

Clients using Text more than Email?

I've noticed that, over the last couple of years, clients are texting me more than they are emailing me. I guess text is more informal and comfortable than email. I've taken to sending messages by both email and text to clients. Some clients even complained they only want texts, not emails, from me.

I was wondering if other people are seeing this too.

Yep. We have to meet them where they are and think of how much YOU text in your daily life. They do too. If you want their business especially in family law, you text. All the time!

Micah G. Guilfoil Payne, Kentucky

I am getting more texts. I don't welcome them as they cannot be saved in my practice management system as easily as email. I tell clients this and they seem to accept and understand my rationale. I tend to email the text to myself and reply by email so all can be saved. The time I don't save an email will be the time I really wish I had.

Deborah Matthews, Virginia

I refuse to text with clients for several reasons:

1. I don't give clients my cell number unless I absolutely have to.
2. I can't keep good records of text messages for the client file.
3. I am no good at answering the darn things. I often notice that I got a text message, and then just never respond.
4. I am a very fast keyboard typist, but verry slow at typing on the phone.

Marshall D. Chriswell, Pennsylvania

Occasionally I'll have clients say they texted me and I didn't reply. I'll ask where they texted me at and they'll give my office phone number. I'll point out that's a landline and it usually satisfies them.

Ronald Jones, Florida

I use RingCentral for my business line, which has texting capabilities. I have a Gmail extension that shows the texts right alongside my emails. I can also respond on my cell phone, on the RingCentral app, if needed. Since I practice family law, I try to communicate in whatever form is most comfortable for the client.

Suzanne L. Hawkins, South Carolina

I practice probate law, so I usually use a Ouija board to communicate with my clients.

Ronald Jones

Very funny! My only point in mentioning that is that my clients are quite often emotional and overstressed. I try not to add to their stress by insisting on doing things my way.

Suzanne L. Hawkins

Marshall,

Agreed, especially for reasons 1 & 2.

John Leonard

Good one!

I rarely text my clients. I think most assume my number is a landline (I actually have Google Voice and do get texts to my work number). In any event, I would strongly resist communicating by text, at least until Microsoft figures out how to pull those into Outlook along with my emails so I can keep all my correspondence in one place.

Kevin Grierson, Virginia

Thanks for the responses everyone.

Suzanne, what Gmail extension do you use? Sounds interesting.

BTW everyone, I use a texting service called Clicksend.com that converts text messages into emails for me. I can also send texts by sending an email to Clicksend, so I don't have to fumble with my thumbs on a small smartphone screen and can instead type texts on my computer. Clicksend even provides a dedicated phone number that clients can text to, so no need to give out the personal cell number. I have no affiliation with them, just think they have a neat service.

Eugene Lee, California

RingCentral extension.

I also have settings configured to get all of the texts via email, so they are stored along with other client communications.

Suzanne L. Hawkins

Very nifty, I'll have to look into that. I have Ringcentral and clearly not using it the way I should be.

Eugene Lee

I agree with Mr. Chriswell. I don't permit it. I fired a client because he kept texting when I told him not to. He said he had OCD (which may have been true). It was too annoying.

Roger Rosen, California

I frequently text with clients. My clients tend to be entrepreneurs, techies or tech-savvy. I am happy to communicate in the way they find most comfortable just as I've emailed clients that prefer to have something in writing (easier to digest and refer back to) than by phone (and vice versa). As for the client file, I get the texts delivered to my email box so they are functionally treated the same in terms of record-keeping.

Kristin Haugen. Minnesota

+1. I have a similar client profile and I've noticed that even the older ones (45+) are moving to texting instead of calls or emails.

Mark Del Bianco, Maryland

I am in the "no texting with clients" camp. I do not give them my cellphone number

Brian C. Hagner, Wisconsin

I only have one number. It is my cell phone. And, even if I said no texting, clients figure out pretty quickly it is a cellphone and start texting. So now I tell them - you can text me, but don't expect a response right away. I would rather have them text me at 7pm then call and leave a message.

Jonathan Stein, California

A hundred years ago, give or take a decade, lawyers were probably whining that clients expected them to be available by telephone. "I'm telling ya, Abner,

before long the art of sending a letter through the U.S. Postal Service or private courier will be dead. The railroad will go the way of that perfectly fine Pony Express."

It's not just texting that's annoying. What I really hate are people trying to reach me about something business-related on Facebook or, even worse, WhatsApp. WhatsApp may not have been a hit in the U.S., but here in Mexico, people, ranging from students to brain surgeons, love, love, love it. Maybe even more than Coca-Cola.

jennifer j. rose, Mexico

Some of the newer practice management cloud solutions have texting capability now. Filevine is one. They generate you a new number for each client you request. The texting is purely done in the practice management program. All text messages from your client goes straight into the case file. Text messages are done in the program to send to your client by anyone with access. PracticePanther has a ton of integrations, I know they can send text reminders (of tasks, appointments, etc.) but not sure about communication.

Clients get text messages. They may or may not get the email. They may or may not get the letter. But they're going to get the text message.

Joseph D. Dang, California

