

# From Lapsed To Loyal

## How SMS Drives Membership Retention

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# Today's Mission

**In 60 minutes, you'll walk away with:**

- Why SMS is non-negotiable for renewals
- The 4-ingredient formula for effective messages
- A lapsed member recovery plan
- Real renewal campaign success stories
- Your own 30-day SMS renewal workplan



# The Reality Check

Your members are reading your texts...  
they're just not reading your emails.

**90%**

SMS Read Rate  
Read within 3 minutes

**15-25%**

Email Open Rate  
For renewal campaigns



**Lapsed members respond 3x more via SMS than email**



# **TCPA Compliance Basics**

**(So You Don't Get Shut Down)**

**To create and maintain compliant SMS campaigns:**

- Stay up to date
- Obtain written consent
- Review content carefully
- Protect privacy and security

 **Violations = \$500-\$1,500 PER TEXT**



# The 4 Must-Have Ingredients

1. **Personalization:** Use their name and membership details
2. **Urgency:** Create a deadline that motivates action
3. **Value:** Tell them what they keep or gain
4. **Clear CTA:** One simple action they can take now



**Pro Tip: Every renewal message should include ALL four ingredients**



# The 10-Second Fix

## Why This Message Fails:

- No personalization
- No urgency
- No incentive/value

"Hi member, your membership is due. Please renew at this link. Stop2End"

## Why This Works:



Name



Deadline



Benefit

"Hi Maria – renew by Friday and keep your benefits active. Tap to renew. Stop2End"



Clear CTA



# MESSAGE EXAMPLES:

## Success:

“This year ORG NAME raised X% and saved XYZ trees. Join the movement and \_\_\_\_.”

## Incentive + Deadline:

“Renew by Friday and keep your benefits active – plus get [incentive].”

## Empathy + Value:

“We noticed your membership expired – we’d love to have you back.”

## Nurture Follow-Up:

“Still thinking about it? Anything holding you back? Reply HELP.”



# Make Renewals FUN (Not Just Functional)

## Energy Over Boredom

- Boring messaging = boring results
- Excitement is contagious
- Your tone sets the temperature

## Make It Experiential

- Tie-dye kits > Discounts
- Adventures > Transactions
- Stories > Obligations

## "Thanking = Banking"

- Gratitude drives future giving
- Make donors feel SEEN, not transactional
- Celebrate, don't just process



# What is a Multi-Phase Drip Campaign Strategy?



# What is a Multi-Phase Drip Campaign Strategy?

Don't send one message and give up. Build a strategic sequence:

1

## Early Bird (30 days before)

*Renew early and get [incentive]*

2

## Reminder (7 days before)

*Expires in 7 days. Don't lose [benefit]*

3

## Last Chance (Expiration day)

⚠ *Today is your last day!*

4

## Win-Back (3-7 days after)

*We miss you! Special offer to rejoin*





# Real Campaign, Real Results

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago & NW Indiana

**38.86%**

Click Rate - Tie-dye kit incentive

**14%** Avg Click • **0.61%** Opt-Out

5-6x better than email • 99.4% stayed subscribed

*14 campaigns • 8 months • 25,000+ members reached*



# The 3-Phase Strategy

## PHASE 1: Early Bird (April-May)

**Goal:** Get renewals 4-6 months before expiration

**Incentive:** FREE t-shirt + patch (May 31 deadline)

**Result:** 15.54% avg click rate

## PHASE 2: Urgency (July-September)

**Goal:** Catch stragglers as Sept 30 expiration approached

**Messages:** "1 month away" → "12 days" → "TODAY at midnight"

**Result:** 7.63% avg click (peaked at 12% on expiration day!)

## PHASE 3: Lapsed Recovery (October-December)

**Goal:** Win back members who expired on Sept 30







**Hook:** Cookie Season! "Renew & join us for the sweetest time"

**Result:** 2.69% click rate 3 MONTHS post-expiration


*Different messages for different audience = strategic*



# Incentives That Actually Work!

-  **Financial:** Early bird discount, lock in rate, waive late fee
-  **Merchandise:** Free T-Shirt (Girl Scout's offered free tie-dye kit to troop leaders)
-  **Exclusive Access:** Members-only events, bonus content, VIP perks
-  **Urgency:** Limited spots, offer expires Friday, first 100 get bonus
-  **Community:** Support our mission, stay connected with peers
-  **Gamification:** Streak bonuses, achievement badges, loyalty tiers

**Split test different incentives to see what resonates with YOUR audience**

 **Pro Tip:** Girl Scouts' tie-dye kit got 38% clicks. Why? It's tangible, fun, and experiential - not just a discount!



# Understanding **Lapsed** Members

Lapsed members aren't ignoring you — they're overwhelmed.

## **Why They Don't Respond:**

- They forgot / Life gets busy
- They're unsure of the VALUE
- They feel disconnected
- They assume it's too late

## **THE LAPSED MEMBER FORMULA:**

**Empathy + Value + Incentive + Simple CTA + Nurture**

Your job: Make the decision easy, warm, and worth it.



# 5-Step Lapsed Member Recovery Timeline

**3-5 days**

**Success Stats: This year ORG NAME raised X%/\$ and saved XYZ.**

**7 days**

**Incentive Message: Plus get [incentive]**

**10 days**

**Empathy Message: We'd love to have you back**

**14 days**

**Nurture: Anything holding you back?**

**21 days**

**Final Warm Nudge: Your benefits are waiting**



# What NOT to Do with Lapsed Members

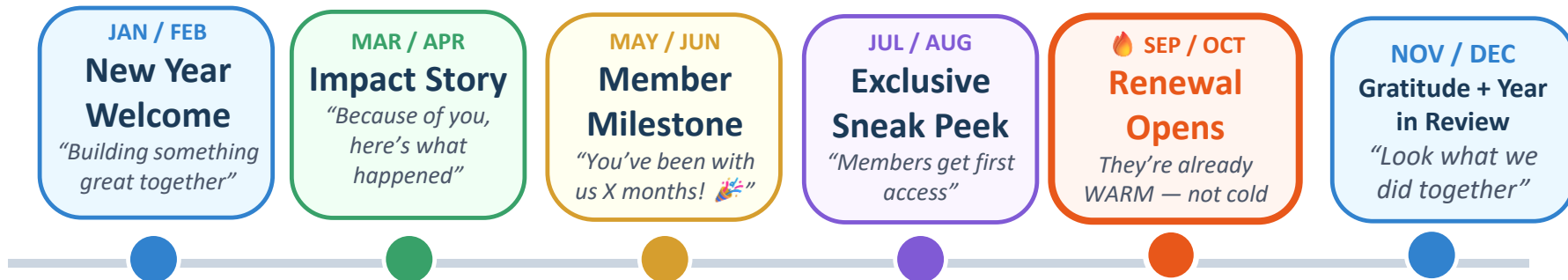
- ✗ No guilt trips ("We're disappointed...")
- ✗ No threats ("FINAL NOTICE!") and don't be spammy
- ✗ No long paragraphs
- ✗ No vague CTAs ("please consider renewing")
- ✗ Don't stop after one message
- ✗ Don't assume they don't care

Recovery takes a sequence, NOT a single message



# Cultivation Calendar: Stay Connected Year-Round

*Renewal is just one moment in a year-round relationship*



🗨️ Every touchpoint is a deposit. **Renewal is just the withdrawal.**



# Oxfam's SMS Cultivation In Action



We're asking you first:  
What should go on our next Oxfam t-shirt?  
A) Fight inequality. End poverty and injustice.  
B) People over profits. The future is equal.  
C) Every human deserves: clean water, healthy food, a safe home, a fair wage, equal rights, and a livable planet.  
D) **NOLIGARCHY**  
E) ~~Eat~~ Tax the ultra-rich

Reply to vote or with your own idea!

● Multiple-choice

Can we ask you a few questions? Take our short survey to help shape how Oxfam communicates with supporters like you:  
<http://lil.ms/ove5>  
stop=end

● Survey





REAL CAMPAIGN, REAL RESULTS

# Oxfam's The Summer Reading List Story

*How year-round cultivation drives renewals*

We're seeking cool reads for hot days for the Oxfam summer reading list. Fiction or non-fiction, light or heavy, we read it all! What should we add? stop=end

50%

of survey responses come from SMS

20 email vs 400 sms

SAME message

20x

more engagement via SMS than email

Oxfam: Thanks for your summer reading rec! Check out what our staff & other community members are reading here: <http://lil.ms/omk3st...>



Same message. Same content. Different channel. 20 vs. 400.



# Spot the Winner

Ideas to test with YOUR members



# ROUND 1: The Tricky Pair

## Message A:

Hi Sarah! Your membership expires in 30 days. Renew now and save \$10 with code EARLY10. Click here: [link]

Stop2End

## Message B:



**Sarah, your membership expires Sept 30. Renew by Friday (Sept 3) and get a FREE tote bag! Tap to renew: [link]**

Stop2End



# ROUND 2: The Emoji Debate

## Message A:

 URGENT: Your museum membership expires TODAY! Don't lose access to FREE admission + member events. Renew in 60 seconds: [link] 

Stop2Quit

## Message B:

Your museum membership expires today. Renew now to keep your free admission and member event access. Click to renew: [link]

Stop2Quit



# ROUND 3: The Guilt Trip vs. The Celebration

## Message A:

We haven't heard from you in 6 months 😞  
Your membership expired in March. We'd love to have you back! Rejoin today: [link]

Stop=Unsubscribe

## Message B:

Remember the amazing programs you enjoyed this year?  
Let's do it again! Your membership renewal is ready.  
Rejoin us: [link]

Stop=Unsubscribe



# ROUND 4: The Short vs. Long Debate

**Message A:**

**Hi Marcus! Renew by  
Friday, keep your  
benefits.**

**Tap here: [link]**

**Stop2Quit**

**Message B:**

Hi Marcus! Your annual membership expires this Friday, September 30th. Renew today to keep your exclusive benefits including free workshops, networking events, quarterly newsletter, and member-only job board. Don't lose access - tap to renew now: [link]

Stop2Quit



# ROUND 5: The Lapsed Member Test

## Message A:

Your membership expired 3 months ago. We'd like to offer you a special comeback rate: 20% off.

Rejoin today: [link]

Stop2End

## Message B:

It's Cookie Season! 🍪

Remember selling cookies with your troop? Renew your Girl Scout membership today and join us for the sweetest time of the year!

Tap to rejoin: [link]

Stop2End



# Your Turn!

## The 30-Day Renewal Challenge

Grab your workbook/scan the code and let's build your actual SMS renewal campaign — together!



# Your 30-Day Workplan

**Complete these 5 steps in your workbook:**

1. Define Your Audience: Who are they? What do they value?
2. Choose Your Incentives: Select 2-3 to test
3. Craft Your Messages: Write all 4 messages using the formula
4. Map Your Timeline: Plan your 30-day send schedule
5. Define Success Metrics: How will you measure results?



# Quick Wins: Start This Week

**Audit Your Current Messages: Do you have all 4 ingredients? If not, rewrite them.**

**Segment Your List: Separate active, expiring soon, and lapsed members.**

**A/B Test One Thing: Pick ONE variable and test it with a small group first.**

**Don't wait for perfection — start with progress!**



# Resources & Next Steps

## Take Home Materials:

- Your 30-Day Renewal Challenge workbook

## Stay in Touch

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## Learn More

mobilecommons.com  
SMS best practices  
Case studies & guides

Scan to visit our Mobile Commons NTC landing page:



Or visit: <http://lil.ms/oxg9>



# Turn Lapsed Into Loyal

You have the plan.  
Now go make it happen!

Questions?