



School Lunch Association of Newfoundland

Communication is Key

A strategic partnership with TxtSquad

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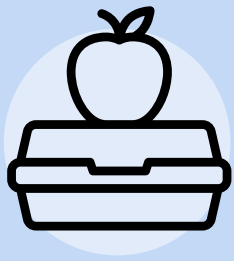


In 1988...

an interchurch group investigating the use of food banks in the city of St. John's prepared a report entitled *Poverty: The One Thing Money Can't Buy*.

Their studies concluded that in many families who regularly used food banks, children were being kept home from school because parents didn't have the money, or food, to provide them with a healthy lunch.

The report gained a lot of attention from the public sector. A committee was created to fight against childhood hunger in the city. A year later and the School Lunch Association was born. Today, it serves up to **14,000 students** in **40 schools** all over the province.



over **1 million**
meals served



to **14,000**
students



in **39** schools
this year across
Newfoundland

The program's success, and the impact it had on the children, was incredible.

As the program expanded, the School Lunch Association began using digital solutions to communicate with students' parents and guardians.

Email was the most popular and accessible form of communication for many households. Although it worked for some time, engagements and open rates soon began to drop.

Staying in contact with hundreds of people spread out over a large area is difficult. The Association needed a better way to reach everyone in the program. They began searching for modern solutions to their communication issues.

The School Lunch Association realized the best way to reach out to so many people was through texting.
But could texting really solve all their problems?

What are the rules and regulations for sending mass messages?

Can we send a large number of texts to multiple people at once?

Is it possible to send custom messages to specific people or groups?

Could we use this to coordinate staff, too?

How do we get started?

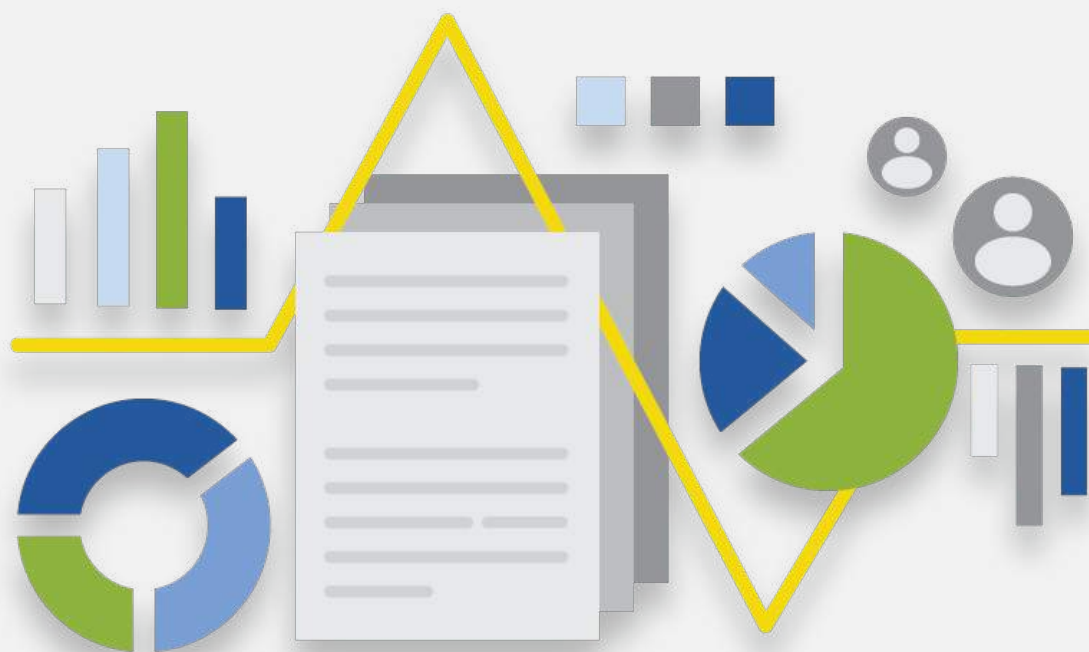
How do we quickly respond to individuals who text us back?

The options were overwhelming.
Until they found TxtSquad

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate!

The executive director of the School Lunch Association realized they had more questions than answers. After careful research, he found Josh Taylor, the CEO of TxtSquad, and knew he was on the right track.

The local school board provided contact information for the parents and guardians enrolled in the program that included cell phone numbers, student names, the schools they attended, and more.



The association didn't have any experience working with such large amounts of information and didn't know how to proceed. Luckily, TxtSquad handled all the onboarding and data structuring to get them started off on the right foot.



The pandemic created a lot of difficulties...

for the School Lunch Association and their ability to plan for the future. Schools closed and opened several times, creating major disruptions in the program.

With thousands of parents and guardians to contact, it was time for the association to send out their first mobile communications.

The messages were sent, but would it work? How many people would actually see the message? Would anyone respond? Was this the right step?

In the end, the text campaign received a **89% engagement rate**, compared to the 30% engagement rate achieved through email.

This sort of participation had been impossible to attain in the past.

On top of the huge increase in engagements, there was a drastic change in the behaviour of parents and guardians in the program.



71%
decrease in
call volume



94%
decrease in
walk-ins

Charitable organizations run on very tight budgets and strict timetables. By cutting down on hundreds of hours of administrative work, the association freed themselves up to focus on their core mission: feeding children.

So far, the School Lunch Association has sent over 150,000 text messages with TxtSquad and they're only just getting started.

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work!

The School Lunch Association is a community-focused program that requires a large staff to keep things running smoothly. During the school year, they manage over a hundred staff members at 40 schools all across Newfoundland.

One of the biggest challenges they faced was finding replacement staff on short notice. A supervisor would have to wake up early to check their emails, find a list of available replacements, and start calling staff. Sometimes as early as 6 a.m.

With TxtSquad, supervisors save countless hours by simply sending out text broadcasts that available staff members can respond to instantly. No more early mornings, tedious cold-calls, or unanswered emails. Employees can instantly communicate with the whole program any time, directly from their cell phone.





Staff members said...

"We couldn't function without TxtSquad today. Our staff can finally leave work at work and not have to worry about responding to emails and phone calls late into the night."

"Text reminders have increased our engagement from 30% with email to over 90%... the TxtSquad team provides an amazing service!"