

Case Study: Zeemee

Trying to Reach Gen Z?

What to do when email won't cut it



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Overview

Companies trying to reach Millennials and Generation Z are well aware of a frustrating fact: They don't check email, anymore. This change in communication habits has left many marketers and business leaders scrambling— how do you contact someone who won't even open your emails?

For ZeeMee, answering this question was urgent. They're an app that helps build community for college students. It's not a stretch to say the bulk of their business relies on people who don't check email.

ZeeMee needed to find a communication channel that people were actually responding to — that's when they tried text message communications.



The Challenge

ZeeMee works with colleges and universities to invite accepted students to join their online community where they can get information about housing, campus and get in touch with their counselor about coursework or any questions.

ZeeMee privately invites students to join the app by sending a link. Their challenge was letting students know they had been approved to join. When they first launched, they tried sending emails.

“They don't read any emails. Gen Z is over email, 100%. The only response you get on email is people saying 'unsubscribe me.' That's if they don't click the link on the bottom to do it themselves.”

Adam Metcalf, Co-founder

Metcalf estimated only about 0.1% of students were downloading ZeeMee after receiving an emailed link — a discouraging number for any business, particularly a startup like ZeeMee that had limited runway to prove their concept.

Metcalf knew he needed to find a way to reach college students through their preferred means of contact.



The Solution

Metcalfe switched from sending emails to texting. He found SlickText easy to use and scale — he was able to train an additional employee to help in five minutes.

“It doesn’t matter who you are, you can log into SlickText and figure this out. It’s that simple. The team was fantastic to work with”

Adam Metcalfe, Co-founder

He realized that for today’s generation of college students, texting met their complex communication needs and their expectation of immediacy.

“You live under the illusion that everybody wants to read your email, and they don’t,” he said. “They don’t care. Even if you’re bringing something that in your mind is hyper-relevant, extremely important and pertinent to them in that state of their funnel, they don’t care. They’re just getting inundated with email. They don’t have time. But if you can hit them right in the palm in their hand and it’s right there in their messages. It’s so much easier for them to open and deal with. It’s also a shorter message, too. It’s just more succinct, and powerful.”

After two years of using texting, Metcalfe is blown away by the results.

The Results

Metcalfe and the ZeeMee team found texting so powerful they have completely abandoned email as a contact method for Gen Z.

“I don’t do emails anymore,” he said. “I just dropped it altogether. It takes longer. It’s probably twice as long to set up any given communication. And, the desired outcome of email is astronomically lower.”

Remember that low download rate Metcalfe was struggling with? He was able to completely reverse that trend using text messaging. “It jumped from 0.1% downloads using email to 20% of people downloading our app when we sent a text. Incredibly significant conversion rate.”



For Metcalfe, the only problem now is a good one— the amount of replies he gets. Not those disheartening requests to unsubscribe, but genuine questions from students. He estimates out of 10,000 texts he’ll get 600 direct replies from students.

He doesn’t foresee ever going back to email. “Texting is our proven, main source of outreach,” he said, “And the best way to drive user adoption for getting students into the app.”



SlickText is the leading text messaging platform. Since 2012, SlickText has turned text messaging into a major competitive advantage for companies. Today, over 177,000 customers across North America, including ESPN, American Cancer Society and FedEx, have used SlickText’s award-winning software to drive relationships, leverage data, and get results. SlickText has been named a 2021 High Performer by G2 Crowd and is a former Technology Innovator of the Year. The company has dual headquarters in Jamestown, NY and Nashville, TN.

Learn more about SlickText at [SlickText.com](https://www.slicktext.com)

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