is one of the most powerful tools

there is? Studies show that many companies around the world have come around to the idea of fully integrated SMS marketing systems within their organizations.

This change is due to the fact that, by last count, opens for text messages far exceed that of email. Folks are more attached to their mobile phones these days, making SMS an enormously powerful weapon in the arsenal of any small business owner. It is estimated that the average person checks their phone about 150 times a day.

A basic understanding of SMS technology as a marketing tool covers the fact that although much older than Social media and various kinds of digital communication, SMS marketing, or text message marketing can be defined as the use of text message technology to facilitate or drive commercial activity. This book will focus on using text messaging as a business communication tool.

In this chapter, we shall take a look at a basic overview of the SMS Marketing landscape as it relates to small business. We Shall address some basic points as it relates to the potency of SMS marketing, and a few other specific topics.

The numbers: An overview

SMS marketing has become more widespread these days than ever before. The mere fact that we are all seemingly unable to separate ourselves from our mobile devices should give you an idea of the potential that lays ahead as we continue to build more creative ways to grab the attention of audiences via mobile technology.

This is the future of communications, believe it or not. The launch of apps like Quibi and Radish tells us that the bigger guys, you know, the ones with access to the best research money can buy, see a future in which a majority of content and - by extension- advertising will be delivered over small screens.

The test for most organizations is to find ways in which we can engage our audiences without creating a source of nuisance for those we seek to connect with.

Global dynamics

It is estimated that over 5 billion people around the world send and receive text messages on any given

day. That is about 65% of the world's population. In younger generations, as well as in developing countries, the use of mobile phones sometimes represents the only screens available.

Mobile phones in nations like Kenya and South Africa are essential to the daily lives of a majority of the population. The use of mobile technology and text messaging is equally as pervasive in other parts of the world too.

292 million people in North America use text messages — that's 80% of the total population. In Russia, 89% of the population sends and receives text messages. In China, over 1,081 million people send and receive text messages. In India, around 730 million send text messages.

Leading the way

Small businesses as a group, and perhaps more than any other, is often in better positions than most to both facilitate and benefit from any market changes in the way the larger business segment operates.

Companies with less than 500 employees are often structurally organized to position and reposition themselves in the face of shifting economic sands. In

the early days of Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, smaller firms were quick to realize the enormous commercial potential these new advertising platforms presented.

Facebook, as large as it is - in terms of share of ad revenue - still obviously builds advertising tools to meet the needs of smaller firms. As a share of the overall U.S economy, small businesses make up about 44% of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP), which is the total market value of the goods and services produced in the country.

It is then unsurprising to see smaller firms like Aeropostale and Boston Market, lead the way in understanding, and utilizing SMS technology to expand their reach and connect with their customers.

Beyond marketing

One of the most common uses for SMS messaging, among smaller businesses, is Marketing. More often than not, smaller companies - those with less than 100 employees - restrict the use of SMS to sales and marketing.

This makes sense as smaller firms in the U.S

are often primarily focused on the acquisition of new customers. Others will often focus the use of SMS messaging on marketing due to budgetary constraints and other size-based encumbrances.

It is important to note though that, the use of text-based messaging holds enormous potential in other areas of communication as well.

In the next few chapters, we shall discuss in great detail some of the other ways in which you can enhance the reach of your business with text messaging technology beyond marketing.

CHAPTER THREE

GREENER PASTURES

I read a highly informative article recently on SMS entitled “Why SMS Marketing Doesn’t Suck Anymore”, or something like that. I thought the title of the article alone was as illuminating as the article itself.

We all know text messaging is nothing new. We all at some point have thought about using this popular form of communication to improve our businesses. You probably thought of using SMS to send out promotional messages to your existing customers.

In the past, I have seen various sales professionals try to communicate with their customers and prospective clients via text messaging.

On a larger scale, some of these efforts have fallen by the wayside just due to many factors including the lack of available technology to help scale and make the use of SMS feasible.

Typically, entrepreneurs and other small business owners would abandon the idea of using SMS messaging due to the aforementioned reasons, among others.

Things have changed over the last few years and I can tell you that SMS Marketing really does not suck anymore.

A trendy environment

Indeed, many changes have taken place in the SMS marketing space recently. These changes have opened the doors to new opportunities for businesses of all types and sizes. For example, many platforms like inbox(www.getinbox.me) have been created to help small businesses leverage the power of text without having to spend a whole lot of money. These types of Software-as-a-service tools provide all the tools one needs to run a dynamic SMS communication and outreach program.

Among the emergence of SMS tools like Tantango and CallHub, various trends in the industry have made the use of SMS attractive to the small business owner these days. Trends including but not limited to:

Content addiction

We often hear all the stats associated with the use of mobile devices. We can all see how pervasive and often distracting these little gizmos have become in all of our daily lives.

I mean, the high user rates, as far as smartphones and other mobile devices go, have been well documented and demonstrable. What folks are addicted to, however, is not necessarily their smartphones, but rather what is on these devices. Or rather what these phones now deliver to the user.

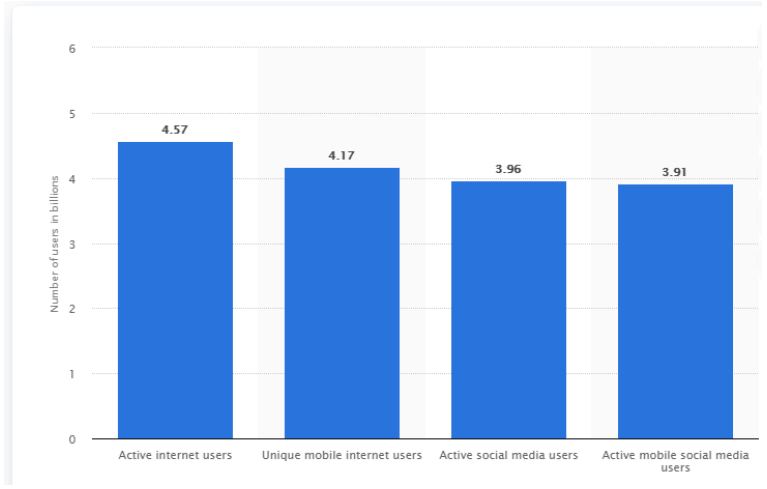
In the earlier days of mobile phones (I can still remember my Motorola Startac), we merely used these devices to communicate. We had no need to constantly stare at our phones.

Then came the heavy use of text messaging. Even

then, we still hardly ever checked our phones. What has changed over the last few years is the migration of all content to our devices. This is why we cannot seem to put our phones down at all, sometimes, not even long enough to drive.

In the 21st century, our smartphone is so much more than just a device through which we communicate with our friends and family while on the go. No, these devices have evolved to become all of our all-in-one multimedia centers.

We watch full-length movies and television shows on our devices now. We check the news, get sports updates, do our homework, express ourselves and stay up to date with what's going on in the world via social media, and so much more.



Unified analytics

In the past, even if you were open to the idea of using SMS messaging as one of your main channels of communication and/or marketing, there were no real tools out there to help you scale and measure success.

For the most part, small firms used these types of messages for such simple tasks as sending appointment reminders, updates, and so on. The development of various bulk SMS tools, however, has opened the doors to wide usage of SMS in the areas of marketing, customer service, etc.

At this stage in the development of SMS technology, one can gain access to a whole host of analytics tools to help enhance various performance areas of any type of campaign.

It is now possible to track engagement across various categories. Categories including but not limited to opens, click rates, overall contact engagement, and so on.

Interactive content

The use of dynamic content and Shortcodes have also been real game-changers in the arena of text message or SMS marketing.

Small businesses now have the ability to, via their chosen SMS marketing platform, send out videos, images, and various other types of interactive content to help drive engagement.

Chipotle, the fast-Mexican food franchise, for example, uses Interactive SMS messaging to help drive in-store sales and introduce customers to newer

menu items.


Do you want more traffic?
YES, I WANT
Bukket it
CHIPOTLE
MEXICAN GRILL
Avocados From Mexico
'CADO CRUSHER
PLAY NOW

CHAPTER FOUR

A VALUE PROPOSITION

Whether you are just getting started in business or you have been running your company for some time now, I have no doubt you spend most of your time thinking about what we all think about when it comes to our businesses.

Money, right? “How can we make more money in business?” is often the question of the day. For some of us, this means more customers, for others, more patients, more contracts, more renters, and so on.

Regardless of your firm's revenue model, we all spend our days looking for ways to market our services to those that we consider potential patrons. After all, this is the natural first step in our revenue model(s).

We, as a result, always look for new channels

through Which We can get the word out about what we offer. This quest can often seem tedious, I mean with all the information out there concerning the various marketing channels.

I am certain that if you are reading this book, this means that for one reason or another, you are at least considering employing text messaging as one of your marketing channels. As a result, you may be wondering if SMS or text message marketing is right for your business.

Throughout this book, I will take the time to reiterate the viability of text across various verticals and various businesses processes. I shall share more about the ways in which my firm has used text messaging to communicate with our customers and clients.

I shall share with you some of my strategies around attracting and retaining new customers with proactive text messaging.

That being said, let's take a look at why folks such as yourself adopt the use of text messaging for business.

Small business-friendly

Among the many technical reasons why folks like you and I look to text messaging as being a possible marketing channel, or just a means for us to engage in dynamic communications with our customers, employees, and others is the fact that while tremendously scalable, text messaging and the tools needed to deploy a robust SMS strategy need not be cost-prohibitive.

Most tools you will need to run effective text message-based communications come at a fraction of the cost of other forms of digital communication and/or distribution. Over the years, we in the small business community have watched as the price to market has skyrocketed.

We have seen ad spend for social media become astronomically high, as well as the cost to use email in any meaningful way. These changes have contributed to the rise of text messaging and all the other associated tools.

Intrinsic value

For the purpose of communicating in a business environment, text messaging has not been deployed historically, leaving most small business owners and marketers unsure about its efficacy.

SMS for marketing has not had the advantage of the availability of tons of market research like other forms of marketing have. When it comes to marketing for businesses of any size, folks tend to lean towards channels like social media, television, radio, search, and others.

There are, however, signs that SMS Marketing will soon become a powerful tool in the arsenal of most companies around the world. A great number of organizations are starting to realize the potential text messaging/SMS marketing has to improve communication and produce a return on their advertising dollars.

Scalability for all

You can deploy text messaging for your company however you wish. In as many versions and as many iterations as you deem necessary. This is just one of the many wonderful aspects of text -based marketing.

Some of the text platforms I will discuss soon are built to help you communicate with your intended contacts within a small two-way environment, and/or on a large scale. All while retaining uniqueness and brand quality.

You will, via the use of tools like inbox, be able to send out small numbers of text campaigns or take things to the next level. Meaning you will be able to build and put into place, a massive text message campaign.

Positive engagement

While being a very personal, one-on-one way to market or communicate with folks, SMS, when done correctly, can be a godsend to your marketing activity as far as open rates, reads, responses, are concerned.

As business owners, this is what we look for when we deploy communications, especially with potential

customers.

We want folks to interact with the stuff we send out. If you maintain the kind of personal touch that SMS requires, you will see engagement across all campaigns rise.

Typically, with SMS, research shows that about 99% of all messages sent are received and opened by the end-user. SMS has been known to have a superior click-through rate (CTR) when compared to email. While email's CTR remains at 3.2%, on average, your typical SMS campaign will see a 36% CTR.

Personal touch

Looking to send out massive amounts of marketing messages while maintaining the kind of personal feel your customers have come to expect from your company?

Do you wish to put your brand in the enviable, profitable position of receiving real-time engagement with your audience?

SMS covers both wishes perfectly. With SMS, you will

be sure to have the tools needed to make your customer service, or marketing messages as unique and personal as possible. You will be able to provide one-on-one customer service to your customers while maintaining a low overhead.

And when it comes to speed, 90 percent of text messages are read within 3 minutes of sending.

CHAPTER FIVE

MY “AHA” MOMENT

I have always considered Sales and Marketing to be that which is most vital to the Startup success and growth of any organization - both at the for profit and nonprofit level. You can have the best ice cream, or coffee in town.

The quality of your products will do little to add to your bottom line if you have no cost effective, sustainable way to get your products in the hands of an increasing flow of old and new customers.

Your half-off sale will do extraordinarily little to lessen your inventory load if no one knows about it. Every day, around the globe, entrepreneurs, and small business owners alike, devote a considerable amount of resources to seek-out new ways to connect with their audiences.

We are constantly looking for new opportunities to optimize our Sales and Marketing systems to allow us to do more: Attract and retain more customers, generate more revenue, get more donations, etc.

In a sea of a seemingly unending flow of ideas, methods, and concepts, text messaging for business use, or text-based marketing has emerged as a viable contender. And for legitimately interesting reasons.

Advanced advocacy

I came to the conclusion that text messaging was right for me and my business not through some series of professional inquiries, careful research, or planning. I really wish I could say so. To me text messaging was old school.

Even rude or intrusive. I must say, I actually do not like receiving commercial text messages myself. I would only come to realize that in the past many businesses have not been proactive in employing the use of text or SMS messaging in the most user-friendly ways.

I think for most consumers, text messaging seems annoying. That is when unsolicited or irrelevant. These are the two aspects of marketing that I think most small businesses do not consider.

Most of the entrepreneurs I have met, the ones not quite there yet as far as their marketing goes see

marketing as the act of getting a bunch of names and blasting these poor folks with a series of general messages in hopes that someone on said list will find what you have to offer intriguing enough to take a desired action.

Of course, you know better, right? Marketing is the act of communication, as I have said before.

Unsuspecting participants

Ever heard the saying " it's better to ask for forgiveness than for permission "? I think going that route when it comes to text message marketing would be Ill advised. For one, doing so may cause you to have to face some civil or criminal reunification in some cases.

Plus, you will not get the return on investment you want and/or need to actually drive sales, donations, and what have you.

Because when it comes to interruption marketing, it doesn't get any more personal than reaching folks on their personal cell phones, it is always best to take a long-term approach. Secure permission from folks to contact them via text and you will have an engaged audience who, for the most

part, will come to enjoy communicating with you and your firm via text.

Sea change

I came to heavily rely on SMS or text for marketing and communication purposes at some point when this seemed like the next logical steps for us. We run a handful of companies. We have always, my team and I, believed in the one-to-many approach when it comes to business.

These are the types of businesses that offer services, products, and other solutions in such ways that can be offered to a whole bunch of customers while maintaining a low footprint. We are in the SaaS business, insurance services, and a few others.

The thing we started to realize was how tough it was getting to communicate with thousands of clients. This issue was particularly pervasive in our insurance lines where we are often communicating with consumers.

Digital discovery

We also, as a result of opening up our businesses to

offer Marketplace Health Plans, found ourselves having to onboard a new crop of clients under the age of forty.

These types of folks are typically tech-savvy, live remarkably busy lives and prefer non-voice communications. We found that younger folks also loved receiving digital coupons and other promotional offers via text.

As a matter of fact, as we increased our footprint among the coveted millennial generation, we started to see an increase in folks opting to reach our customer service line via text messaging and also to confirm in-person appointments via text. This was the moment we realized we had to look into SMS a bit more.

Feedback loop

Our next natural steps - since we were not set up to do text in any scaled-up way - we started looking for platforms out there that could help us meet the needs of our customers in this new way.

We found a few platforms like CallHub which worked great but had a few missing pieces. We decided to reach out to our clients via text to let them

know that we were setting up a text infrastructure to help serve them better.

We asked for permission to communicate via text and asked them for their feedback and suggestions. We were able to get some valuable feedback that led us to build our very own Mass Text platform, inbox.

CHAPTER SIX

HOW WE SMS

It is important to recognize the dynamic role text messaging can play in your entire organization. As far as communication goes, it is crucial that you look at the use of text as applicable to various channels and departments within your business.

SMS is great for sending messages that seek to generate new engagement or messages that are promotional in nature. Text, however, can be used to help drive inter-company collaboration, customer retention, and so much more.

Before we start to think about incorporating SMS into our organization's communication and marketing apparatus, we must first identify the specific areas we need to improve. At our company, we use text messaging to communicate in the following ways:

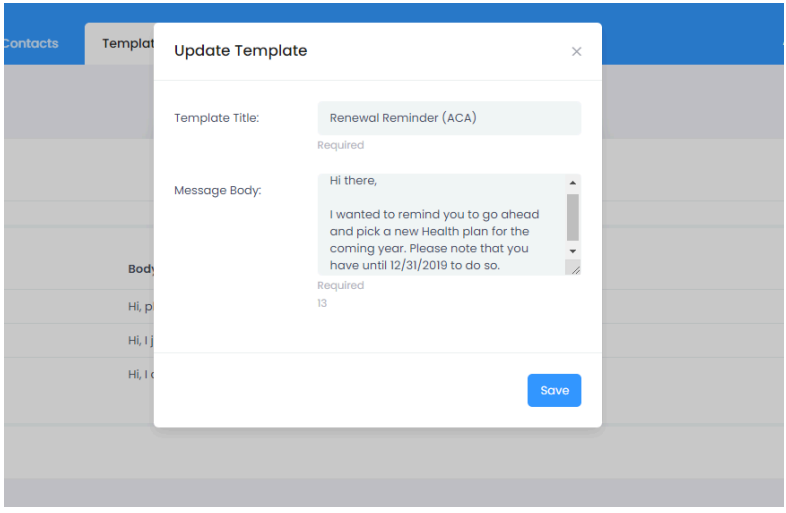
Reminders and updates

The very nature of some business lines requires that our customers take certain steps periodically. We offer

insurance products that include but are not limited to Marketplace healthcare plans.

These plans are renewed each year and each customer has a specific window of time within which they must renew their plans. Since we understand that most individuals are busy and as a result, often forget to make these vital decisions, we typically send out a simple reminder template message to our customers to help them take note of any upcoming dates.

We also use our text messaging platform to provide account updates to our clients across various businesses. These actions, if using our inbox platform, can be taken by first capturing contact information, then creating a template for each type of message. These templates can be saved and used as many times as needed.



Two-way messaging and customer support

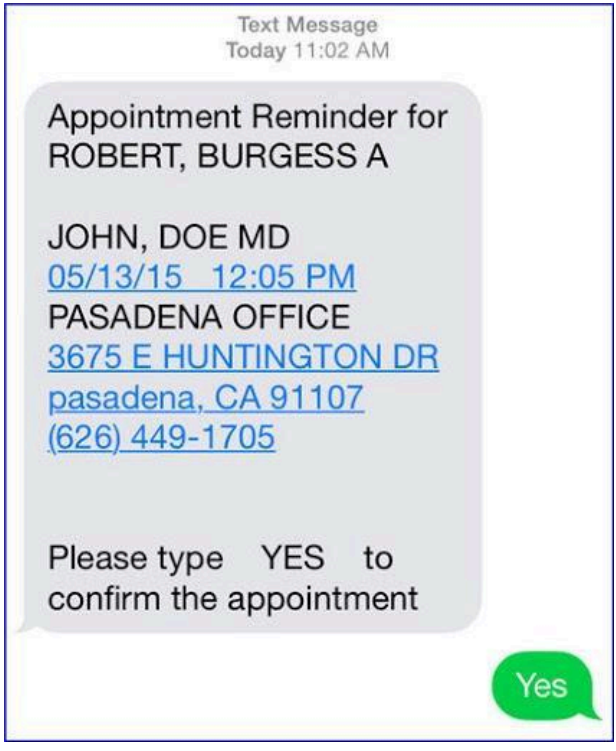
One of the most impactful ways you can employ the use of SMS or text messaging within the scope of your daily business activity is via communications that require the end-user to take certain real-time actions.

So here, we are talking about scenarios in which you send out general messages and the customer or prospect needs to use some interactive feature embedded in your message to acknowledge consent, confirm a meeting, claim a promotion, etc.

You typically see these types of messages being used

by doctors' offices, Lawyers, Financial Advisors, and any business that requires face-to-face meetings with clients as a part of their business processes.

With most SMS platforms, you can also generate responses from your contacts and engage in real-time conversations with them, regardless of how many contacts you shared your message with.



The Welcome party

Like most companies, we use text messaging to help successfully onboard new clients as well as employees and partners. The premise here is pretty simple.

There are some lines of communication when you are in the process of training new employees or onboarding new customers. You will not want text to replace other professional communications such as emails and mailers.

What you will want to do is to use text to send out information to new employees, new customers, current employees, and so on that is needed in a personal way.

For example, you can send out new weekly work schedules to your employees via text. This ensures that regardless of each employee's digital habits, they are able to see their new work hours almost immediately.

You can use text to send out specific account information to customers. Account ID numbers, account access information and so on.

Sales and Promotions

The quest to attract new paying customers continues to be the most pressing issue for businesses of any size. The need to sell more stuff to more people is especially pressing for small businesses for obvious reasons.

The fact is, this is what most entrepreneurs are worried about on any given day. This is what keeps new business owners up at night. So, naturally, any new type of communication that you look into, understandably will be for the purpose of promoting your business and its services to new customers.

All these other types of communications mentioned are obviously preceded by actually acquiring the customer or client first, right?

As I have stated before, text occupies a space in marketing that is very personal and therefore should be approached on a more strategic level. You will want to employ a text messaging marketing system that captures (with permission) new leads, nurtures these leads with periodic sales messages.

This will be a continuous thing for you.

In the next few chapters I will share some strategies you can use to capture more text-ready leads.

That being said, the use of text messaging and SMS can help introduce new products and promotional items to your customers and prospective clients. Any versatile SMS platform will provide the tools you need to help send out messages tailored to your audiences' specific needs.

These types of messages, used by firms like Chipotle, will help drive new engagement and sales.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CASE IN POINT (CHIPOTLE)

Chipotle Mexican Grill, Inc.

The Newport Beach, CA-based Mexican restaurant, a favorite among younger audiences, has built a name for itself as the go-to spot in any city for a quick bite to it. That is if you are in the mood for south of the border - inspired cuisine.

Started in Denver, Co. By classically trained chef, Steve Ells, the one-time small chain has grown to over 2,000 store locations and serves over 1 million customers per day.

The company has a mission to serve food prepared from local, “ethically sourced” produce and to always serve fresh, healthy meals.

Initial public offering

The company went public in 2006, listing its shares on The New York Stock Exchange. The firm raised over $170 million. Selling over 7.88 million shares priced at $18 per share. The company used its IPO funds to fuel growth and other revenue-generating

activities like marketing. As well as paying down a $30 million debt owed to McDonald's.



A fresh Concept

Chipotle was born of the radical belief that there is a connection between how food is raised and prepared, and how it tastes. Real is better. Better for You, Better for People, Better for Our Planet. It may be the hard way to do things, but it's the right way. This is a mantra the company works hard to maintain.

The digital wanderer

Its customers, who tend to be younger, technologically

astute individuals show their support for the firm based on these pillars of conduct.

Apart from the many ways in which the company advertises its offerings, Chipotle also focuses on ensuring that first-time customers are engaged from start to finish and even after they leave their premises.

The company recently teamed up with popular food delivery service provider, Doordash to help bring its popular food items right to the doorstep of its customers.

As part of their engagement strategy, Chipotle uses text messaging to help support their customers and aid them in their discovery of new menu items as well as discounts and promotions.



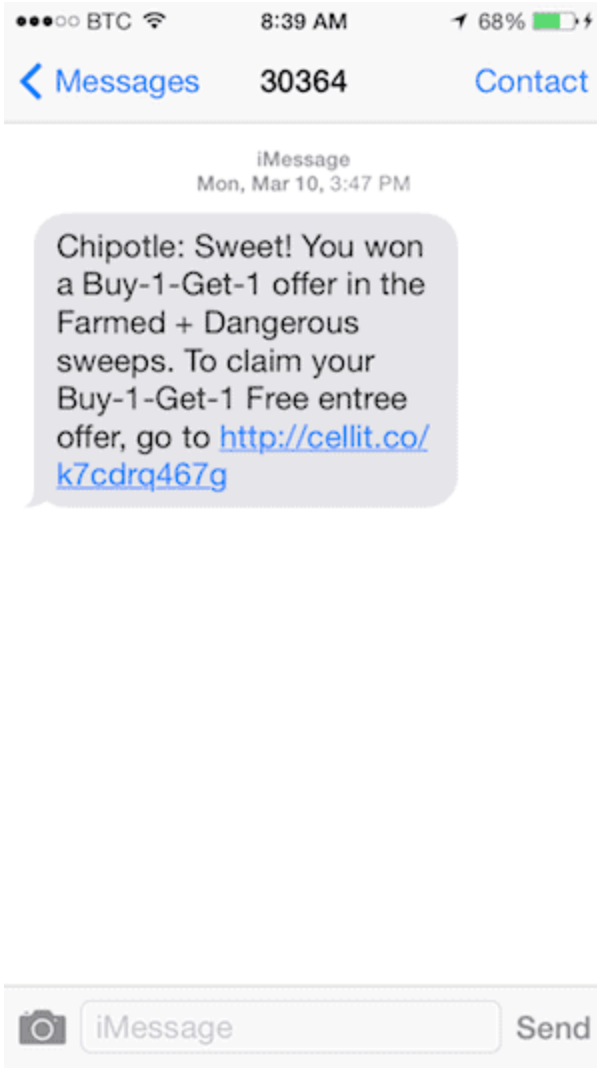


Tasty rewards

Chipotle takes its rewards program very seriously. The company, through its mobile app and via periodic text campaigns, operates a handful of rewards programs.

There is one that seeks to provide customers with free food once a customer accumulates 1200 points.

There are a few other promo programs that all focus on keeping customers engaged and informed on new menu items.



Outreach channels

The company does a particularly good job of making sure its customers provide contact information

including mobile phone numbers, email addresses, during most initial interactions.

They do this by offering customers many opportunities to enroll in various discount programs.

These activities ensure that customers provide with, consent, their contact information.

This information can then be used to populate various marketing channels including those dedicated to Chipotle's various SMS -based outreach and marketing programs.

These are tactics that ensure the Mexican food chain has (at all times) access to their customers' flow of digital data.

CHAPTER EIGHT

BULK UPLOADS

So, where does one get the contacts required to allow the fruitful execution of some of the concepts discussed in this book? I often encounter entrepreneurs who seek names and numbers of cell phone users.

The objective, typically, is to randomly send out promotional messages to folks who neither gave their consent nor have any idea what they are being sent. There are many issues with this approach.

The first one of course is the reality that spamming folks, here in the U.S, violates several State and federal laws. The second concern is that randomly spamming folks with SMS messages will not get you any closer to achieving your ultimate goal of growing your business

A very personal channel

One thing that you have to keep in mind is that Text messages, SMS and everything that happens on a

person's cell phone are often as personal is it gets. We all expect to be marketed to when we go online: Check our emails, log onto our various social media accounts, and so on.

We tend to view our personal inboxes as spaces where we expect a whole lot of privacy. Technically this is often not the case, but we all, for one reason or another, have this expectation.

For these reasons, it is super important to come up with a text message communications and marketing plan that takes this especially important point into account.

When setting up your text message marketing plan, it is important to take *Consent* seriously. All folks who receive your promotional messages or otherwise, should have giving you and your employees permission to contact them via text messages.

There are various ways to think about how you intend to go about send folks communications and promotional offers via text that will ensure that all involved are on the right side of any regulations.

It is important to think of other forms of marketing as a way to acquire the contacts needed to help power your overall marketing plan, including

once built on text messages.

Overall strategy

As a business owner, regardless of what your business actually is, there are (I am sure) various points at which you come into contact with folks. Whether these *contacts* result in sales or not, I am sure you and/or your employees are constantly interacting with existing customers, would be customers, and new customers.

I am also sure that during these "first touch" instances, you are often collecting some kinds of information from your prospective customers and customers alike.

These are all great opportunities to help create an understanding that your firm will be implementing some new SMS strategies.

Allow me to text you:

From my store

Even at the retail level, whether clothing store or coffee shop, you can do a few things to help set you up to engage your customers in future SMS interactions.

For one, you can collect customers' cell phone numbers at the register.

Stores like *Marshalls* and *Starbucks* do this seamlessly. You will want to give customers the option via your POS system to have their receipts sent to them via text message or email, placing the text message option first.

For most people, it is easier to enter their cell phone number than their email address. This is especially true if your customers are generally consumers and not business folks.

Once you send their receipt. You can have a notice attached that lets the customers know that you will be sending them promotional offers and other communication, and that they can text a number or letter back to you to let you know if they do not want to receive any further communications from you via text.

This strategy gives you a very seamless way to acquire contacts and the permission you need to send them any future text-based marketing.

Newsletters and Free users

In the content-for-money space, entrepreneurs are constantly collecting various contact information about customer. In the blog world, as well as the software-as-a-service space, customers are used to giving up their email addresses, names, and more, in order to be able to have access to free contact, paid content, access to some type of software tools and so on.

These customers are often expecting the makers of these various services to follow their registration up with emails and phone calls.

As you explore the use of text messaging as part of your marketing system, you can commit to including a few lines about SMS messages in your terms of use, and also include spaces on your various forms that are designed to collect the cell phone numbers of those who sign up to access your services.

Once these subscribers and users provide their contact information, I would recommend a welcome text with their new username and passwords, with a line of text to let them know you are sending these to their phone so they can easily access them.

Also include simple steps for the user to follow to indicate that they do not want to receive any further

text messages from you. This will set you and your new user up to receive text messages from your company.

Raffles and giveaways

One other way you can collect valuable contact data from folks to allow for effective text message marketing is via giveaways. In the olden days, these used to be tactics used by firms like Bally total fitness to get valuable marketing data from folks. The idea was that they – Bally's- would place various raffle boxes with contact forms and a pen attached to these boxes, in various business locations. These raffle boxes were visible at the entrances of various grocery stores, cinemas and so on.

Consumers were encouraged to fill out these contact cards to be included in a raffle where they could win free gym visits.

Once the company received this information, it seemed like they gave all who entered a chance to come check out their gyms for free for a while.

The idea is that they would also use the contact information you provided to send you various promotional material about the other services

available to you.

You can take this approach too. You can use various online and offline promotions and giveaways to help acquire the contacts you need for your SMS and text message marketing.

This can be an amazingly effective tactic, as long as you follow the appropriate steps to get permission to send out marketing and engage in various marketing strategies that help strengthen your brand.

BONUS

BEST PRACTICES

Every expert on this topic will tell you that it is a battle these days to win the hearts, minds, and wallets of the average consumer. As content becomes king, attention spans become stretched to their absolute limits, it is increasingly difficult to break through all the noise to present your ideas to folks.

As a business owner, it is crucial, now more than ever, to explore new ways to connect with customers and prospective clients. You simply cannot afford to overlook the compelling marketing opportunities that SMS or Text message (marketing) presents.

According to a TechCrunch survey of over 6,000 consumers, 85% wanted to get text messages from brands. Engaging your audience in protective, strategic text messaging can help grow your business and increase your brand value among your customers. There are various things you can do to help increase your brand visibility, connect with your audience, and grow your overall bottom line, via text messaging.

These “best practices” include but are not limited to:

Consistency is a must.

It is always best to send promotional text messages to your audience on a consistent basis. Although, your business may require you to send out more or less text messages to your clients and/or prospects, the recommended number of texts to send to help stay relevant in the eyes of your audience is 2-3 per week. It is important with any form of marketing that you remove the fear of being annoying. Do your absolute best to remain relevant by sending out marketing (or otherwise) messages frequently.

Opt in, opt out

We have talked about the importance of obtaining permission to send out text messages to your audience. I have gone on and on about it. It is equally important to provide, in every message you send out, a way for folks to choose to stop receiving your marketing text messages.

Most text marketing platforms will provide the resources to automatically include opt out options. Platforms like Simple text make it super easy to provide your customers and prospects with ways to opt out of receiving you text messages.

Value first

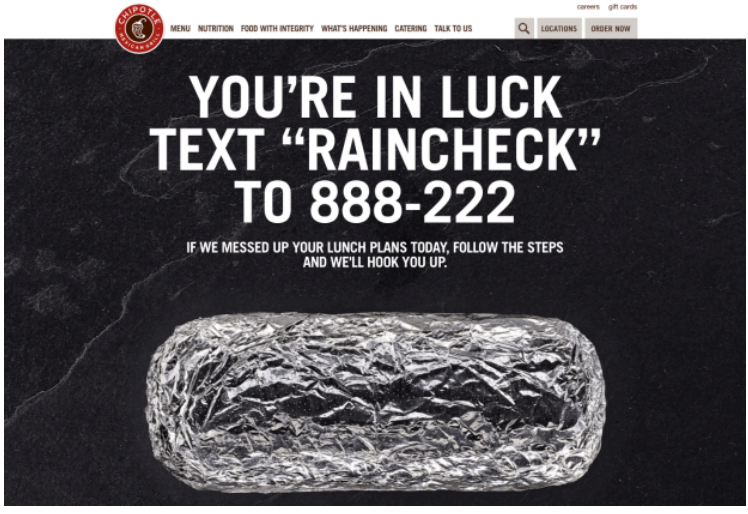
When it comes to text message marketing, many experts believe that to make your text messages worthwhile for your audiences to read and take action based upon the content you send, you must ensure that each message sent is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant, and Timely). The idea behind this approach is that you do not send out messages that are not of value or offer value to the end-user.

You do your brand no favors by constantly sending out vague messages to your audience. Take the necessary steps to optimize your messages to meet the SMART standards.

Talk about text

In order to prepare your customers and all those with whom you and your firm come into contact with for your text/SMS marketing messages, many experts believe that is important to educate your audience as much as possible on the ins and outs of your new text/SMS -based marketing program. The idea is to

have available, all the information one would need to help be fully informed about your new text message program. Provide details about this new channel you are using on your company website, social media pages, and so on.



Incentives work – Just ask Walter

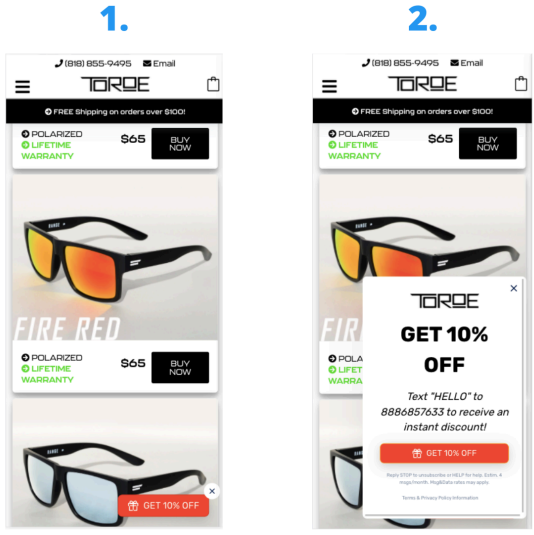
In order to get the receivers of your text messages to take the desired action(s), it is important that you include incentives as much as possible. Incentivizing folks to take various steps works very well across all channels. An example of a firm using incentives via their text messaging campaign to drive sales is Toroe.

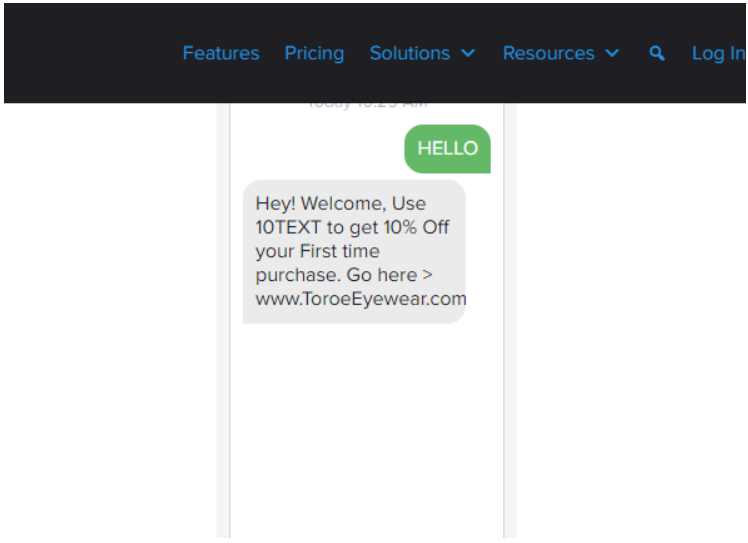
The Sunglasses retailer recently explored offering their subscribers 10% off their first purchase. This SMS campaign came as the company saw a decline in opens for their email campaigns, according to Walter Castillo, Toroe's Checkout Success Manager.

"We have a huge email list with a valuable audience–but getting them to open is a challenge."

As a result, the firm saw a 200% increase in conversion and an additional $7000+ in revenue.

"We set up the widget, created a 10% discount for subscribers, and the code has generated an extra $7,028.01 in store revenue within 30 days. That's 156x return on the cost of sending the texts–we recommend it!"





Caution! Wet floor

Although some disclaimers may seem unnecessary,

and even silly at times, marketing and sales regulations require that commercial text massages include the following:

- How often you plan to text subscribers (e.g., You may receive up to 4msgs/month.)
- Msg & Data rates may apply
- A link to your terms and conditions as well as your privacy policy
- Information about how to unsubscribe (Reply STOP to end or HELP for help.)

I recommend that your review the CTIA's Short Code Monitoring Handbook and CTIA's Messaging Principles and Best Practices (https://www.wmcglobal.com/us-resources
To get the 411 on the do's and don'ts of text message marketing.

Notes

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https://www.wmcglobal.com/us-resources

RECOMMENDED READING

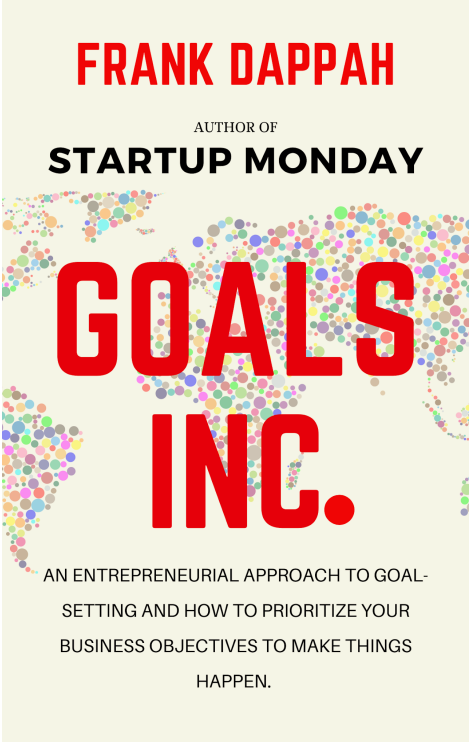
Some of the ideas and concepts discussed in this book can be further explored and fully researched by reading the following books.

Full disclosure: Some of the books mentioned here are by authors who belong to the same publisher as me.

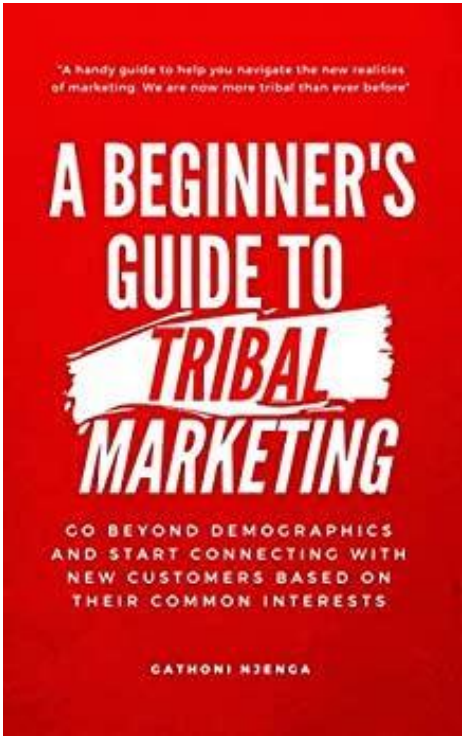
My only motive in recommending these books is to help you acquire the resources and knowledge I feel will help you immensely when it comes to starting and growing your existing firm or idea for your next startup company.

ENJOY!

GOALS INC.: An entrepreneurial Approach to goal setting and prioritizing your business objectives to make things happen.



THIS BOOK IS ABOUT GOALS! This is a sentiment

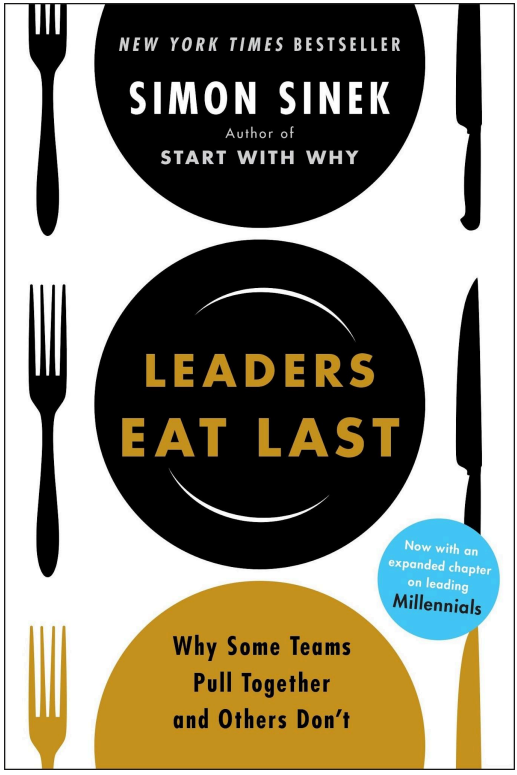


you will see repeated over and over again in this book. Goals Inc. Is the latest installment in a series of books by the Author aimed at helping Entrepreneurs from all walks of life accomplish their business objectives.

A Beginner's Guide to Tribal Marketing: Go beyond demographics and connect with new customers based on their shared interests.

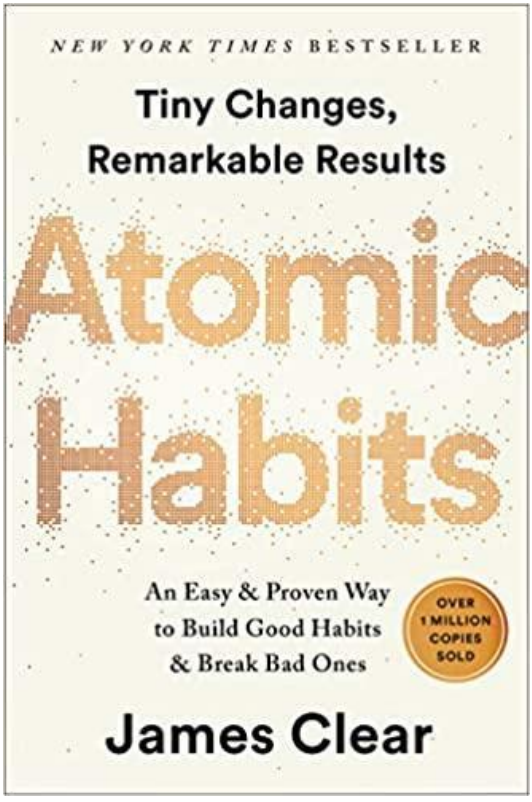
A beginner's guide to tribal marketing lays out the fundamentals of social and community-based marketing. This short and straight-to-the-point book can serve as an introduction for any small business owner or marketer to the new age of marketing: Tribal Marketing.

Leaders Eat Last: Why Some Teams Pull Together and Others Don't



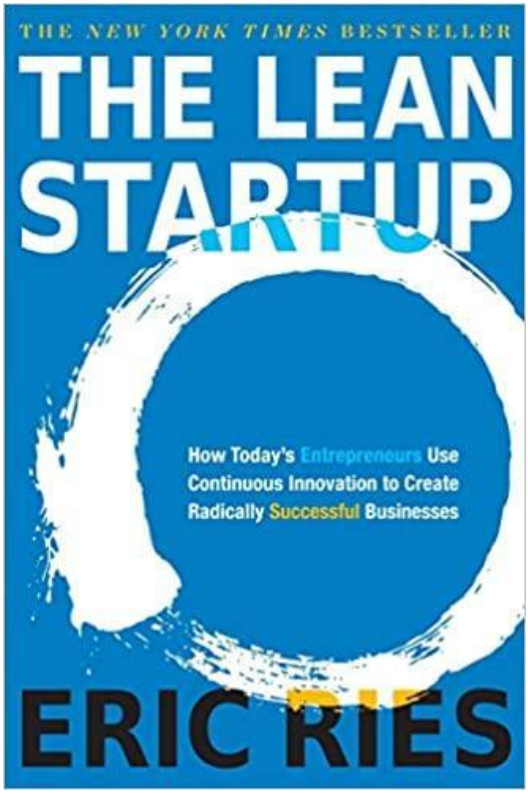
Imagine a world where almost everyone wakes up inspired to go to work, feels trusted and valued during the day, then returns home feeling fulfilled. This is not a crazy, idealized notion.

Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones



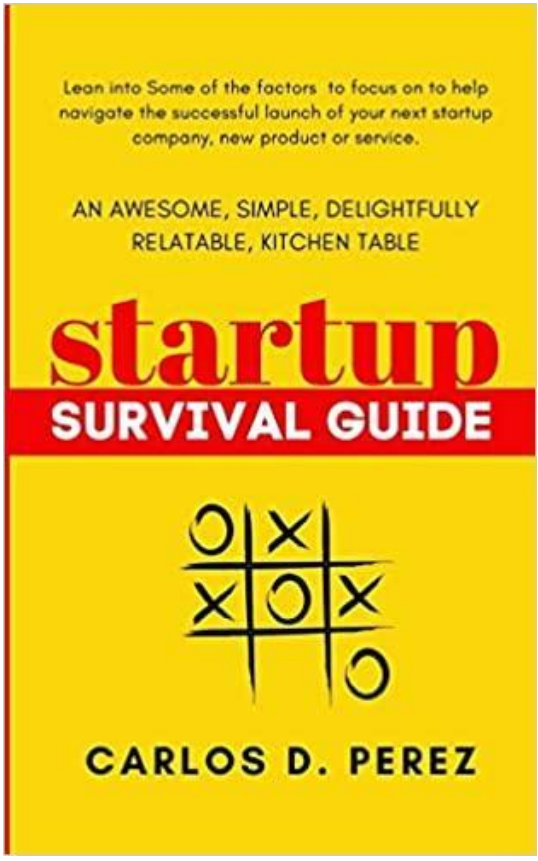
No matter your goals, Atomic Habits offers a proven framework for improving--every day. James Clear, one of the world's leading experts on habit formation, reveals practical strategies that will teach you exactly how to form good habits, break bad ones, and master the tiny behaviors that lead to remarkable results.

The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses



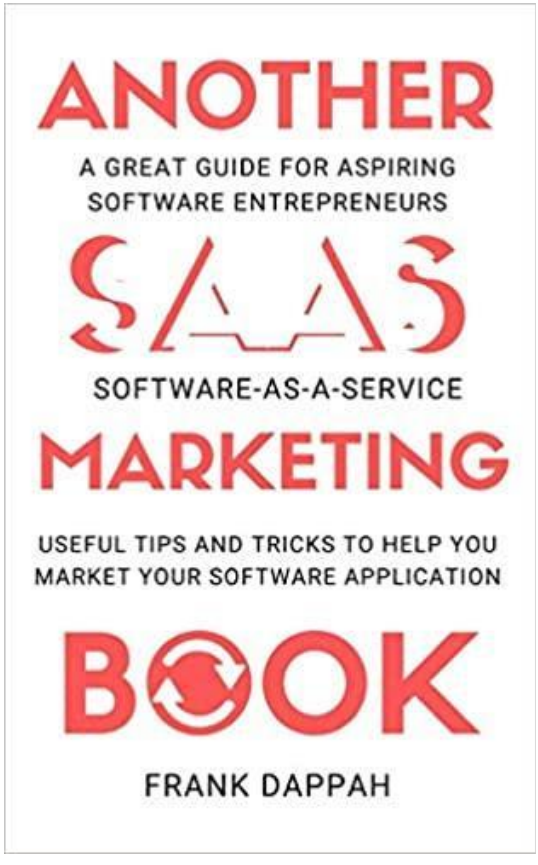
Eric Ries defines a startup as an organization dedicated to creating something new under conditions of extreme uncertainty. This is just as true for one person in a garage or a group of seasoned professionals in a Fortune 500 boardroom.

AN AWESOME, SIMPLE, DELIGHTFULLY RELATABLE, KITCHEN TABLE STARTUP SURVIVAL GUIDE



This book is about what you need to know to help you successfully start your next company, introduce your next new service to the marketplace, or to help you launch your next product.

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