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Segmenting SMS campaigns with contact groups: by purchase, area, interest and activity

SEO & Marketing

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Segmenting SMS campaigns with contact groups: by purchase, area, interest and activity

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The short answer: segmenting means sending each customer **only the campaigns that matter to them**. In the SMS Center you do it with **contact groups**: a contact can be in several groups, and when you send you pick one or more groups. Someone who is in two of the chosen groups **receives the message once**. Fewer numbers, more responses and fewer credits used.

Why it is worth it

A school supplies offer sent to the whole list reaches people with no children; a tyre offer reaches people without a car. Each of those messages uses credits and teaches customers to ignore the next one. With groups, the same campaign goes to fewer people, and almost all of them have a reason to read it.

Groups that tend to work

Criterion	Example groups
What they bought	"Shoes", "Office supplies", "Butcher counter customers"
Area	One group per neighbourhood or city, to announce a new outlet or deliveries in an area
Stated interest	What the customer picked on the sign-up form: "New arrivals", "Offers only", "Events"
Activity	"Active" (bought recently) and "Inactive" (not seen for a long time). See **win-back campaigns**.
Customer type	"Businesses" and "Individuals". For businesses, `{$contact_company}` puts the company name in the message.
Birthday month	One group per month, for the birthday offer. See **birthday and loyalty SMS**.

How to set up the groups

1. **Create the groups** under Contacts, in the Groups tab. Use clear names, such as "Offers - Shoes".
2. **Put each contact in the right groups** when you edit it, or import a CSV straight into a new or existing group.
3. **To split a large list**, export your contacts as CSV, split the rows in a spreadsheet by the criterion you want and import each part into its own group.
4. **To send**, use "Send to this group" in the group list, or pick several groups under "New campaign".

Adding groups together without repeats

The numbers in the chosen groups are added to any you type by hand, and duplicates only receive once. So you can send to "Shoes" and "Children's clothes" at once without paying twice for people in both. If what you want is to leave someone out, build a group with only the people who should receive it: groups add up, they do not subtract.

Start with two or three groups.
Lots of small groups are hard to maintain. Start with "Active", "Inactive" and one group per main interest, and add more when a campaign calls for it.

Segmenting does not replace consent.
An "Offers" group should only hold people who agreed to receive offers. People who gave their number only for order updates belong in an updates group. See **who you may send to**.

RECOMMENDED

Want to send the right campaign to each group? See the SMS Marketing tools.

See the SMS Marketing page →

SEE ALSO

- **SMS contacts and groups: importing a CSV list and keeping it clean** →
- **Personalised SMS with the contact's name: variables, examples and pitfalls** →

- How to plan an SMS marketing campaign: list, message, cost and timing
- Testing two versions of an SMS campaign: a simple A/B test with contact groups
- Win-back SMS campaigns: bringing back customers who stopped coming
- SMS campaigns to more than 5,000 numbers: splitting the list and sending in waves

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