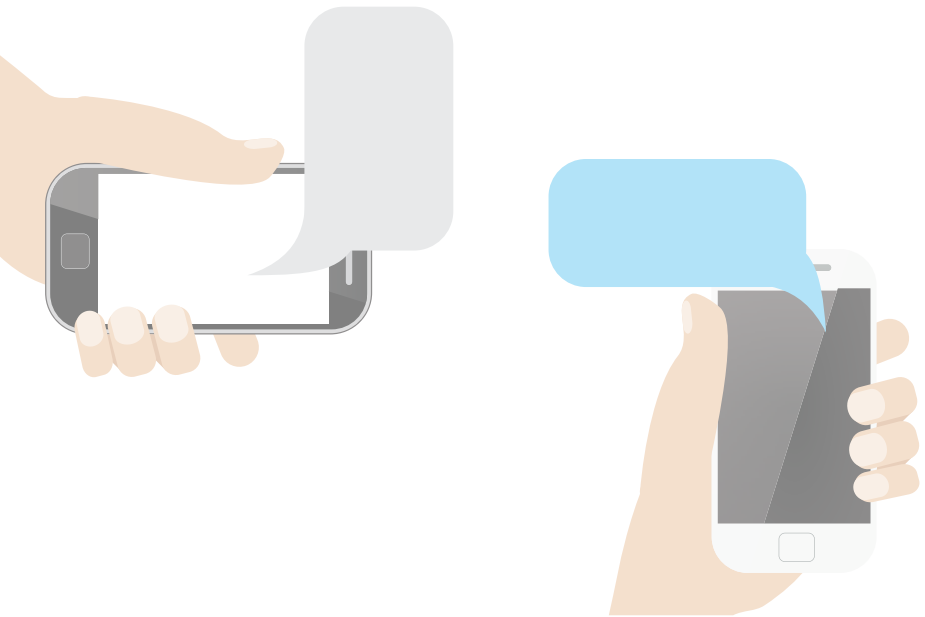


# Mobile Recruiting 2.0:

How to Use Text Messages to Simplify Candidate Engagement

Matthew Kosinski

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"TextRecruit has without a doubt made our sourcing more effective, and at least 20% of the candidates we currently source come from our texting campaigns."



# TextRecruit



"We use TextRecruit to schedule automated reminder messages to new drivers, which increases orientation attendance and cuts staffing costs."



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# Introduction:

## What Is Mobile Recruiting?

**R**ecruiting guru Tim Sackett<sup>1</sup> declared this year would be “The Year of Mobile Recruiting.” Why? Because candidates are increasingly interested in finding and applying to jobs via their mobile devices – and that means recruiters will have to meet top talent in the mobile space if they want to attract the best of the best.

“Mobile recruiting” is the all-encompassing name we give to any and all recruiting tactics that make use of mobile technology. To give you a better idea of what mobile recruiting looks like in practice, here are some common mobile recruiting strategies, tools, and techniques:

- Mobile-optimized career sites that allow candidates to find and apply for jobs at a company directly through their smartphones and tablets.

- Recruiting software that integrates with mobile devices, allowing recruiters to access candidate databases on the go.
- Maintaining an active employer presence on social networks for the purpose of building a strong, mobile-accessible employer brand.
- Removing resumes and cover letters from the application process, which makes it easier for candidates to apply for roles via mobile devices.
- Using text messages, email, chat apps, and phone calls to contact candidates from anywhere, at any time.

<sup>1</sup> <http://thehiringsite.careerbuilder.com/2015/01/19/2015-is-year-of-mobile-recruiting/>

Basically, mobile recruiting has two goals:

- 1) To make it easier for prospective candidates to engage with a company via mobile devices.
- 2) To bring recruiting out of the office, so that recruiters can engage with their candidates no matter where they are.

### Why You Should Care About Mobile Recruiting

It's more than just a fad: Mobile recruiting matters because we live in a mobile-optimized world. The majority (51 percent) of Internet access and media consumption in the U.S. is conducted via mobile devices, and that percentage is expected to keep climbing over the next few years.<sup>2</sup>



Moreover, people are almost constantly on their mobile devices. Research from Deloitte found that 50 percent of people check their smartphones at least 25 times per day, and that roughly 10 percent of people check their smartphones more than 100 times per day.<sup>3</sup>

Job seekers are doing everything else via mobile devices, from shopping, to keeping in touch with friends and family members, to reading the news. They want to be able to conduct their job searches via mobile devices, too. Eighty-six percent of job seekers search for jobs on their smartphones, and 70 percent of job seekers want to apply

to jobs on their smartphones as well.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.smartinsights.com/mobile-marketing/mobile-marketing-analytics/mobile-marketing-statistics/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/technology-media-and-telecommunications/articles/global-mobile-consumer-survey-us-edition.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://keltonglobal.com/in-the-media/for-70-of-candidates-online-applications-are-a-turnoff/>

Increasingly, job seekers are looking for mobile job-hunting experiences, and recruiters need to give them what they want – otherwise, a company may miss out on top-tier candidates.

As mobile devices become more and more ingrained in our daily lives, more and more job seekers will expect fully mobile-optimized candidate experiences. If a company can't give such experiences to a candidate, it may leave a bad taste in the candidate's mouth. Roughly 20 percent of candidates say they'll abandon a job application if they can't apply via mobile devices.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, candidates who have bad experiences with a company's hiring process often go on to spread the word. Research suggests that 78 percent of job seekers will share their negative candidate experiences with friends and family members,

encouraging them not to apply to the company. A third of job seekers also say they would stop using a company's products or services if they had a negative candidate experience with the company.<sup>6</sup>

Mobile recruiting is what candidates want. If your company gives that to them, it will have a much easier time attracting great talent. Your company will also gain a valuable advantage over the competition, because very few employers or recruiters have adopted the mobile strategies that candidates desire: as many as 80 percent of employers have not optimized their recruiting processes for mobile devices.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> <http://keltonglobal.com/in-the-media/for-70-of-candidates-online-applications-are-a-turnoff/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.careerbuilder.com/share/aboutus/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?sd=6/20/2012&id=pr703&ed=12/31/2012>

<sup>7</sup> <http://thehiringsite.careerbuilder.com/2015/01/19/2015-is-year-of-mobile-recruiting/>

# Text Messaging: A Viable—and Overlooked Recruiting Tactic

**D**iscussions of mobile recruiting seem to focus almost exclusively on mobile-optimized career sites and job postings. These are important pieces of any mobile recruiting strategy, but they alone are not enough.

Job seekers want to browse and apply for jobs via mobile devices, of course – but they also want ways to engage with recruiters on their smartphones.

Think of it this way: What good is a mobile-optimized career site if a candidate has to hop right back on their desktop or laptop to engage with recruiters after they've applied?

When we think of “mobile business communication,” many of us think first of email, which has become the foundation of almost all business interactions.



The problem is, when it comes to engaging candidates, this method of communication is almost worthless. Average email read rates and response rates are abysmal, at 18 percent and 8 percent, respectively.<sup>8</sup>

Text messaging offers a much more useful alternative, with a 97 percent average read rate and a 30 percent average response rate. Furthermore, text messages reach candidates much more quickly: 90 percent of texts are read within three minutes of being received.<sup>9</sup>

Text messages are especially great for engaging millennial candidates, who compose the majority of the workforce. Once Generation Z joins the workforce – which will happen very soon, as the first crop of Gen. Z-ers are currently entering their twenties<sup>10</sup> -- text messages will become even more

valuable. Both millennial and Gen. Z talent grew up alongside technology. Mobile devices are second nature to them, and they tend to prefer texting to all other forms of communication.<sup>11</sup>

If text messaging is such a powerful way to engage with candidates, why do so few recruiters use text messages as part of their recruiting strategies? There are a few factors at play here:

1) Many recruiters are simply uncertain of how to integrate text messaging seamlessly into their recruiting efforts.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.textrecruit.com/why-use-textrecruit/>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.prsa.org/Intelligence/Tactics/Articles/view/11057/1110/Move\\_Over\\_Millennials\\_Here\\_Comes\\_Generation\\_Z\\_Unde#.Vju27q6rRcA](https://www.prsa.org/Intelligence/Tactics/Articles/view/11057/1110/Move_Over_Millennials_Here_Comes_Generation_Z_Unde#.Vju27q6rRcA)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.naahq.org/read/marketing-buzz/things-to-know-about-gen-z>



2) Recruiters who have strategies for using text messages often lack the infrastructure they need to manage texting with high volumes of candidates.

3) Some recruiters worry about the legal status of texting candidates. Given how new the concept of texting with job seekers is, many people would rather err on the side of caution.

The good news is that technological advancements have arrived to help recruiters overcome the second and third concerns listed above. Software that manages text messaging campaigns allows recruiters to schedule and track text message conversations with job seekers, and it can guide candidates away from inadvertently engaging in illicit activities when texting candidates.

For recruiters to truly take advantage of text messaging as a method of candidate engagement, they'll need to invest in recruiting technology that helps them manage their texting campaigns.



But even then, recruiters may still be at a loss: How, exactly, does one go about using text messages to recruit?

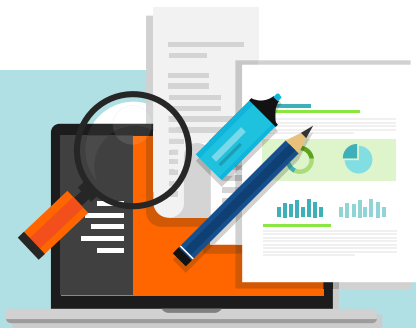
To answer that question, we'll take a look at how text messaging can fit into every step of the hiring process, from sourcing, to the application process, to the interview stage, and on to hiring/onboarding.

# How to Use Text Messages at Every Stage of the Recruiting Process

The information in the following sections is sourced from real-life case studies conducted by TextRecruit, a leading text messaging software for recruiters and employers. By following the examples of actual companies, we'll take the conversation about text message-based recruiting out of the realm of the possible and into the real world.

You, as a recruiter or employer, can pick up some very practical tips and strategies to help you take advantage of text messaging as a critical method of candidate engagement.





# SOURCING:

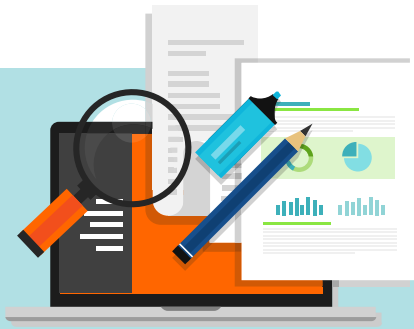
## How Liberty Mutual Cut Time-to-Hire by More than 50 Percent

Like most companies, insurance provider Liberty Mutual relied heavily on email and cold calling to source candidates and make initial contact. Unfortunately – and also like most companies utilizing these strategies – Liberty Mutual dealt with chronically low response rates. When candidates did respond, it usually required at least five attempts to make contact.

In an effort to improve the efficacy of its sourcing strategy, Liberty Mutual decided to augment its traditional tactics with text message-based sourcing. When reaching out to candidates via text messages, Liberty

Mutual saw its average of five contact attempts drop to two contact attempts, dramatically decreasing the company's time-to-hire. Currently, 20 percent of Liberty Mutual's candidates are sourced via text messaging.

Kate Rushton, a sourcing manager at Liberty Mutual, says that text messaging has "without a doubt made [the company's] sourcing more effective," and that she has recommended text messaging to "lots of colleagues and sourcing professionals."



# APPLICATION PROCESS:

## How to Simplify Job Applications Through Text Messaging

Overly complicated, unclear application processes are a major turn off for most candidates. Ninety-three percent of candidates say unclear application instructions are a primary cause of negative candidate experiences, and 90 percent of job seekers say applications that are too long may drive them away from applying to a job.<sup>12</sup>

Text message-based applications can simplify and shorten the application process tremendously, thereby encouraging more candidates to apply. A text message-based application process works like so:

- First, a company generates a custom keyword and a short number.
- The company shares the keyword and number via billboards, fliers, buttons, stickers, and other highly visible methods of advertising.
- The company instructs job seekers to text the keyword to the number in order to apply for a job (e.g., "Text 'Jobs' to 123456 to apply today!")
- Candidates text the number, and are greeted with all the information they need to apply, including links to mobile-optimized application forms or questions they need to answer.

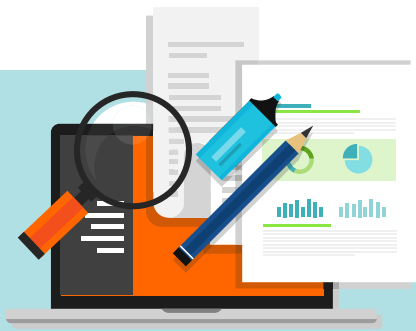
<sup>12</sup> <http://www.softwareadvice.com/recruiting-agency/industryview/ats-report-2015/>

- The company collects the pertinent information from the candidate. It then moves on to reviewing the candidate's application and scheduling interviews, which can also be done via text.

Not only does this simplify the process, but it also makes applications more accessible to more candidates. Seventy-nine percent of workers carry their phones with them 22 hours a day. When these workers can apply for jobs directly from their phones, that means they don't have to wait until they get home or set aside a few after-work hours to fill out an application. They can simply apply as soon as they see your advertisement.<sup>13</sup>



<sup>13</sup> <https://docs.google.com/document/d/153iU2HG-8bhWLbuGGPRoYV9wgPTv482R4TxdEgAo6DY/edit>



# THE INTERVIEW STAGE:

## An Easier, More Cost-Effective Way to Schedule Interviews

Consider one of the major hurdles of the recruiting process: scheduling an interview. Recruiters, hiring managers, and candidates all have their own schedules. Coordinating between these parties in order to arrange an interview time that works for everyone often requires multiple calls and emails back and forth. This draws out the overall time-to-hire and adds unnecessary stress to candidates', recruiters', and hiring managers' lives.

Trucking company Con-way experienced the challenges of coordinating schedules firsthand. Truck drivers do not have regular access to the Internet while on the road, making it difficult for recruiters to get in touch with them when necessary. This lack of communication contributed to low

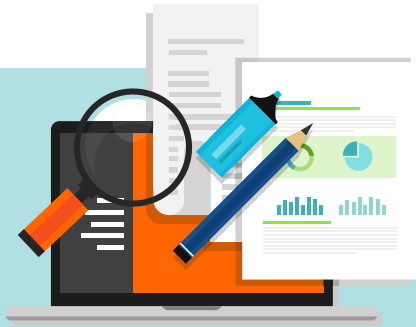
attendance rates, even beyond the interview stage: 25 percent of newly recruited drivers did not show up for their first day of orientation.

"Texting was one of the solutions that drivers and recruiters wanted," says Steve Sanchez, supervisor of recruiting at Con-way.

This solution made it much easier for recruiters and truck drivers to stay in touch with one another and coordinate schedules. Con-way was able to lower orientation absenteeism by 5 percent and save an estimated \$200,000+ in annual recruiting costs as a direct result of implementing text messaging into the recruiting process.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s6Sn0cJZcREHfobjAfI7IM65cRXdskkHqH\\_s03kzd8w/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s6Sn0cJZcREHfobjAfI7IM65cRXdskkHqH_s03kzd8w/edit)





# ONBOARDING:

## How Text Messages Helped SSM Health Save \$500,000 on Staffing and Rescheduling Costs

SSM Health was having serious onboarding problems. Ten percent of new hires were turning up at the wrong starting locations, and 15 percent were delayed from starting on time due to missing paperwork.

To address onboarding problems, SSM tried using traditional methods of communication – calls and emails – to impart vital information to new hires. These methods did not work well, and delayed onboarding processes were costing the company a lot of time, money, and effort. Furthermore, new hires were not as well equipped to work as they should have been, since the onboarding process was so disrupted.

When calls and emails failed, SSM turned to text messaging and saw immediate improvements. New hire response rates rose to 64 percent, and the average new hire response time decreased dramatically to 64 minutes.

Moreover, new hires were excited about the changes, too – which made them more engaged at work. Wendy Crawford, SSM’s vice president of talent, says that “clear onboarding instructions [delivered through text] and a great first day lead to improved retention down the road.”

Overall, SSM was able to cut staffing and rescheduling costs by more than \$500,000 in one year.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.textrecruit.com/ssm-health-case-case-study/>

# Conclusion: Text Messages: The Future of Recruiting

Text messages are highly underutilized in the recruiting space, largely because many recruiters are unsure of how text messaging might fit into a recruiting strategy. As a result, many companies are missing out on the massive benefits that text message-based recruiting can bring them.

Today's candidates are mobile-savvy and tech-empowered. They want easy, direct ways to engage with employers and apply for jobs. Traditional forms of communication, such as emails and phone calls, do not give candidates the convenient experiences they want.

Recruiters will need to go mobile in order to stay competitive in the war for talent. The best way to

do that is by implementing text messaging into their recruiting strategies. Text messages slot in at every step of the way, from initial contact all the way through to onboarding.

Text messages make recruiters' and candidates' lives easier, resulting in higher-quality hires in less time and at lower costs.



*TextRecruit is a global, mobile recruiting platform that helps attract and engage candidates or employees via text message. This cloud-based software is accessible via Web or the IOS/Android mobile applications and helps teams centralize texting while staying compliant. TextRecruit can easily integrate with existing applicant tracking systems or can be used independently by recruiters.*



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