



## Case Study

# StudySoup leverages personal mobile messages to engage their notetakers.

## Partner



StudySoup is a marketplace for students to buy and sell class notes, study guides, and other classroom materials.

## Challenge

When phone conversations became too time consuming, StudySoup had to find a scalable and cost effective way to convert prospects to customers.

## Solution

Utilizing Sonar's API and interface, StudySoup was able to convert leads around the clock with two way texting.

## Results

StudySoup was able to qualify and convert 4x more prospects with fewer resources and increase engagement from 20% to 70%.

## Learn More

StudySoup: [support@studysoup.com](mailto:support@studysoup.com)  
Sonar: [contact@sendsonar.com](mailto:contact@sendsonar.com)



**Cody Eliason**  
COO @StudySoup

*Mobile messaging is a powerful channel that enables companies to create personal relationships with their customers. Our partners leverage Sonar to drive more sales conversions, increase engagement and interaction, and of course answer any pressing support questions their customers might have. In this Case Study, we spoke with Cody Eliason at StudySoup to learn more about how they increased their conversion rates by 4x.*

## StudySoup Spotlight

StudySoup is a peer-to-peer online learning marketplace where students can sell their class notes, study guides, and other course material to their peers. The marketplace enables successful students to make money off their notes while helping their peers succeed as well. StudySoup has a robust training program that teaches their



customers how to be successful and earn as much money as possible on their notes, thereby increasing the “supply” of great notes in their marketplace.

StudySoup initially looked at using SMS to automate and scale their lead conversion processes. While the team had well-defined stages, they were struggling to pull prospects through their process with email reminders alone. To compensate, they were resorting to expensive and time-consuming phone calls to each of their prospects that hindered their scalability. Not only has StudySoup successfully scaled its processes to convert leads, they have since expanded their use of mobile messaging to many other touch points along their customer journey.

Before we take a look at where StudySoup is now, it is important to look at what was being done before they made the change to mobile messaging.

## Sales Funnel Highlight

StudySoup has a funnel common to most web-based companies. It starts with a prospective note taker filling out a form on their landing page. In this form, the prospect provides personal information like their name, email address, phone number, and school they attend. From there, the first conversion event is getting the prospect to book an online training session. StudySoup provides a significant amount of training upfront to make sure their expert note takers are providing the best content for their marketplace.

Once the prospect has booked an appointment the next conversion point is to have them attend the online training session. Oftentimes, a prospect commits to a meeting but doesn't actually show up. After a prospect has completed their training StudySoup will then push them to fill out their class schedule and exam dates. Once that is completed the last conversion point is to have a prospect upload their first set of notes for the courses they are taking. Once a prospect uploads their notes they then become customers which make money for StudySoup and themselves.



Fill Out Web Form

Schedule Training

Attend Training

Add Classes & Exams

Upload Notes



Figure 1: Visual Display of StudySoup Sales Funnel.

*NOTE: This well-defined and well-understood training/sales funnel allowed StudySoup to easily track and monitor their conversion rates, giving StudySoup and Sonar a clear KPI to work towards. The clear KPI was an important factor to both teams measuring and proving the impact of mobile messaging on driving more revenue for StudySoup.*

## Before Sonar

When StudySoup began making the transition to Sonar for their sales funnel, they had employed 30 sales agents. Each agent's primary job was to pick up the phone and make 30 or more phone calls a day to guide prospective notetakers through the funnel. These agents ran into several hurdles. The first was actually connecting with a prospective notetaker. Their customer demographic of 18-24-year-old college students barely ever picked up the phone (Not surprising, because the industry average pick-up rate for cold calls is sub-10%).



They found it difficult to get engagement or responses, in general, using phone calls. The second was the number of time agents spent dialing, talking with a prospect when they reached them and then entering their notes into their internal CRM system. With these limitations, their team of 30 agents could only speak with around 3,600 note-takers each month.

On top of the phone calls, the StudySoup team would also send email reminders. Cody mentioned the team was only getting a 20% engagement rate using these methods to when converting prospects to attend training. The StudySoup team needed to find a way to go from 1-to-1 interactions to 1-to-many.

## Scalability and Personalization through Automation and Mobile Messaging

*“When we thought about our demographic and looked at the need to scale, automation and SMS was the most logical solution.”*

With scalability concerns & the demographics of their customers in mind, Cody and the team came to Sonar looking to scale their efforts while maintaining the same conversion rates they were seeing through customer-tailored phone calls.

StudySoup used a combination of Sonar’s functionality to achieve this daunting task in a matter of days. They leveraged the Sonar’s API to trigger automated text messages to their prospects from the moment they fill out the form on their landing page (1st step of their funnel) to the time they uploaded notes (last step). StudySoup also used the Campaigns feature to segment their prospects and send dedicated messages nudging them to move to the next step of the funnel. Lastly, when prospects replied with questions or concerns, StudySoup agents were able to use the Sonar





interface, which boasts a customer panel with customer activity information, to engage with them, adding the personal touch that was critical to conversion in the phone-call days.

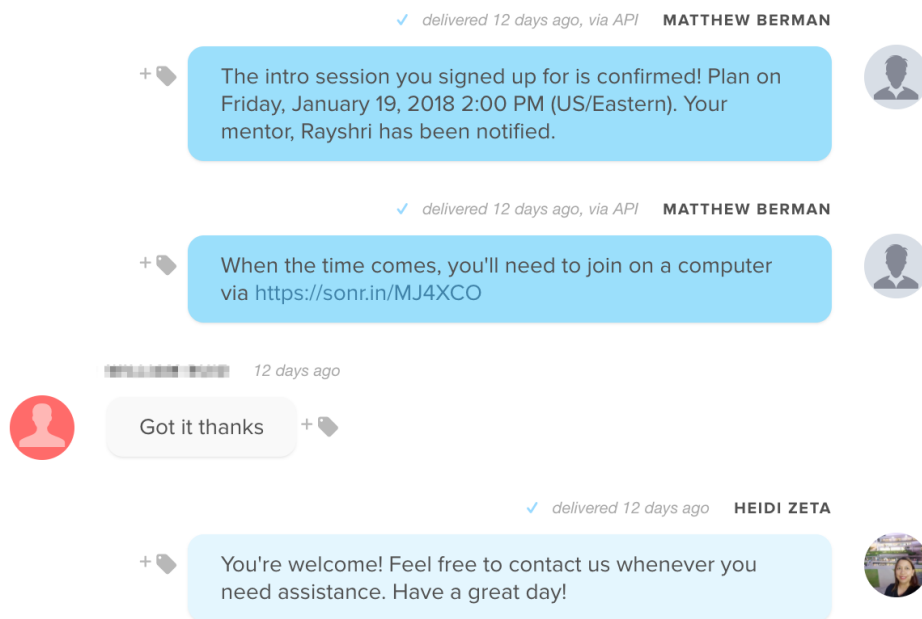


Figure 2: Example conversation in Sonar confirming a prospect for training

With programmatic messages going out around the clock, StudySoup was able engaging prospects at the whichever hour they expressed interest in their service. SMS messages saw a 99% read rates and 40-60% response rates. Since rolling out Sonar, StudySoup's agents now are able to help 10 customers in the time that they would have originally talked to just one. Sonar continues to help StudySoup scale their process when messaging prospects and customers.

## Results that Matter

Cody and the team believe mobile messaging has impacted their business dramatically and has allowed them to scale more easily than they could have imagined. The two main metrics that have been impacted by switching to mobile messaging is increasing the overall size of their funnel



and improving response rates from their customers. StudySoup has since also narrowed in the best path of conversion for their prospective customers.

Historically having 30 phone agents making 30 calls a day only allowed them to connect with 900 individuals at most. With a 20% engagement rate on the phone that means they were only truly connecting with around 180 individuals per day, or 3,600 per month. Tapping into Sonar allowed them to reach and engage with thousands of customers each day. Even better is that they are **seeing a 70% engagement rate using mobile messaging**. In October 2017, alone, StudySoup were able to handle 14,632 total conversations, **four times the conversations** they handled with their original phone-call approach, all while reducing the number of agents they needed to have on board.

## Conclusion

Cody and the StudySoup team have leveraged Sonar and mobile messaging to significantly scale their funnel, conversion rates, and engagement rates, achieving what was unthinkable in the phone-call days. Not only that, but their customers are so much happier now that they can text StudySoup -- a mode of communication their generation prefers to anything else. To learn more about StudySoup checkout their website:

If you want to also learn how Sonar and how your team can develop personal relationships through mobile messaging, send us an email at [contact@sendsonar.com](mailto:contact@sendsonar.com)

## About Sonar

Sonar helps businesses build personal relationships with their customers through mobile messaging. Our platform empowers your company to focus on what really matters, personal conversations with your customers.

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