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Attentive Gets the Message Out

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2020 MICHAEL SCHEINER

Attentive (https://attentivemobile.com//) is a 1:1 mobile messaging marketing tool that helps brands use personalized and behavior-targeted text messages to regularly stay in touch with fans and followers, inform them of new offers, and even reward them for loyalty.

At the core of Attentive patent-pending technology is what the company calls the "two-tap" sign-up. The point of this novel feature is to allow brands to lay out the shortest possible path between piquing a user's interest in the brand, to having them sign up for a regular flow of marketing texts. No email confirmation required and no need to download an app.

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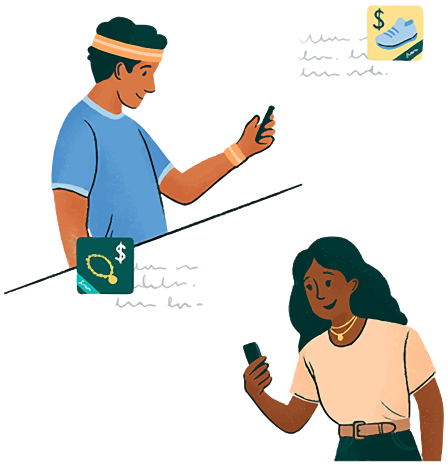
Attentive Mobile EX-2016

Attentive's two-tap solution is being used by over 750 leading brands in several industries from ecommerce to retail, food and beverage, travel and hospitality, entertainment, media, education, and even non-profits.

Texting on the rise



The team behind Attentive recognized text messaging as the marketing medium most relevant today, taking over from the previous focus on emails. "Businesses can't build a relationship with the modern consumer through email alone," says (https://techcrunch.com/2019/08/12/sequoia-leads-40m-investment-in-mobile-messaging-startup-attentive/) Attentive co-founder and CEO, Brian Long.

There's sound logic behind Long's claim—emails are a slower, more crowded, and more cumbersome form of texting. What's more, people today check and respond to texts at much higher volumes than emails. As Long explains, "email performance, as measured by how many subscribers click-through on a message, is down 45% over the last five years."

It's not just the outdated email problem that Attentive's text-based marketing method solves. Another major loss-point in the customer-to-brand sign-up journey is the need to install a new application on one's phone. "People don't really want to download an app anymore," notes (https://techcrunch.com/2018/02/08/attentive-launch/) Long.

That's where Attentive's two-tap sign-up solution comes in.

The two-tap solution

Tap number one

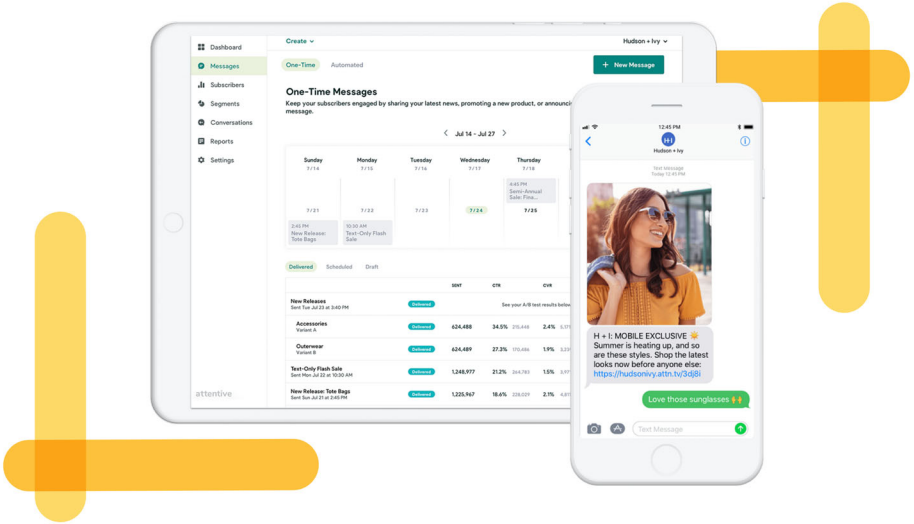
A user sees an ad, a post, or something on a brand's website that prompts them to subscribe for more information (or deals). They tap a CTA that offers to opt them in.

Tap number two

Via Attentive's technology, the user's text message app automatically opens, and right away they'll see a sign-up request pre-written for them, which will be automatically sent to the brand's designated phone number. All the user has to do is tap "send."

The results? The Attentive homepage confidently states that the strategy gets a 90% open rate, ups click-through rates by 30%, and increases ROI by 25%. Very impressive figures, but that's not the limit to what Attentive can do.

Behavior-based messaging and segmentation



Once a user is signed up through Attentive to get regular texts from their favorite brands, the idea is not to frequently bombard customers with unwanted, unnecessary and generically-blasted messages.

Rather, Attentive helps brands tailor and target messages based on the user's engagement with the brand, their products, and their promotions.

For example, after the initial sign up, a user can receive a slow series of welcome drips to ease them into greater brand awareness and all the deals on offer. Once a user has made a purchase, that behavior can be rewarded with a glowing post-sale thank you message.

Not all sales happen easy-peasy though. Stats vary, but several sources (https://optinmonster.com/cart-abandonment-statistics/) report that somewhere around 3 out of 4 carts

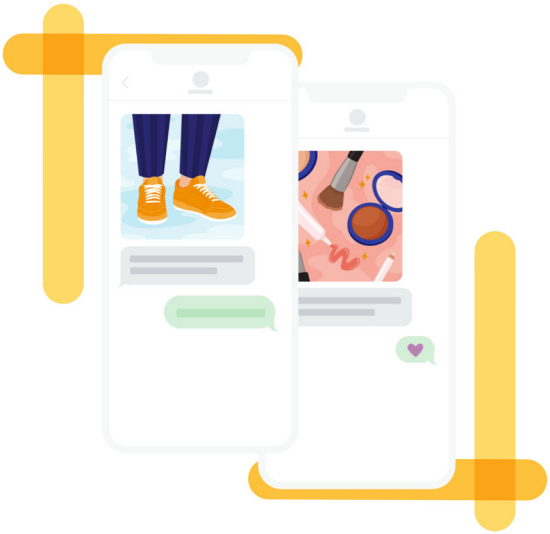
sadly never see the digital checkout line. Attentive offers behavior-based automated features, like cart abandonment reminders for such scenarios. These automated features are defined by how users have engaged with texts or the brand.

For example, big spenders can automatically receive exclusive promotions; auto-reminders can go out to regular shoppers who have suddenly gone absent; people who have shown a specific interest in items (for example, purple-colored clothing, pineapple designs, or organic household goods) can get automatic notifications when similar items have hit the shelves.

Once you gather an understanding of who your subscribers are based on their behavior, you can create customer segmentation parameters for further tailored message outreaching.

For example, if you've set up a segment for customers who have spent over $1,000, as soon as a new big spender enters the arena they will automatically be added to the group.

Attentive even offers pre-built segment parameters which are based on the platform's knowledge of similar brands' best practices.



A/B testing and reporting

Attentive lets you A/B test posts, creating two similar groups of people to gauge their reactions to two different versions of a text.

The difference can be a mere matter of design, wording, or even a type of promotion—for example, do people prefer half off on a single order or a 2 for 1 deal?

With Attentive's reporting, you get all the stats on which test fared better and with whom, which is all updated in real-time as the test is in progress.

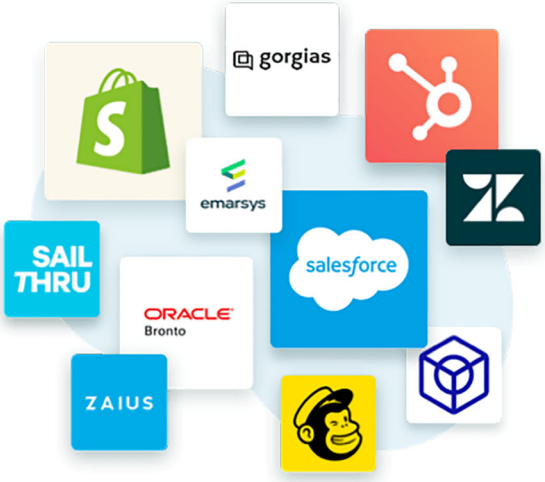
Attentive has extra analytics beyond A/B testing too. For example, the platform will gather up all the most useful metrics for an ecommerce operation—click-through rates, conversion rates, and revenue by location, duration, or even by an individual customer.

For added analytical power, the platform easily integrates with Google Analytics, Omniture and others.

Integrations

Attentive offers a wide range of smooth integrations for your business like MailChimp, Shopify, Zendesk, HubSpot, and more.

The mobile messaging platform takes all its data from subscription sign-ups and other triggered behavior and sends those insights over to your CRM to help give you a 360-degree view of all your contacts. For example, if someone responds to a message via Attentive, that communication gets logged in the contact's profile in your CRM.



An attention-worthy tale

Co-founders Long, Ethan Lo (Head of Special Projects), and Andrew Jones (CPO) spent a few years on the Twitter

team before deciding to pursue their own project. It's possible the disruptive nature of the Twitter platform opened their eyes to whole new ways to think about how brands can better keep in touch with followers.

After Twitter, the co-founders created TapCommerce, an app to help fine-tune retargeting ads based on user behavior—elements of which survive into Attentive. TapCommerce was acquired (https://techcrunch.com/2014/06/30/twitter-acquires-tapcommerce/) by Twitter in 2014, freeing the trio up for what was to come next.

The next step was Attentive, whose investment coming-of-age story testifies to the money'd confidence in the three co-founders and their products. Series A got them a quick $13M in February 2018 and a Series B in August 2019 landed them $40M.

It seems a pretty quick path to success—a story that seems to mirror the Attentive speedy "two-tap" strategy itself: Talk where people are listening, and don't make them go through extra steps when they want to hear more.

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