

Parkbench Gets 2X the Connection Rate with Messaging

Easy and Fast

It's easier and faster to message a Parkbench sales rep than to schedule a call.



“ Messaging has doubled our connection rate, because we're able to communicate better with leads and in an easier way. That just naturally leads to a lot more leads for us and a lot more revenue. ”

-Kunaal Chopra,
Business Manager, Parkbench



Overview

Parkbench is a Canadian technology company that builds hyper-local neighbourhood websites that they maintain and update with local events, deals from local businesses and local news. They have built 10,000 neighbourhood websites across North America. The company has a proprietary technology that automatically aggregates local content from across the web.

Parkbench works exclusively with one real estate agent in each neighbourhood, who sponsors the local website for a year. Real estate agents can advertise deals on their website and feature local business owners, thus building relationships.

Business Challenge

Real estate agents are either in meetings or out of the office showing properties. Parkbench found it very difficult to get them to pick up a call. After two or three follow-ups, the company's sales reps would stop calling leads due to this low response.

The reps tried messaging them from their own cell phones and found they could close more deals. However, this meant that reps had data on their customers that Parkbench was unable to track or access. Once the company realized the effectiveness of messaging, they wanted to store all their customer data, conversations and activity history in Salesforce to maintain visibility into their business operations.

Answering the Challenge

In search of a messaging solution, Chopra visited the Salesforce AppExchange. "SMS-Magic was right at the top, with a lot of great reviews," says Chopra. The company wanted a solution that integrated with Salesforce, with a good user experience and that was easy to use.

Parkbench narrowed their choices down to Salesforce LiveMessage and SMS-Magic. LiveMessage didn't have many features that Parkbench wanted and the price was high.

Unlike other text messaging solutions, SMS-Magic's conversation view was convenient, because, "it looks like you're texting in your phone, but in Salesforce. So, it just makes texting a lot cleaner and integrates a lot smoother," says Chopra.

How Parkbench Uses Messaging to Engage Buyers

Parkbench texts leads to get a conversation going and continues the interaction over text as well, even after the lead is converted to a website sponsor.

Appointment setting

A sales rep tries calling a new lead at first, but if the lead doesn't pick up, which is 60-70% of the time, a text message is sent to the lead.

Please note: *In the conversations below, green represents an automated conversation, yellow represents a 1:1 conversation.*

Earlier, after calling a lead, reps would have to wait four or five hours before they could call again. Now, 60-70% of the time, reps get a response to this initial message, so they're able to start the first conversation with leads two to three times faster.

Being able to set meetings by text message is "huge for us because otherwise we'd just be randomly calling and hoping that they pick up so we'd be able to organize meetings with them to demo the website," says Chopra.

SENT

Hi, you just inquired about Parkbench on our website. When would be a good time to talk? Thanks, David.

RECEIVED

Hi David, I'm busy right now, but we could talk at 3 PM? Thanks, Ramona.

An automated text reminder goes to leads 30 minutes before the demo, which has helped reduce no-shows. Real estate agents have a fluid schedule since they're always moving around, so it helps to confirm with them before the call.

In case the lead is running late, they reply to the text message saying they're running 20-30 minutes behind, for instance. The rep gets an email notification that the lead has responded to their text. This helps reps reschedule the demo, rearrange their schedule and use their time productively by reaching out to another lead meanwhile, for instance.

"Texting provides a really personalized touch. Salespeople are perceived as sleazy sometimes. With texting, they're still trying to sell something, but when you're texting someone it's like texting a friend, so they have more personalized conversations," says Chopra.

Continuing the Conversation

Even after a demo or a conversation, if a lead has a question, it's easier and faster for them to message a Parkbench sales rep than to schedule a call. Forty to fifty percent of leads text reps after an initial conversation and ask them a question.

Even if such questions come in the evening, reps can easily shoot a reply over message using the SMS-Magic mobile app.

SENT

Hi <firstname>, just a friendly reminder that we have a demo scheduled in half an hour. Let me know if we're still good for <demotime>. Thanks, <repname>, Parkbench.

RECEIVED

Thanks for the reminder, David. I'll be there. Ramona.

“40%- 50% of leads text reps after an initial conversation and ask them a question.”

RECEIVED

Hi David, quick question- is there a lock-in period for your product? Thanks, Ramona.

After a lead is converted, they get passed on to account managers who continue to text message them. They coach customers on how to use their Parkbench neighborhood website and answer queries via message.

Messaging Flash Sales and Videos

Sometimes reps run a flash sale towards the end of the month and text the offer to their clients.

Sales reps also sometimes send a video of themselves as an MMS talking about why a neighborhood site would be good for the realtor. This adds a personalized touch and makes the realtor feel as if they know the salesperson. These messages help reps to close deals.

SENT

Hi Ramona, you need to buy a website for a year.
Thanks, David.

RECEIVED

Hi Tim, how do I upload an interview on my site?
Thanks, Ramona.

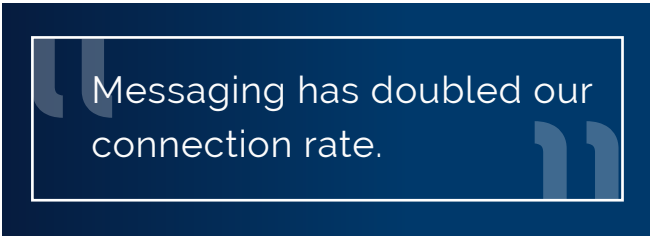
SENT

Hi <firstname>, We're running a flash sale. Get
\$500 off your website today. Call me for details.
Tim, Parkbench.

Highlighting the Business Value of Messaging

Reach more leads. If Parkbench got ten leads and was only able to contact three or four who picked up their call, earlier they would let the rest go after seven or eight follow-ups.

"Messaging has doubled our connection rate, because we're able to communicate better with leads and in an easier way. That just naturally leads to a lot more leads for us and a lot more revenue," says Chopra.




Messaging has doubled our connection rate.

Engage more leads faster. With text messaging, Parkbench can start a conversation with leads two or three times quicker than they were able to via phone. Sixty to seventy percent of the leads who are unreachable by phone call reply to the text.

Reduce no-shows. Fifty percent of leads respond to text reminders about demos either confirming they're coming, or rescheduling. Fifteen to twenty percent more leads show up for demos because of this text message reminder. Another 15-20% leads reschedule demos, so Parkbench can get those demos done, too.

Close more deals. "We have been able to close 25-30% more deals, just from being able to connect with people better through text messaging," says Chopra.



We have been able to close 25-30% more deals with text messaging.

Increased efficiency and productivity.

Sales reps and account managers don't need to set up a call for one-off queries like uploading a photo on the real estate agent's neighborhood site. This question, and others like it, are easily answered via text. Overall, messaging has increased the reps' efficiency by 25-30%.

Higher customer satisfaction. Sometimes prospects are afraid to get on the phone, thinking that reps will pressure them to purchase the solution. With text messaging, they are more in control of the conversation.

Parkbench aims to position themselves as the neighborhood digital mayor, seeking to appear friendly and approachable to realtors. Messaging, by its very nature, is a personal communication channel that helps Parkbench's reps to build a lasting relationship with their buyers.

About SMS-Magic

SMS-Magic is a proven, global messaging platform for Salesforce, with over 1500 clients across 59 direct carriers, including small, midsize, and enterprise accounts. 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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