

Welcome SMS messages

Purpose

Get participants ready for the upcoming study.

When to use

Before starting each stage of the study.

How to use

To repeat the study, copy and paste the message required for each event into your SMS sending tool. Replace all items between brackets with information specific to your study. If available, use variables to auto-replace content between the brackets.

To create variations of the study, use the guidance notes to design your own messaging.

Tools required

- Automated SMS sender
- Participant names and telephone numbers
- Participant list split into two groups (groups A and B)
- An email address and mobile number the participants can contact you on

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Instructions

This series of welcome messages are designed to ensure that as many of the recruited participants commence the study as possible. We achieve this through preparing and priming the participants.

Stage one

Begin priming the participants with a first welcome message seven days before the study starts. Further contact should be made three days, then one day before the study begins.

Break

A waiting period of at least three weeks; but preferably longer; should be used between research stages.

Stage two

Similar to the first stage, participants should be contacted shortly before the start of the second stage of the study. It is highly recommended that participation in stage two be reconfirmed with each participant before sending the study packs. Not only does it allow re-engagement with the participant, but it also ensures that participants who would like to opt-out, can do.

Participant's memories may need to be refreshed about the study if there is a long break between stages.

Messages

Some messages have been designed to be received by all participants; some are custom to each study condition at that stage of the experiment.

All messages have been designed to reduce response bias by not specifying that an individual, who the participant may try to please by their behaviours and actions during the experiment, sends the messages.

Timeline

FIRST STAGE									
Days before study starts		7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0 - Study start day
Message	Group A	One week notice – all groups				3 day notice message – all groups		Starts tomorrow – experimental (intervention) group	
	Group B						Starts tomorrow – control (non-intervention) group		

SECOND STAGE									
Days before study starts		7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0 - Study start day
Message	Group A					3 day notice message (2nd stage) – all groups		Starts tomorrow (2nd stage) – control (non-intervention) group	Starts today (2nd stage) – control (non-intervention) group
	Group B						Starts tomorrow (2nd stage) – Experimental (intervention) group		

Messages

First stage

One week notice - all groups	
Guidance	Example message
<p>Thank participant for taking part.</p> <p>Inform participants when they should expect to receive the study materials and what it will contain.</p>	<p>[FIRST_NAME], thank you for agreeing to take part in the [studyName] study. You will receive your study pack in the post within 4 days. The pack will contain your placebo medication, instructions and post-study interview material.</p>

3 day notice - all groups	
Guidance	Example message
<p>Remind them of the study start date. Confirm if study material have been received.</p> <p>Provide contact details.</p> <p>N.B. if no contact then follow up via email to confirm that they have received Tic-Tac's. If not, then re-confirm their address and send another pack out first class post.</p>	<p>[FIRST_NAME], the [studyName] study starts in 3 days and you should have received your study pack in the post. Please message [Telephone number or Email address] to confirm if it has been received.</p> <p>The contact details above can also be used if you have any questions.</p>

**Starts tomorrow notice
- experimental (intervention) group**

Guidance	Example message
<p>Remind them of the study start date.</p> <p>Introduce the scenario.</p> <p>Brief instructions about what they will need to do.</p> <p>Explain the intervention.</p> <p>Ask for confirmation of pill times so that you can set up the reminders.</p> <p>Explain that more detailed instructions have been sent via email.</p> <p>Give them a way of contacting you.</p> <p>N.B. if no contact then follow up via email</p>	<p>[FIRST_NAME], the [studyName] study starts tomorrow morning; so don't forget your Tic-Tacs.</p> <p>The scenario</p> <p>You have been unwell and have been prescribed a course of medication by your doctor. The Tic-Tac's you have been sent are a placebo for this medication.</p> <p>You will need to take one Tic-Tac twice a day (at the same time each day) for the next 7 days.</p> <p>Please note down what time you took your first Tic-Tac. You will be contacted during the day so that we can get this information and send you SMS reminders twice a day for the duration of the study.</p> <p>An email has been to you with more detailed instructions.</p> <p>You can contact us on [telephone number], or [Email address] if you have any questions.</p> <hr/>

**Starts tomorrow notice
- control (non-intervention) group**

Guidance	Example message
<p>Remind them of the study start date.</p> <p>Introduce the scenario.</p> <p>Brief instructions about what they will need to do.</p> <p>Explain that more detailed instructions have been sent via email.</p> <p>Confirm that they will be taking part.</p> <p>Give them a way of contacting you.</p> <p>N.B. if no contact then follow up via email.</p>	<p>[FIRST_NAME], the study starts tomorrow morning; so don't forget your Tic-Tacs.</p> <p>The scenario You have been unwell and have been prescribed a course of medication by your doctor. The Tic-Tac's you have been given is a placebo for this medication.</p> <p>You will need to take one Tic-Tac twice a day (at the same time each day) for the next 7 days.</p> <p>Please note down what time you took your first Tic-Tac. We will contact you during the day so that we can get this information. You will need to take the second Tic-Tac 12 hours later and subsequent Tic-Tac's at the same time each day for the next 6 days, as if it were real medicine.</p> <p>An email has been sent to you with more detailed instructions.</p> <p>Please confirm that you will be taking part in the study here: [LINK]</p> <p>You can contact us on [Telephone number] or [Email address] if you have any questions.</p>

**Starts today notice
- control (non-intervention) group**

Guidance

Example message

Remind them that the study starts today.

[FIRST_NAME], the study starts today.

Remember to take the Tic-Tac's as if they were real medication.

Second stage

7 day notice (2 nd stage) - all groups	
Guidance	Example message
<p>7 day notice.</p> <p>Confirm that will be taking part</p> <p>N.B. if no contact within 2 days follow up via email to see if they want to take part in the second stage.</p>	<p>[FIRST_NAME], the second stage of the study starts in 7 days. Please message [Telephone number or Email address] or click this link: [LINK] to confirm that you will be taking part.</p>

3 day notice (2 nd stage) - all groups	
Guidance	Example message
<p>3 day notice.</p> <p>Confirm if study material has been received.</p> <p>N.B. if a participant states they have not received their study pack then re-confirm their address and send another pack out first class post.</p>	<p>[FIRST_NAME], thank you for agreeing to take part in the second stage of the study. The study starts in 3 days. You should have received your study pack in the post. Please message [Telephone number and/or Email address] to confirm if it has been received and confirm that you will be taking part in the study</p>

**Starts tomorrow notice (2nd stage)
- Experimental (intervention) group**

Guidance	Example message
<p>Thank them for continuing with the study. If it has been a long time between study stages then include the study name as a reminder.</p> <p>Remind them of the study start date.</p> <p>Explain the purpose of the study.</p> <p>Introduce the scenario.</p> <p>Brief instructions about what they will need to do.</p> <p>Explain that more detailed instructions have been sent via email.</p> <p>Give them a way of contacting you.</p>	<p>[FIRST_NAME], the [studyName] study starts tomorrow morning; so don't forget your Tic Tac's.</p> <p>Like the first stage, you will need to take one Tic-Tac twice a day (at the same time each day) for the next 7 days.</p> <p>IMPORTANT Please take the Tic-Tac as if it were real medication. For this stage of the study you will receive SMS reminders twice daily at the same times that you took your Tic-Tac's during the first stage of the study.</p> <p>I've sent you an email with more detailed instructions.</p> <p>You can contact us on [Telephone number] or [Email address] if you have any questions.</p>

**Starts tomorrow notice (2nd stage)
- control (non-intervention) group**

Guidance	Example message
Remind them of the study start date.	[FIRST_NAME], the study starts tomorrow morning; so don't forget your Tic Tac's.
Explain the purpose of the study.	Like the first stage, you will need to take one Tic-Tac twice a day (for the next 7 days).
Introduce the scenario.	In the last stage of the study you took your pills at [FIRSTPILL_TIME] and [SECONDPILL_TIME]. We would like you to take your Tic-Tac's at the same times for this stage.
Brief instructions about what they will need to do.	
Explain that more detailed instructions have been sent via email.	<p>IMPORTANT</p> <p>Please take the Tic-Tac as if it were real medication. For this stage of the study you will NOT be sent SMS reminders.</p>
Give them a way of contacting you.	<p>You have been sent an email with more detailed instructions.</p> <p>You can contact us on [Telephone number] or [Email address] if you have any questions.</p>

Starts today notice (2nd stage)
- control (non-intervention) group

Guidance	Example message
Reminder that the study starts today.	[FIRST_NAME], the study starts today. Please confirm that you will be taking part in the study here: [LINK].
Confirm that they will be taking part.	You should take your Tic-Tac's at [FIRSTPILL_TIME] and [SECONDPILL_TIME].
Final reminder about the times they will need to take their Tic-Tac's.	