

# Selling Home Buyers on Conversational Text Messaging

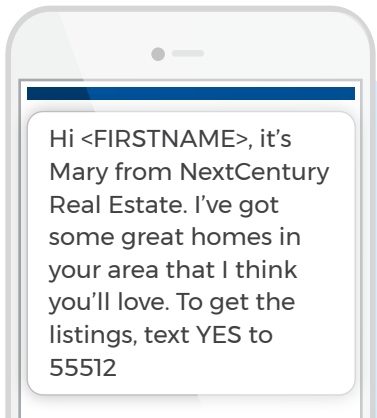
Potential home buyers are seeking information on everything from property details to the buying process. When they come to your agency for help, responsiveness is key. Nearly 80% of today's buyers expect real estate agents to respond to inquiries within a day and over 40% of them want a response within hours, according to research by Zillow.<sup>[1]</sup> If you don't respond quickly, you don't get the client. Conversational text messaging provides the responsiveness you need.

Getting back to everyone by email and phone can become an all-consuming task, so you have to use the right technology to connect with digital-age home buyers. Since 70% of home buyers are now millennials or gen-Xers, it only makes sense that text messaging is the solution.

[Using a conversational text messaging platform](#) can help you respond to buyers faster and reduce the amount of time you spend fielding inquiries so you can handle more leads and continually build your database.

## Use Your Existing Database

Just as you use your database to mine leads through email or by mailing postcards, you can use it to begin communicating with leads via text. Start by sending a message to all your current leads to let them know you can keep them up to date with text messages. This will also serve as an opt-in confirmation for future messages.



Hi <FIRSTNAME>, it's Mary from NextCentury Real Estate. I've got some great homes in your area that I think you'll love. To get the listings, text YES to 55512

When a lead replies "yes" to this message, they are automatically sent a series of property listings that fit their needs according to information you have previously entered in your database. This way you don't have to make a call or send an email every time a new home comes on the market and the client can then let you know if they need more information or want to see a home.

## Add Texting to Your Home Listing Marketing

Studies show that 90% of leads prefer to receive text messages over calls from a sales representative. Fortunately, real estate agents have many opportunities to let home buyers know that information is available by text message. You can offer your text-based services on all of the marketing materials you already use, like your website, direct mail, online and print ads, social media, property listings, and flyers.

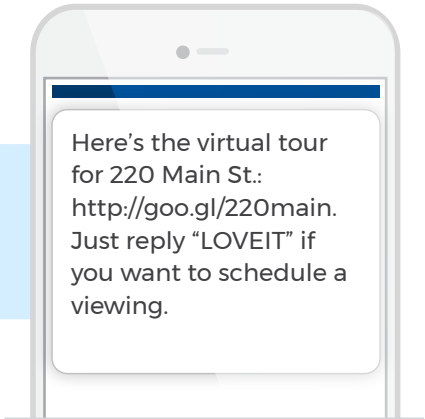
## How to Get the Opt-In for Conversational Text Messaging

Say a house hunter stops by one of your properties and grabs a flyer. On the flyer, you can offer to text them real-time updates on the status of the property and to send them information on similar homes.

To invite home buyers to opt-in to your text messaging services, include a message with an SMS short code in your promotional materials and advertising. For example, on a property listing flyer, the message might look like this:

*Text "220MainSt" to 55512 to see the virtual tour for this property. Up to 6 msgs/month. Reply HELP for help or STOP to cancel. Message & data rates may apply. See Terms & Conditions at [NextCenturyRS.com/tnc](http://NextCenturyRS.com/tnc).*

Once the buyer opts in by sending a text to 55512, they are sent a link to the virtual tour and your SMS platform automatically adds them to your database as a new lead.



Here's the virtual tour for 220 Main St.:  
<http://goo.gl/220main>.  
Just reply "LOVEIT" if you want to schedule a viewing.

Not only do you now know that this is a hot lead, but you get a wealth of information about the buyer—what type of property they are looking for, what area they're shopping in, etc. From here, you can send them more targeted listings, automatically schedule showings, and up your chances of finding exactly the home they are looking for. This same tactic can be used on any of your marketing materials and mailers.

Note that most messages can be sent automatically by an SMS marketing platform like SMS-Magic. You don't have to spend all day responding to text messages instead of fielding phone calls—the platform uses keywords in the texts you receive to send the appropriate response, and it notifies you when you need to take action or when an event happens such as when a new lead is added to the database. Of course, you can manually intervene whenever you want to add a personal touch or answer a complex question.

## A Few Rules to Follow

Text messaging is a cost-efficient and effective way to engage home buyers. There's just one hitch—prospects and customers must "opt-in" (give you specific permission) to send them marketing text messages.

Text messages for business falls under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA), which is the main anti-telemarketing law in the U.S.

Here's how to comply:

- Get your home buyers to opt-in as discussed above.
- Make sure the invitation you include on your marketing and sales materials tells them what to expect; number of messages per month and types of messages - listings, virtual tours, community information, etc. And make sure you meet the expectations you set.

- Give them a way to opt-out of your text messaging program, should they want to. Use a keyword like "STOP" to opt out and communicate it occasionally. The beauty is that an advanced SMS texting platform will automatically remove them from your list to keep you in compliance.

Check out our guide to the [TCPA Guidelines](#) to assure that you're following the rules and always remember to text your clients the way you would want to be texted.

## SMS Texting is a Win-Win in Real Estate

Messaging is the new conversation in real estate. The communication preferences of the next generation of buyers are demanding it, and fortunately, it will make your life easier and help you sell more effectively. [SMS platforms](#) can automate a lot of your day-to-day inquiries, save you time, help you serve your clients more effectively, and of course, help you close more deals.

### Sources

[1] <https://www.zillow.com/research/zillow-group-report-2016-13279/#buyer>