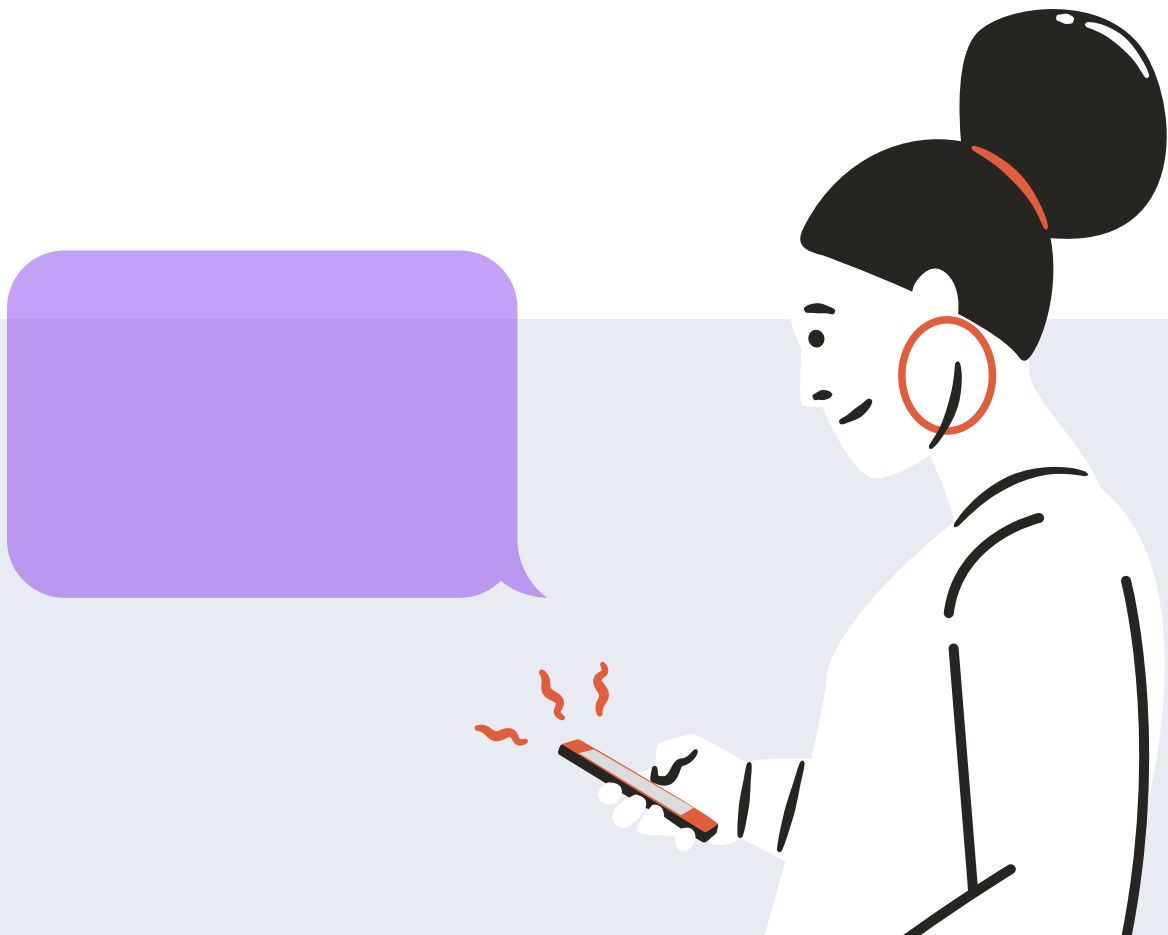


# Expert Tips for Top Nonprofit Texting Programs

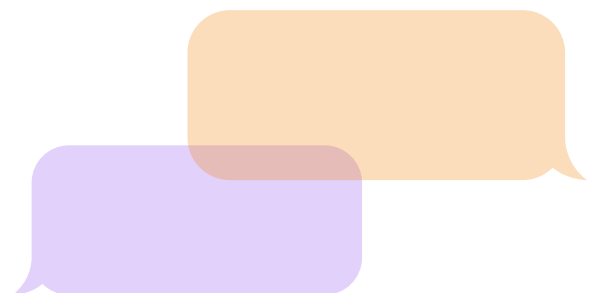
*A Comprehensive Guide for Building Meaningful Donor Relationships Through Strategic Text Messaging*





# Table of Contents

- 3** Introduction: Why Texting Matters for Nonprofits
- 5** Audience: Building Your Audience Foundation
- 7** Case Study: Transforming Donor Thank You's
- 9** Case Study: Multimedia Success
- 11** Creating Content That Sparks Joy
- 14** Measuring Success
- 17** Your Implementation Checklist



## INTRODUCTION

# Why Texting Matters for Nonprofits

Text messaging has emerged as one of the most powerful tools in the nonprofit communication toolkit. With high open rates, immediate delivery, and the ability to create personal connections at scale, texting offers unprecedented opportunities to engage supporters and drive meaningful action.

### THE REALITY CHECK:

- Text messages have a **98% open rate** compared to email's 20%<sup>1</sup>
- Messages are typically **read within 3 minutes** of delivery
- Supporters expect immediate, personal communication

However, successful nonprofit texting isn't just about pressing send. It's about building authentic relationships, providing value, and creating experiences that feel personal rather than mass-produced.

*Successful texting programs feel personal, not mass-produced. They're built on thoughtful audience acquisition and nurturing that leads to deeper relationships.*

## STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS FRAMEWORK

### Message Timing Principles:

Contact must be made soon after engagement

Overall experience should be positive and low-pressure

Content must make logical sense to the recipient

### Engagement Guidelines:

Encourage positive responses and engagement

Minimize opt-outs through value-driven messaging

Build reputation beyond "just asking for money"

## AUDIENCE

# Foundation Building: Growing Your Audience

## TWO FOUNDATIONAL STRATEGIES

### STRATEGY 1: ORGANIC, AFFIRMATIVE OPT-IN

Methods:

- Promote text-to-join keywords
- Include opt-in fields on donation forms
- Offer opt-in during event registrations
- Website form submissions

✓ Pros: High-quality, interested engagement

✗ Cons: Slower growth, especially for active donor audiences

### STRATEGY 2: INVITE YOUR STRONG SUPPORTERS

Methods:

- Import donor records with valid phone numbers
- Send gentle introduction texts to active supporters
- Apply established segmentation practices
- Start with low-level asks and mission-related updates

✓ Pros: Quick list growth

✗ Cons: Potential to confuse or annoy supporters if not handled carefully

## BEST PRACTICES FOR AUDIENCE BUILDING

### Segmentation is Key:

- Use what you know about your supporters
- Leverage platform segmentation capabilities
- Craft messaging that makes sense to specific audience segments
- Tag contacts based on interests and engagement history

### The Gentle Introduction:

- Start with offerings rather than asks
- Relate directly to your mission
- Express gratitude for their existing support
- Clearly explain the value of texting communication

## CASE STUDY

# Transforming Donor Thanks Through Texting

## THE CHALLENGE

Traditional donor thank-you methods (phone calls, emails) were expensive and time-consuming, costing \$1-\$2 per call or requiring significant staff time.

## THE SOLUTION | PERSONALIZED THANK-YOU MESSAGES

Implementation:

- Monthly import of all donors from the prior month with phone numbers
- Send personalized thank-you messages for recent gifts
- No additional donation asks included
- Clear opt-out reminders in every message
- Logical connection between recent donor activity and message receipt

## THE RESULT

Engagement Metrics:

- **3x higher response rates** compared to campaign messages
- **50% decrease in opt-outs** compared to other introductory messages
- Significant **cost reduction** for donor thanks efforts
- Enhanced donor relationship building

## KEY INSIGHT:

*"You're never wrong when you tell a donor you appreciate them. These messages aren't just calls to action; they're calls of gratitude."*

## IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Monthly Process:

- Export donor data from previous month
- Filter for valid phone numbers
- Segment by gift amount/donor history
- Craft personalized thank-you messages
- Send with clear opt-out instructions
- Monitor responses and engagement

## Sample Thank-You Message:

"Hi [Name], it's [Organization]. We wanted to personally thank you for your recent gift of \$[Amount]. Your support means everything to our mission.  
Reply STOP to opt-out anytime."

## CASE STUDY

# Hope For Paws' Multimedia Success

## ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Hope For Paws is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on animal rescue, providing veterinary care, and reducing animal homelessness and abuse in the Los Angeles area.



## THE CHALLENGE

- Reconnect with lapsed donors
- Efficiently distribute inspiring, long-form video content
- Find a solution beyond standard CRM add-ons
- Need a centralized dashboard with a user-friendly interface

## THE SOLUTION | MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING

Creative Approach:

- Upload high-quality rescue videos to YouTube
- Send text recipients compelling video screenshots
- Include trackable SmartLinks to full videos
- Pair texting with email for comprehensive outreach



Hi this is Eldad from Hope For Paws. I just rescued a dog that was left behind by a homeless person near the freeway: {link: Brenda}

I hope you love the rescue and have a great weekend!

## THE RESULT

Performance Metrics:

- **20% conversion rate** per message
- **7-13% click-through rate** (double their email performance)
- Reduced donor churn through direct engagement
- Wider media spread and audience reach

## KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- High-quality, emotionally resonant content
- Strategic use of visual previews
- Trackable links for performance measurement
- Integration with existing communication channels

Lessons Learned

- Texting can effectively drive traffic to longer-form content
- Visual previews significantly increase click-through rates
- Emotional storytelling resonates powerfully via text
- Multi-channel approach amplifies results

## MESSAGING

# Creating Content That Sparks Joy

## THE ANTI-FATIGUE STRATEGY

### Core Goals:

- Create engaging content mix to prevent fatigue and opt-outs
- Enhance supporter/organization bond
- Build reputation beyond "asking for money"
- Communicate like a friend, not a faceless organization

## FOUR CONTENT CATEGORIES THAT WORK

1. Interactive
2. Fun
3. Interesting
4. Personal

## PLANNING YOUR MESSAGES BY CONTENT TYPE

### Frequent Content Mix

#### Recommendations:

- Mission update/impact story
- Interactive element (poll, quiz, survey)
- Fun/personality content
- Gratitude/personal message

### Occasional Special Content

#### Recommendations:

- Donor spotlight features
- Volunteer appreciation
- Behind-the-scenes content
- Seasonal campaigns

*Continue to examples* 

## CONTENT CATEGORY 1: MAKE IT INTERACTIVE

Engagement Tactics:

- Surveys and quizzes with multiple choice answers
- Polls about mission priorities or preferences
- Feedback requests on programs or services
- Simple Q&A sessions with automated responses

Example Interactive Message:

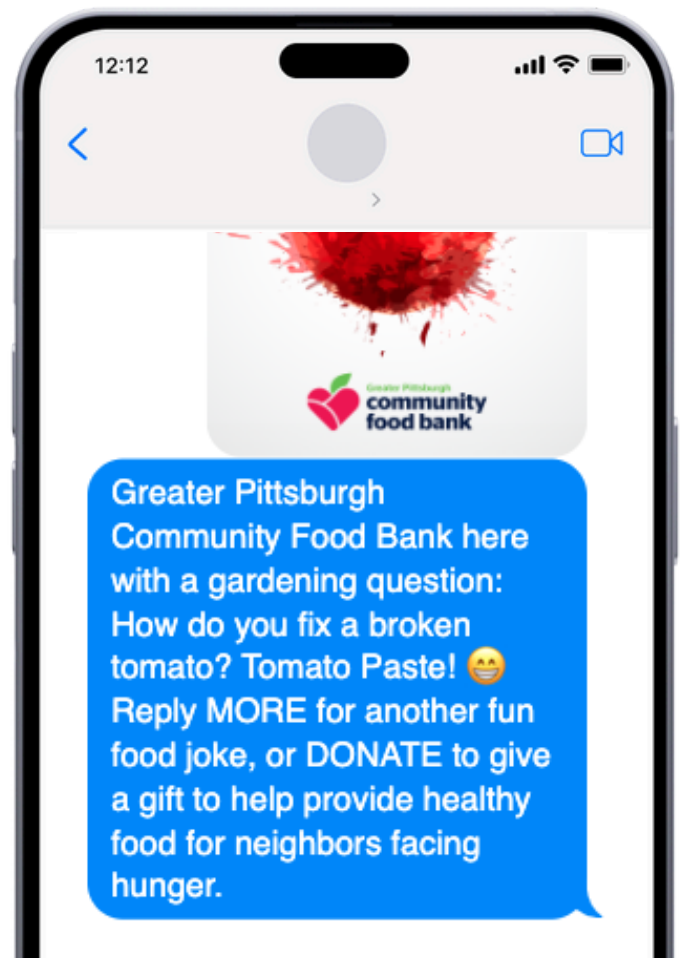
"Quick question! Which part of our mission matters most to you? Reply: A) Research, B) Patient Care, C) Education, or D) Community Impact. We'll share more about your choice!"

## CONTENT CATEGORY 2: MAKE IT FUN

Personality-Driven Content:

- Mission-related jokes and memes
- Dad jokes that supporters can share
- Seasonal greetings with personality
- Behind-the-scenes glimpses of your team

Example Fun Message:



## CONTENT CATEGORY 3: MAKE IT INTERESTING

Value-Added Information:

- Lesser-known program highlights
- Positive, uplifting statistics
- "Did you know?" facts about your work
- Success stories and impact updates

Example Interesting Message:

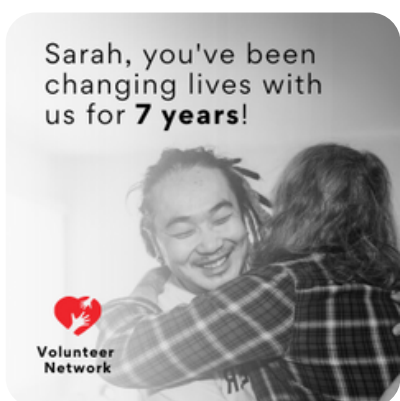
"Did you know our cooking program taught 500 at-risk youth foundational skills last year? 89% went on to find stable employment. Your support makes stories like this possible!"

## CONTENT CATEGORY 4: MAKE IT PERSONAL

Relationship-Building Content:

- Personalized thank-you messages
- Custom GIFs and images
- Birthday and anniversary acknowledgments
- Milestone celebration shares

Example Personal Messages:



Learn more about making personalized GIFs at [prompt.io/fuse](https://prompt.io/fuse)

## METRICS

# Measuring Success: Key Metrics to Track

## PRIMARY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

### Engagement Metrics

- Open Rates: Target 95%+ (significantly higher than email)
- Response Rates: Target 45%+
- Click-Through Rates: Target 7-13% for multimedia content
- Conversion Rates: Target 15-20% for well-targeted messages

### Audience Health Metrics

- Opt-Out Rates: Target <2% (50% lower than other introductory messages)
- List Growth Rate: Make a monthly growth percentage goal with your team
- Segmentation Effectiveness: Track the response rates by segment

### Relationship Building Metrics

- Donor Retention: Percentage of donors who continue giving
- Donor Upgrade Rates: Donors who increase giving after text engagement
- Volunteer Conversion: Supporters who become volunteers
- Social Sharing: Content shared beyond the original audience

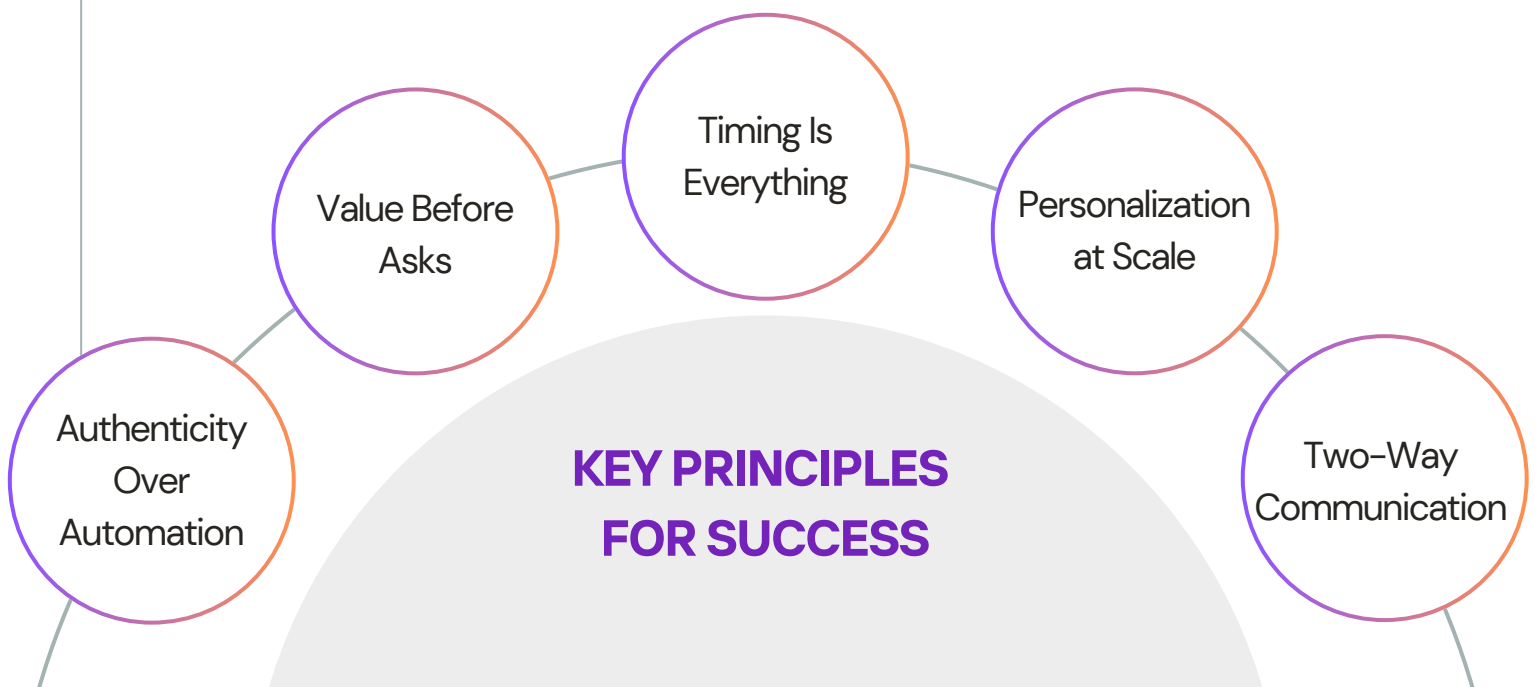
## IMPLEMENTATION

# Where to Start Your Texting Program

The most successful nonprofit texting programs share a common thread: they treat supporters as individuals, not data points. They provide value beyond financial asks and create experiences that feel genuinely personal and meaningful.

## YOUR NEXT STEPS

1. **Start Small:** Begin with your most engaged supporters
2. **Focus on Gratitude:** Implement a donor thank-you text program
3. **Add Value:** Introduce fun, interactive, and informative content
4. **Measure and Optimize:** Track key metrics and adjust based on results
5. **Scale Thoughtfully:** Expand audience and programming based on success



## KEY PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESS

### 1. **Authenticity Over Automation**

While automation enables scale, authentic relationship-building drives results. Every message should feel like it could come from a friend who genuinely cares about the cause.

### 2. **Value Before Asks**

Lead with gratitude, information, entertainment, and engagement. When you do make asks, they'll be received more positively by an audience that's used to receiving value.

### 3. **Timing Is Everything**

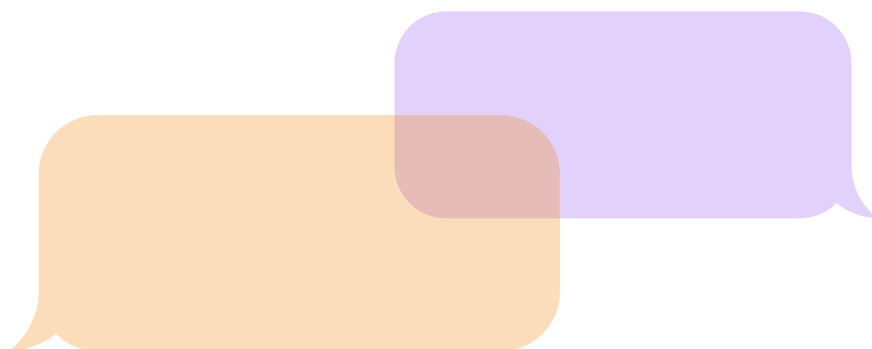
The immediacy of texting is both its greatest strength and biggest risk. Message timing must make logical sense to recipients and connect to their recent engagement with your organization.

### 4. **Personalization at Scale**

Use segmentation and personalization features to ensure messages feel relevant and targeted. Generic mass messages are the quickest way to lose audience engagement.

### 5. **Two-Way Communication**

Encourage responses and be prepared to engage in conversations. Texting's interactive nature is what sets it apart from other communication channels.



## IMPLEMENTATION

# Your Texting Program Essentials Checklist

### Phase 1: Foundation Setup

- Choose robust texting platform with segmentation capabilities
- Ensure 10DLC registration for legitimate traffic
- Set up 2-way conversational capabilities
- Integrate with existing CRM system
- Establish clear opt-out procedures

### Phase 2: Audience Building

- Identify organic opt-in opportunities (website, events, forms)
- Create compelling text-to-join keywords
- Develop donor import strategy and segmentation rules
- Craft gentle introduction message templates
- Set up automated welcome sequences

### Phase 3: Content Development

- Create content calendar template
- Develop message templates for different purposes
- Design interactive elements (polls, quizzes, surveys)
- Prepare multimedia content (images, GIFs, videos)
- Establish brand voice and personality guidelines

#### **Phase 4: Launch and Optimization**

- Start with small, engaged audience segment
- Monitor initial response rates and feedback
- Adjust messaging based on audience response
- Gradually expand to larger audience segments
- Implement A/B testing for message optimization

#### **Phase 5: Scaling and Automation**

- Set up automated thank-you sequences
- Create triggered messages based on donor behavior
- Develop seasonal campaign templates
- Establish performance review and optimization schedule
- Train team on platform use and best practices

Texting isn't just another communication channel—it's a bridge to deeper connections with your supporters. When done thoughtfully, it transforms transactional relationships into meaningful partnerships in your mission.

*Remember, every text is an opportunity to strengthen a relationship. Make each one count.*

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**



Quick Byte Webinars



Texting experts + platform