

LifeMoves Uses Messaging to Connect with Clients to Improve Communication, Engagement and Success Outcomes



LifeMoves converses with clients via text messaging to remind them about appointments, ongoing responsibilities and to stay engaged with them after they leave the program.

Implementing SMS-Magic has enabled LifeMoves to increase the depth and quality of the communications we have with our clients.

- Craig Garber
CFO, LifeMoves

Overview

LifeMoves is the largest nonprofit serving the homeless in Silicon Valley. They run 17 shelters for families and single adults. They also have outreach programs where they connect with the unsheltered homeless to try and get them services or into shelters. The nonprofit serves 10,000 people annually, with 93% of families and 72% of individuals who complete the LifeMoves transitional program returning to stable housing and self-sufficiency.

The Challenge

LifeMoves collected data about clients when they left their program about whether they had achieved stable housing. However, the nonprofit didn't know whether they were having a lasting impact on their clients, aside from the occasional communication from some clients who kept in touch with their case manager. LifeMoves wanted to develop a systematic way of keeping in contact with clients to track if they were still in stable housing a month, six months or a year after leaving.

LifeMoves received funding from Google.org to develop a solution for this challenge. After LifeMoves conducted research on their client base, they discovered that almost all of their homeless clients had cell phones. For clients who didn't have cell phones, LifeMoves was able to provide them easily.

However, many didn't have smartphones. This led to LifeMoves decision to use messaging to communicate with clients after they left their program. "Texting was the easiest way we could achieve our goals and we reach the broadest number of people by text, rather than email," says Garber.

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Answering the Challenge

LifeMoves investigated three texting solutions presented to them by their Salesforce implementation partner, Cloud for Good.

SMS-Magic became a top contender because its seamless integration with Salesforce was an important criteria for LifeMoves. "Looking at both cost and performance, SMS-Magic fit our needs well," says Garber.

How LifeMoves Improved Communication with Clients via Messaging

LifeMoves developed the Connect program to maintain contact with clients via text messaging. They realized that messaging clients while they were in their program would establish an effective communication channel. This would make it easier for clients to continue communicating with LifeMoves using texts in the longer term, after they left the shelter.

Appointment Reminders

LifeMoves used messaging to engage with clients in the shelters by reminding them of appointments with their case managers. This resulted in clients keeping their appointments more often and increased connection with their case managers. It also allowed clients to reach out to their case managers for help via texting.

Task Assignment

Clients are assigned chores through automated messaging flows and they respond back via text as to whether they've completed them. People often also share an image of the completed chore as proof that it's done.

An automated message goes to clients as an acknowledgement when they confirm that they've completed a chore. Their status in the CRM is then automatically updated from Confirm to Completed.

Informational Messages

Clients get an inspirational text every Monday morning. Many of them respond with a thank you or a thumbs up emoticon. LifeMoves also sends informational messages about community events.

After clients leave the shelter, they continue to get texts from case managers checking in on them. They also receive texts with job and housing listings.

Regular Surveys

LifeMoves sends clients a periodic survey by text to learn how they're doing. They send an eight question survey bi-monthly which takes less than five minutes to complete.

The survey begins by asking clients whether they're currently residing in stable housing. A 'No' response triggers the person's case manager to contact them.

SENT

Hello, {!Contact.firstname},
Welcome to LifeMoves short survey. There are 8 short questions and should take less than 5 minutes to complete.

Are you currently residing in stable housing?

Please respond by answering, yes or no.

The survey then asks clients how confident they are about making their next rent payment, on a scale of one to five. Clients scoring their ability to pay rent from one to three trigger case management. If needed, the Connect Program case manager then follows up with clients to provide ongoing support as they transition to self-sufficiency.

A similar question follows in the survey about employment. There are also questions checking the client's well-being - how safe they feel in their current residence. Individuals answering never or rarely would again trigger case management.

SENT

How often would you say you feel good, all things considered?
Please respond back with the corresponding number below:
1-Never
2-Rarely
3-Sometimes
4-Often
5-Always

Clients also must rate how sincerely they've been following their treatment plan. Those who have a substance abuse issue need to reply with the number of AA meetings they've attended that month. If clients are on parole or probation, LifeMoves asks them whether they have any concerns regarding their parole or probation conditions. A 'Yes' would trigger case management.

If a client doesn't respond to the survey within 24 hours, LifeMoves sends a reminder message.

SENT

Hello, {!Contact.firstname}, Recently we invited you to participate in a survey. We noticed that you have not yet responded. We kindly ask that you spend just a few minutes filling out the survey.

Fifty-nine percent of clients respond to the text survey. "Clients like the survey by message as we're checking on them without being too invasive," says Megan Bradski, Case Manager, LifeMoves.

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LifeMoves has also identified certain words that indicate psychological distress, such as a potential suicide, in both Spanish and English. If a client text messages a word from this list, they get an automated message in response.

SENT

Hi {!Contact.firstname}, A LifeMoves case manager will reach out to you. Please call 1-800-273-8255 if you need immediate help.

A notification goes to the case manager to ensure that he/she follows-up with the person.

Highlighting the Business Value of Messaging

Better engagement with clients. "SMS was a new area of communication with clients," says Garber. LifeMoves now has more data on how people are doing after they leave LifeMoves shelters, based on regular text surveys.

Positive feedback from clients. LifeMoves clients welcome the messages they receive from the nonprofit. They feel more connected and reassured that someone's looking out for them.

Ability to deal promptly with high-risk clients. SMS-Magic recognizes sensitive keywords in incoming messages and notifies case managers. Case managers intervene in time to counsel those in distress.

Currently 250 clients are receiving messages in the Connect program, and 67 are receiving texts post program. LifeMoves has been piloting texting in four of their nine shelters since October 2017 and they will roll it out fully across all shelters by this year.

Messaging was initially a way for LifeMoves to gather data about clients after they left their shelters. It is now central to their communication to ensure that clients are self-sufficient in the long term.

About SMS-Magic

SMS-Magic is a proven, global messaging platform for Salesforce, with over 1500 clients accessing 59 direct carriers. SMS-Magic enables Salesforce users to engage buyers and win and retain more new customer revenue, while creating strong customer relationships that drive sustainable competitive advantage. SMS-Magic is the most positively reviewed messaging application on Salesforce AppExchange.



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