

# SMS marketing - An open letter to the marketer

 By [Keanan Reis](#)

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Dear marketer, about that SMS you sent me...

First and foremost, I would like to know where you got my number? You're like that creepy guy who gets the cell number of a good-looking girl from one of his mates, but won't tell the woman in question where he got her number.

This immediately rules out any kind of relationship being built on trust, and if you're selling me an insurance product, you sure as hell need my trust.

Seeing as we've never dealt with each other in the past, I know I never gave you my number, so this makes it unsolicited communication, which, unless I'm mistaken, is against my fundamental right to privacy.

You're not off to a good start.

Secondly, what do you know about me, besides which 10 digit combination will make my cellphone beep?

How do you know that I am even remotely interested in what you're advertising? What makes you think that you can add any kind of value to my life? I am quite sure that SMSing a twenty-something about life insurance has about as much relevance as asking a starving Somali child if they would like to try a new Hollywood diet.

But let's say I might be interested. How does your marketing approach show any kind of personal touch in trying to acquire my business? You're trying to court me, but you use the same line on everyone. That's just tacky.

Thirdly, why the hell do I have to pay to opt out? I never opted in to begin with! You've hijacked my cell phone number, and now you've decided to hold it ransom until I send an SMS saying, "NO".

In a country like South Africa, that smacks of the mentality of a common thug, not an established, trusted organisation.

But, guess what. I always reply, "YES" to these SMSes, and when your sales people phone me (sometimes two days later), I spend a good 10 minutes demoralising them and their line managers, by demanding that my details be taken off your database and that they never call me again.

Wonder why you are getting so many 'YES' replies, but can't close half of them? There's your answer, because I'm not alone in this. People are forced to do the same as a last resort.

In closing, let's find a better way to do this. The next time someone walks into your office and says, "Hey boet, guess what, I have a killer database of okes who are just primed for your product, you gotta try this SMS marketing thing it's blerrie effective boet," please show them the door.

## ABOUT KEANAN REIS

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