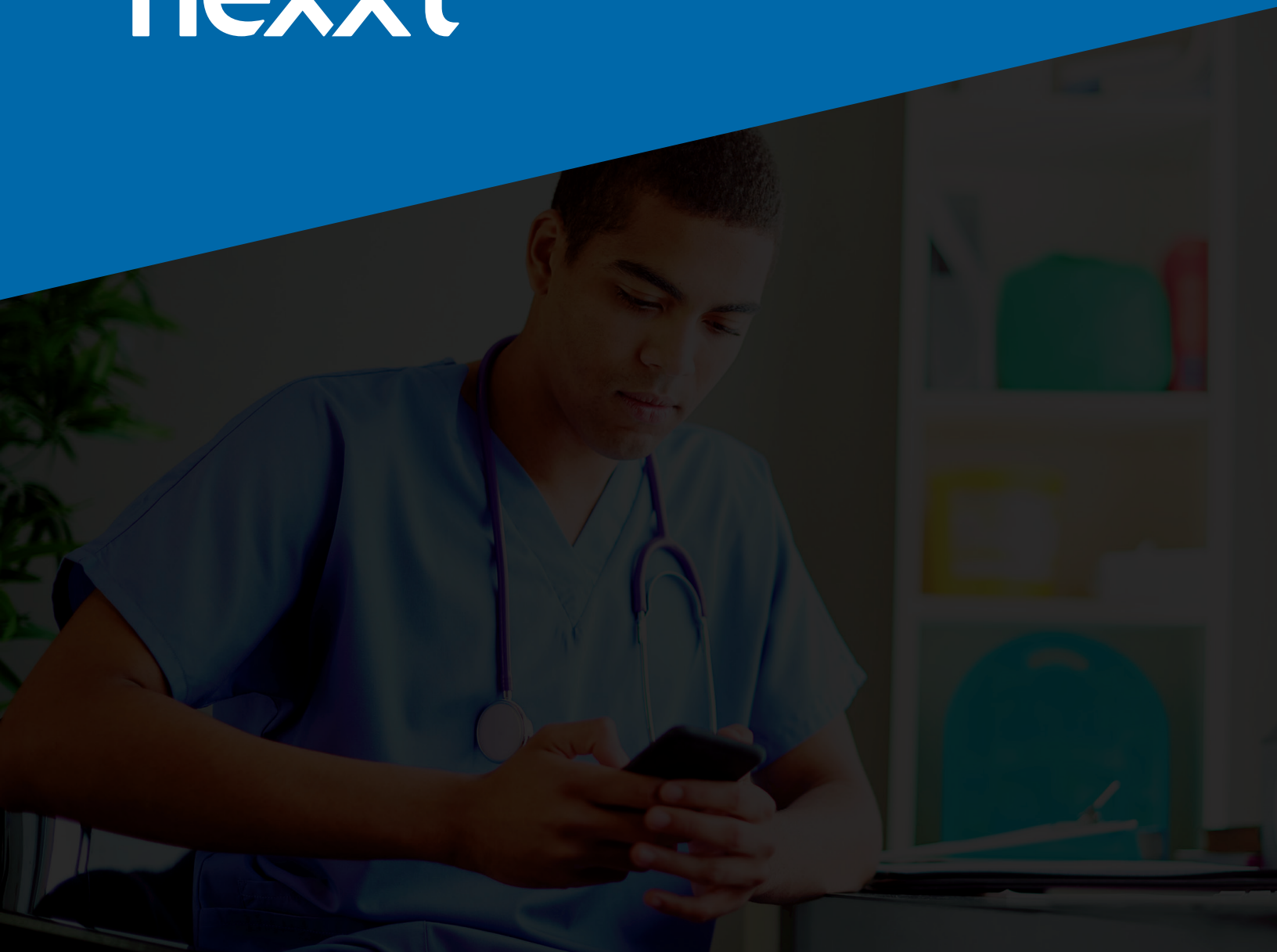


Building a
**Candidate-Winning
Text Strategy**
for Recruiting Nurses

nexxt



The demand for nurses remains strong and so does the competition to attract and engage with top talent. The healthcare industry, unlike many others, comes with the added challenge that candidates must have specific credentials to be qualified. The result is that many medical professionals, like nurses, bounce from one facility to the next, accepting better bonuses and benefits with each move. This means the best are moving fast, and to stand a chance, you will need to move fast, too.

That's why SMS texting is quickly becoming a go to recruiting channel. Nurses are on-the-go types. Some bounce to different facilities through one employer, and those that do work one central location still might have highly varied shifts. SMS texting allows recruiters to make direct contact quickly without the potential of being overlooked or interrupting a shift and disturbing rest.

In addition, text messages allow employers to edge out the competition by starting conversations with potential candidates—even if they aren't actively applying to jobs. Text messages have an amazing delivery rate of 99% and 50% of job seekers have said they've already texted with a recruiter. Additionally, according to Statista there are **3.5 billion** smart phone users in the world, this means that 44.85% of the world's population owns a smartphone. And according to EMarketer.com, adults in the United States spend 3 hours and 45 minutes on average on their mobile devices, so they're likely not to miss any messages that come in. Email, which only sees an average **20% open rate**, is opened on mobile devices 46% of the time.



If you are interested in exploring this rapidly growing channel but don't know where to start, this guide is for you. Even if you have delved into the world of SMS text recruiting, our insight will provide tips and advice on building a candidate-winning **SMS text recruiting strategy**.

First things first, let's cover the basics...

› SMS Texting Compliance

As expected, text messages sent from businesses to consumers have strict guidelines to be followed and regulations from the Federal Communications Commission. Recruitment text messages are not held to the same consent-based protections under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act. However, you still must obtain consent from the recipient.

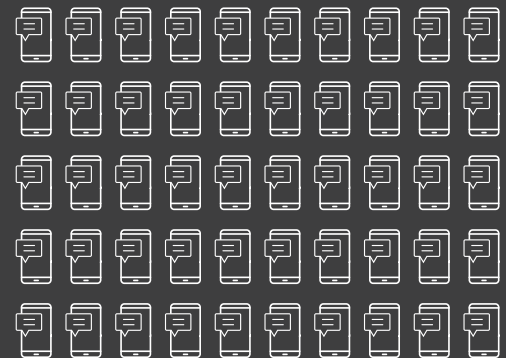
It's important to provide...

- **Notice to your candidates.**
Make it clear they are consenting to receive text messages. If you collect mobile numbers through your ATS, include an SMS text opt-in so that you have the ability to text them in the future.
- **A clearly written opt-in.**
Never contact a candidate who has not explicitly opted in to receive recruitment opportunities via text. Best practice is to require the user to actively check an opt-in box (preferably next to the field where they entered their cell number) as opposed to pre-checking the box for them. This shows that the candidate clearly intended to opt-in, rather than simply opting in because they continued to the next step in the process.
- **An opt-out method.**
Even though candidates will consent to receiving texts, you should be prepared for them to change their mind. That could be including an option to stop receiving texts in the message itself, or simply having a plan in place should someone request



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2010, Papa John's sent 500,000 texts that violated the text consent rules. They had to pay a \$16.5 million settlement.



to be removed from the list. Obvious desires to opt-out are replies that read, “stop” or “unsubscribe”. You’ll also want to monitor for people who responded with unique language, such as, “I just got this phone” and “don’t know why you are texting me!”, which can happen if the person who opted in gives up their cell phone number. Be sure to track those who opt-out and remove them from all text campaigns. If you don’t, it will not only negatively impact your brand, but it can also get you into trouble with the carriers or the government.

NOTE: Never send a text to a candidate who has not explicitly signed up to receive opportunities via SMS text messaging.

› Connecting with Candidates

It can be overwhelming to approach SMS text recruiting when you consider all the rules and regulations involved. There are two great solutions to connect with candidates in a compliant and friendly manner.

The first is to develop your own list of candidates to text. This can be done by using your career site and enabling candidates—or even site visitors—to opt to receive text messages. If you haven’t been doing this and want to build your list more quickly, try emailing your entire talent pool and inviting people to opt-in.

The second option is to work with companies who have connected with and developed lists of interested candidates. When texting a list of interested candidates, it is important that your text is HIGHLY relevant. The leading companies can build a list personalized to your needs so that you are only texting people who are qualified and interested in your jobs.

› Managing Text Recruiting Campaigns

As with any recruiting strategy, SMS text recruiting requires maintenance. Candidates are quick to lose interest in companies that don't respond to their applications, so an unanswered text conversation the employer started will surely end in a bad candidate experience. You have to be at the top of your game. Here are some SMS text management options:



Traditional

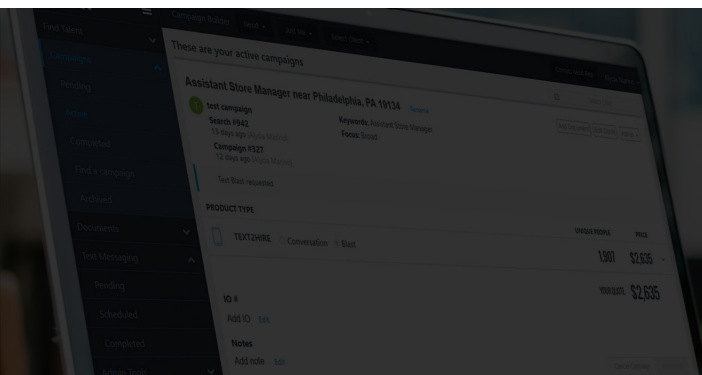
Traditional text messaging is 1:1, and recruiters can do this themselves no differently than making a phone call. If you are reviewing a candidate resume and want to contact them, simply send a text instead of an email.

Pros: Direct communication. Don't need to be as concerned with opt-in.

Cons: Very time consuming. Does not work en masse and doesn't automate or speed up the recruiting process. Also, the recruiter has now given away their personal number to candidates.

When to use: Use of unique positions where you are trying to get top candidates to respond—the same people you might leave a voice message for.

Tips: Be personal. Start your message with, "I hope you don't mind if I reach out to you via text, but I have a position that I think you might be a great fit for..."



Automation



To start a large number of candidate conversations quickly, many organizations turn to automation through an SMS “blast”. Similar to email, a list of candidates is sent a message en masse and those who respond receive an automatic reply to move the process forward. Pay special attention to your language and how you approach advertising the opportunity so as not to lose a personalized touch or appear spammy.

Pros: Can reach a large number of candidates quickly. Don’t need to have someone monitoring the campaign and responding in real time.

Cons: Loses the personal touch of a real person responding and can lead to lackluster communications.

When to use: SMS blasts work great if you are promoting an event such as a job fair or jobs that may attract a diverse audience of job seekers. This can work well if you are hiring lots of different types of healthcare workers with varying qualifications.

Dashboard



If you work with a company who specializes in SMS text recruiting, you probably have the option to manage your text messages and replies via a dashboard. This enables you to start conversations with interested candidates NOW, and while the initial response is slower, it can lead to faster hires. Often times, employers still use basic scripts and allow multiple recruiters to respond from the dashboard, which speeds up the response times.

Pros: It’s a real conversation!

Cons: Requires the manpower to monitor the responses in real time.

When to use: This works great when you are hiring a number of skilled candidates for high demand positions—such as registered nurses, CNAs, medical billers, etc.

Tips: Invite candidates to skip the application. High demand candidates might not have their resume up-to-date and may not want to go through your ATS process, so let them know that you can move forward with a personal conversation.

› Creating the Perfect Opening Pitch in One Text

Once you have organized the compliant list of candidates to text, there's another challenge to face: *what should you say to them?* This is still very much about making a good first impression. This first text message will carry the weight of your offer and ultimately influence your chance of getting a reply. Concentrate on the message you are trying to convey, keeping it casual enough to not appear spammy or pushy.

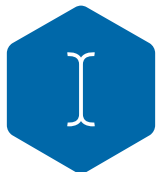


REMEMBER!

There is a 160 character limit to each text. Everything from the greeting to the URL falls into that restriction. The URL accounts for 25 characters.



Introduce yourself. No one likes to respond to strangers or wrong numbers and there's always the chance they forgot they opted-in to receive messages. Be sure you mention the employer you represent so the candidate knows your message wasn't a mistake or attempt at intrusion.



Stick with basic written communication rules. All caps are better left in conversations with your friends. It will look harsh and unprofessional to a candidate.



Be honest with your pitch. What are you offering this candidate? Keep your language excited and interesting but avoid trying to hide your intent. You know where you want this conversation to go. The candidate will know or catch on fast, so start with transparency. It will only help build trust.



Include a benefit. You are turning to SMS texting in order to get in contact with your candidates as soon as possible. Clearly and concisely explain the benefit of working with you to explore the opportunity. Make it worth their time immediately. This can simply be a mention about the job opening, but if room allows, feel free to also include available hours (part or full time), pay (salary or hourly) or any number of details (split schedule, weekend hours, growth opportunities, flex-work, etc.)



WWW.

Decide whether to use a dashboard or an automated campaign.

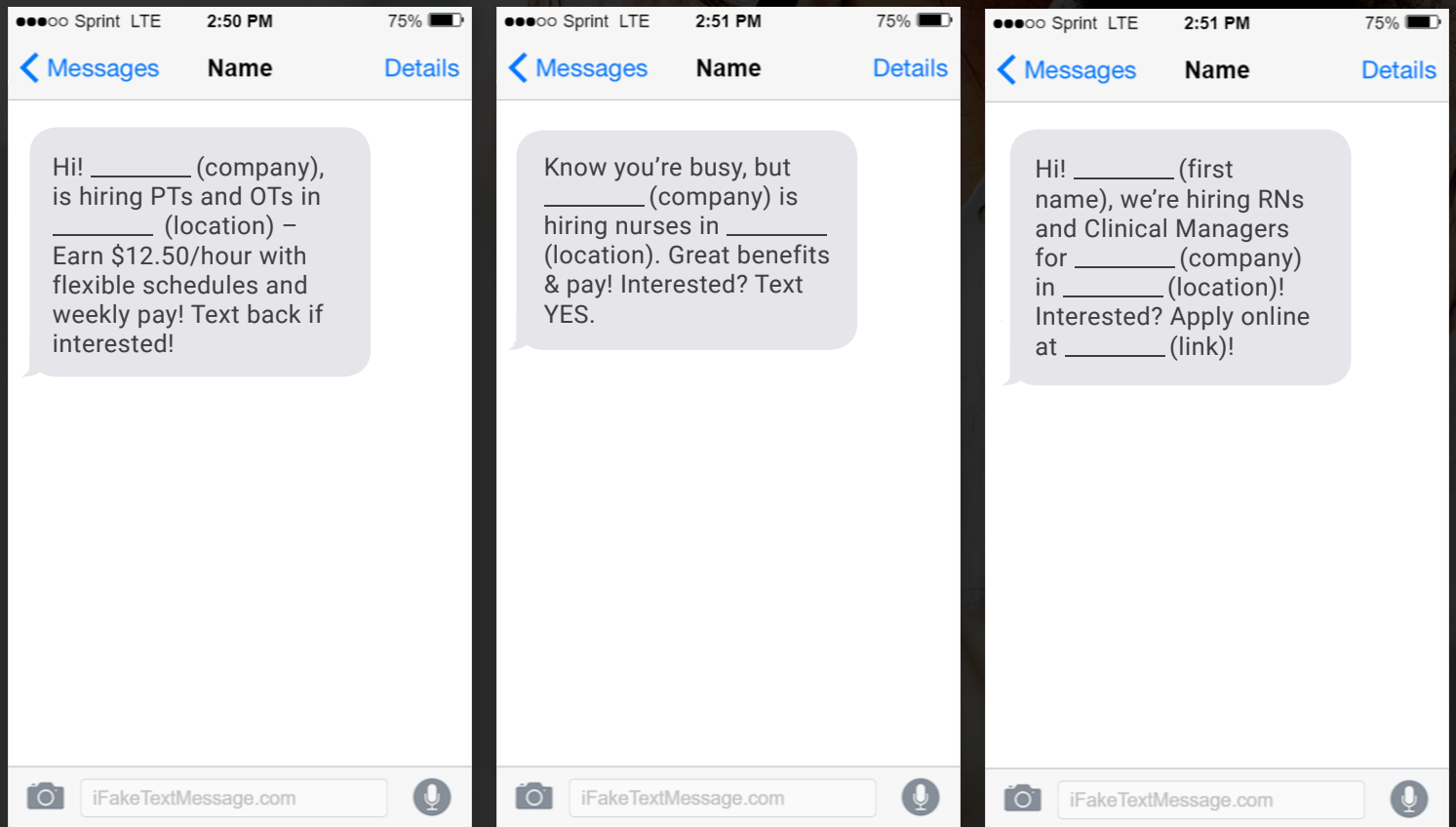
For healthcare recruiting, starting a conversation via dashboard is more effective. But, only do this if you are able to have a recruiter man the dashboard and carry on live conversations. If you don't have the bandwidth—or if you are promoting a hiring event rather than specific openings—then a blast makes sense. For a blast, you will need a landing page to send them to where they can learn more and register. Ideally, the landing page will be customized to the campaign, and it will work seamlessly with the text messages they received.

If you send candidates to a website,
be sure it's optimized for mobile.
They will be accessing it from their
phone after all.



› Seems like a lot to fit into a text, right?

Here's an example with fill in the blanks to get you started:



› Finding the Right Timing & Frequency

Medical professionals work insane hours. Even the aspiring medical professional still balances classwork with clinicals. The good news is that SMS text recruiting will allow you to communicate with your target candidate easily, regardless of their schedule. The bad news is that you might be waiting for a reply over the course of a day. Many nurses and medical staff are known for 12-hour shifts or working a few days on and a few days off. It might take 2 or 3 days for a nurse to even look at their phone, while a nurse practitioner has 24/7 access. Your frequency will need to allow for time to pass without responses.

For this unique industry, try to send the first text within business hours, but don't expect a response then. Wait, at the very least, 2-3 weeks before following up with your initial text. In some cases, follow up isn't even acceptable or encouraged. Cap your correspondence to 2 texts. If by 2 texts, there is no response on a specific opportunity, assume the recipient isn't interested. Wait a few months before sending a new offer.

If a candidate does reply, be sure to respond as quickly as possible. Those crazy hours the medical professional carries can be a huge obstacle in keeping conversation. Have a plan in place for immediate or quick replies to take advantage of their availability.



› Follow Up without Turning Candidates Off

It's a waiting game after your first text. No response could mean disinterest, that they haven't received the message or they received the message but forgot to respond. And those are only three possibilities. How you tread further can have massive impacts, so it's crucial you have the right follow up strategy.^a

By rule of thumb, stick to guidelines similar to email follow ups. Just remember some candidates are not interested in job opportunities presented via text. Keep your follow up text simple. They can see everything you sent before right there anyway.^b

Greet the candidate again

1

Reiterate the deadline for the opportunity

2

Identify if you will or will not be reaching out again

3

Invite them to connect when and however is most convenient for them

4

NOTE

a If you are using an automated process, be sure you have a clear workflow laid out so it doesn't feel automated. If you offer a candidate the option to contact you via email, make sure they're no longer sent texts. The candidate might skip a response and complete an online form, if so, they applied and there's no need for further contact.

b Once you've made your initial point of contact, how you proceed is important. Medical workers are busy and will require a little more flexibility. Gear your conversation to answering their questions and scheduling a phone conversation if they're interested in proceeding.

› Taking the Hint – Know How to Disengage

Remember, some candidates simply don't want to be contacted via their phone. Be proactive by providing other means of communication (your email, phone number, etc). Move forward with caution and err on the side of caution when continuing conversations.

Are you interested in connecting with medical professionals? Find out how many nurses and specialized healthcare professionals Nexxt can help you reach.

› Finding the Right Solution to Automate Texting Campaigns

Text2Hire™

One of the easiest and most effective ways to reach numerous candidates through texting at once is through Text2Hire.

Text2Hire gives you direct, immediate access to the people you want to hire—and who have already said they are open to receiving career opportunities via text.

99% average open rate

8% average response rate

74% of job seekers say they want to get targeted jobs via text



The best way to communicate with candidates is the way they're already communicating.

Learn more about Text2Hire from Nexxt and how it can help you create targeted text campaigns targeted to your specific audience using a database of millions of candidates.






About Nexxt

Nexxt, a recruitment media company, is a dynamic employment solution catering to the next generation of hiring. For companies and agencies, Nexxt is a full-service recruitment marketing platform, providing a targeted method of sourcing the best people from a broader talent pool. For professionals, Nexxt is an employment solution, powering more than 50 niche career sites to make finding the perfect job easier. Nexxt combines predictive technology with multichannel marketing to a diversified talent network of more than 85 million candidates on focused career sites, allowing recruiters and hiring managers to build custom campaigns and efficiently fulfill their hiring needs. To learn more and see what's Nexxt, please visit hiring.nexxt.com.




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nexxt
Talent + Tactics

You start conversations with the right candidates through targeted, multi-channel recruitment marketing campaigns.

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