SMS > Automated Responses

Text-to-Join Keywords are a great way to grow your SMS contact lists and provide custom responses to your recipients. This article will guide you through setup and usage for SMS Keywords.

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Keywords are subject to SMS compliance requirements. **Anywhere** (websites, social media, print media, etc.) you display a call-to-action ("Text 'SALES' to (xxx)xxx-xxxx"), you must also include SMS disclosure language as mandated by CTIA. For more information, see SMS - Ascent360's Guide to Texting Compliance

The Automated Responses Page

The Automated Responses page can be found under the **SMS** navigation drop-down. This page displays the keywords and their responses that will trigger whenever a recipient texts to your phone number.

Entries labeled "Compliance" indicate Keywords that message senders must support to remain in compliance with applicable SMS legislation. These include the START, STOP, HELP, and INFO keywords.

- The START keyword is treated as an SMS opt-in.
- The STOP keyword is treated as an SMS opt-out.
- HELP and INFO do not affect permission but produce a response that provides useful information to the recipient.

Because these keywords must be supported by all senders and the responses must fulfill certain criteria, these entries cannot be edited. If you'd like to change the "From Name" or email address found in the HELP/INFO response, you may do so from the Settings page. Alternatively, please reach out to support@ascent360.com for assistance.

You may also create text-to-join keywords or configure custom responses from this page. To do so, click "Create Keyword" in the top right. Before creating a keyword, you may wish to finalize the design you intend to couple with the keyword from the **SMS Design Library**.

Create a Keyword

SMS Keywords allow you to grow your SMS contact list, customize SMS messaging streams, and provide customized responses to recipients.

Choose a keyword that is brand-recognizable and provides your recipient an expectation of the type of messages they may receive in the future related to this keyword. Keywords must be between 2-20 alphanumeric characters and should not contain spaces.

If you have multiple phone numbers, keywords are shared between all phone numbers on your account and cannot be repeated within your account. For example, if you create DEALS as a keyword, Ascent360 will detect and act upon this keyword for any of the numbers on your account.

After designating a keyword, select the **Type** of the Keyword. There are two keyword types:

- **Subscriber Group:** Recipients can text this keyword to join a subscriber group and receive additional messaging. A recipient can also text a recognized *Stop Phrase* to leave the group without unsubscribing altogether (more on this below). Select this option if you intend to create an audience of people who have texted this keyword and send them additional messages.
- **Triggered Response:** Recipients can text this keyword to receive a one-time response. Recipients who text this keyword won't be added to a group for audience segmentation, so select this option if you do not intend to send additional texts to this keyword group.

> Examples:
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> - A user creates the Keyword: MONTHLYDEALS with the intention to send a message to all recipients who have texted MONTHLYDEALS each month. This keyword should be designated as a Subscriber Group.
> - A user creates the Keyword: STOREHOURS with the intention of pairing a text message listing the store's hours as an automated response. The user does not intend to send additional messages to people who have texted STOREHOURS ongoing, so this keyword should be designated as a Triggered Response.

> **All keywords, regardless of type, will be considered as an SMS opt-in for that recipient, meaning they would be eligible to be included in other SMS audiences as well. If a recipient has previously unsubscribed via some other method, texting in a supported keyword will re-subscribe them.**

Select a Response

After designating a keyword, select a response to the Keyword. The response will be triggered back to the recipient when Ascent360 receives an inbound message containing the keyword.

- If your Keyword type is a Subscriber Group, selecting a response is **optional.**
- If your Keyword type is a Triggered Response, selecting a response is **required.**

In addition to your custom response, recipients may also receive the standardized opt-in confirmation message (the same message that is triggered by the START keyword).

All messages sent outbound from Ascent360 - whether messages required by compliance or messages created by you in the Design Library - cost credits. For more on credits, see Understanding Text Message Credits.

Preview and Finalize Creation

As you create your keyword, you'll see the phone preview on the right populate with an example of what a recipient will see on their device. This includes the Keyword initiation message and compliance + custom responses.

After completing the Keyword and Response sections, select **Create** in the top right to activate the keyword.
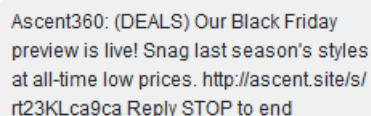
Disable a Keyword

You may disable a keyword from the Automated Responses page. A disabled keyword will not be detected by Ascent360 when texted to one of your phone numbers. If the keyword is a Subscriber Group type, recipients in the group won't be removed and you may still wish to send messages to these individuals.

Ongoing Messaging to Subscriber Groups

You may choose to create an audience of people who have texted one or more keywords to send them additional messaging. To do so, use the **Subscriber Groups** drop-down and associated SMS fields in Audience Builder.

If you are sending messaging streams based on keywords, Ascent360 recommends identifying the message as such in the message subject.

Ascent360: (DEALS) Our Black Friday preview is live! Snag last season's styles at all-time low prices. http://ascent.site/s/rt23KLca9ca Reply STOP to end

All Subscriber Groups support a STOP phrase that is specific to the keyword. If a recipient texts this phrase to one of your numbers, he or she will be removed from the group but won't have their global SMS permission altered.

The STOP phrase is always: STOP

For example: STOP DEALS

If a recipient texts this STOP phrase, they will receive the confirmation shown below:

{{FROM NAME}}: You will no longer receive texts for {{KEYWORD}}. To opt-out of all messages, reply STOP

You may wish to notify recipients of this STOP phrase in the triggered response message:

Ascent360: (DEALS) You'll start receiving information on A360's best deals. To end Deals, reply STOP DEALS. Reply STOP to end