4 Tips for Writing Event Text Communications
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We've all seen the Consumer Cellular ads and know that "text size" can easily be enlarged on mobile or GrandPad[1] devices, which is important to keep in mind when creating event text communications from your business desktop or laptop. The interface and experience of that of the attendees that receive event-related text messages are likely to vary, regardless of the type of mobile device.

Just because message length or choice of diction looks great for you, doesn't necessarily mean this will be the case for guests that receive this message on their mobile devices. Today, text messaging continues to shape the way people communicate. The first text message was sent around 1992, and in a relatively short period, today there are over 5 billion texters globally with about 2 billion of those in the U.S. And these figures will continue to rise. According to a study by Twilio[2], "90% of people say they'd rather receive a text than a phone call from a business." This article will guide your business towards writing clear, concise event text messages with confidence.

1. **Include the most relevant, timely and personalized info first.**
   Text messaging or any event related communications can have an impact on the overall strategic meeting experience and your team's success. Unlike email or push notifications from mobile event apps, most text messages are open, seen and read quickly – 95% of texts from businesses are read within 3 minutes of being sent. It's important to keep in mind that most mobile event apps do not push messages to those who do not download the app, and most people rely on a few mobile apps daily.

   Still, it's essential to optimize and to ensure that you are making a good impression by providing relevant, timely and personalized support with texting.

   Ask yourself *If I could have my VIP take just one thing away from this text, what would it be?* Use the answer to that question in creating your text message so that the most critical information comes first. If you don't, the attendee might get confused by the text, consider it like Junk for marketing purposes, or quickly move on. Let's optimize the following Airport Arrival text.

   > *Welcome to Chicago! Shuttled airport transportation to your hotel is being provided at both O'Hare and Midway from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM at approximately 30-minute intervals. Look for transportation staff holding GruupMeet signage in the baggage claim area. After retrieving your luggage, uniformed GruupMeet staff will escort you to the shuttle pickup area. If you are unable to locate GruupMeet transportation staff for your vehicle, please call, Russell Wyman, GruupMeet Operations Manager, at (972) 375-0540. Be prepared to provide your location. If you have arrived outside the shuttle time frame, please take a taxi or use Uber or Lyft's service. If you use Concur, make this request using the app so that the expense is recorded for you too.*

   This text is over a hundred words, and most of them aren't necessary. Let's look at what this message conveys that it doesn't have to.

   Keep in mind that extraneous information adds words, not impact. For instance, most meeting attendees likely do not need to know the type of transfer (i.e. whether shuttled, one-way transfer or point-to-point) that is provided. The shuttle time period and pick-up intervals are also not essential. Guests arriving outside the window should receive a different text message personalized to them or no text at all. And not all attendees will likely stick to the schedule anyway, so it's okay to leave info about rideshare or taxi options out of this message, as this is likely already known.

It's also not necessary to reiterate the name of a services provider (such as GruupMeet in this example, though we are a software company and do not provide transportation services). Attendees tend to care more about being assisted quickly and are not likely to remember the name of another company following the meeting.

While providing the name and phone number of an Ops or Program Manager may seem more customized, the information is not likely to be of benefit to guests after the event, and it also requires them to take another action or use another phone number which might easily become frustrating or too confusing in today's fast-paced mobile environment.

Now, let's consider this optimized version.

> *Welcome to Chicago! Please proceed to the baggage claim area. Greeters will be at the baggage claim for your flight to direct you to your transportation. Staff will have GruupMeet signage. For assistance, please reply to this text or call this number.*

The message body comes in at under forty-five words and the most essential information is included. Guests can also easily act, if appropriate.
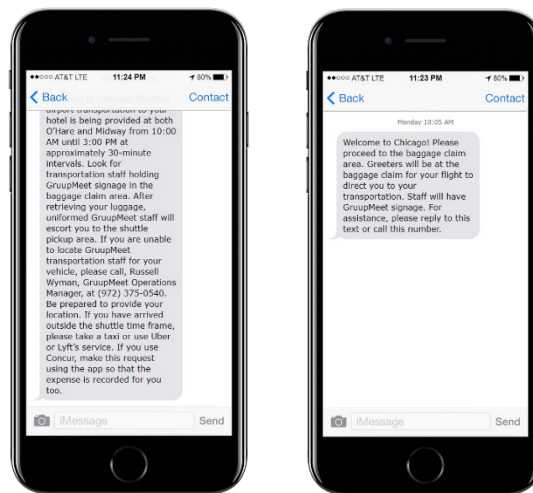
2. **Know the difference in "2-way texting" vs. "SMS marketing."**
   In the U.S., reports indicate that 78% of millennials like text communications. But there's a difference in the type of text messages, and it's important to understand the difference when communicating with meeting attendees. You're making a personal connection when communicating, so you'll want to ensure that your system is handling your communications in the most appropriate manner as you are responsible for all the content of the communications sent to your clients.

   For example, GruupMeet offers the ability for organizers to email and communicate via 2-way text messages to consumers directly through its event management platform. This functionality was built to send service-related communications specific to an organizer's event attended by the recipient of any messages. This means that because the communication is for business matters and because it's from the organizer, consent has been obtained. And it's important to make sure that permission is managed. On the other hand, SMS marketing can be used but an organizer will often need to secure their own compliant opt-in consents for the sending of marketing emails or messages. This can be done with "short codes." You'll typically want to use "short codes" when using SMS for larger-scale marketing purposes. These codes are shorter than typical phone numbers so they're easier to remember and type. You've likely seen

them in ads like GNC's Nugenix. Unlike traditional, mobile phone numbers, short codes are optimized for marketing. This means that they are individually approved by wireless carriers for marketing purposes, so your messages are less likely to be blocked or identified as Junk when communicating to a large group. Typically, you can send messages at a much faster rate than from regular mobile phone numbers. SMS marketing is promotional in nature and often is received by consumers differently than that of messages from a traditional number. It's also important to consider whether you want attendees to potentially call the number directly or to communicate easily with on-site support teams. You'd want 2-way texting if so.

3. **Have a process in place for quickly responding to messages.**
Organizers such as DMCs rely on event management platforms like GruupMeet for features like call-forwarding and the ability to reply to messages from attendees from directly within the platform. Communications are recorded so teams can manage live feedback, and easily offer more personalized support and duty of care. Because GruupMeet is for business communications directly from or on behalf of the client, the tool works seamlessly with business email so that email replies are received directly in the sender's inbox. The platform also provides organizers with "Planner Text Alerts" notifying then when participants reply to a notification via text, even if they are not logged into the platform or actively checking email notifications.

It is often in the best interests of all parties for text messages not to be sent from a personal device or from a device and not a software solution with the proper policies, practices or built-in systems and consents to ensure that important communications and event data are appropriately stored and managed in an ethical and secure manner.

4. **Avoid asking guests to take an action that's not convenient.**
Convenience is everything today, which is why organizers need flexible tools. While guests do rely on mobile more today, expecting them to change how they prefer to communicate is a BIG ask. Today's attendees are expert travelers that are seeking unique local program experiences that deliver emotional engagement. People remove apps that waste time vs. contribute to success. People remove apps they don't use or that are difficult to learn. People are tired of inefficient app notifications and disruptions. People seek timely and relevant info across many device types.

Do you know if guests are excited and willing to download an app or learn to use a new interface? Or feel comfortable sharing more information like their location or contacts? Whether or not the solution you embrace is convenient or not matters. Keep this in mind when crafting event text communications or push notifications if an app is an appropriate medium for your attendees. Today's meeting attendees often seek the benefit of services provided by downloading or installing an app, but they often hesitate or are not willing to keep up with anything else. Attendees are also more hesitant to click shortened or tracked URL links, which by their nature likely are totally NOT attendee focused.

About GruupMeet, Inc.: GruupMeet streamlines communications and logistics so participants experience professional and personalized attention, and event teams stay in control in one beautifully designed, intuitive platform – ensuring operations run smoothly. No downloading or installing required, so attendees don't have to worry about keeping up with anything.

[1] Grandpad by Consumer Cellular. 4 Ingenious Technology to Help Aging Adults Stay Connected by Amy Blankson, published in *Forbes Magazine*, 2018.

[2] Twilio's Global Mobile Messaging Report