

SMS

Short Message Service

The new age communication
technique!

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SMS

SMS (Short Message Service), commonly referred to as "text messaging," is a service for sending short messages of up to 160 characters (224 characters if using a 5-bit mode) to mobile devices, including cellular phones, smartphones and PDAs.

SMS is similar to paging. However, SMS messages do not require the mobile phone to be active and within range and will be held for a number of days until the phone is active and within range. SMS messages are transmitted within the same cell or to anyone with roaming service capability. They can also be sent to digital phones in a number of other ways, including:

- From one digital phone to another
- From Web-based applications within a Web browser
- From instant messaging clients like ICQ
- From VoIP applications like Skype
- From some unified communications applications.

Users can send messages from a computer via an SMS gateway. SMS gateways are Web sites that allow users to send messages to people within the cell served by that gateway. They also serve as international gateways for users with roaming capability.

SMS Communications

SMS solutions help unions stay in touch & interact with members across distances

What's the best way of keeping your members active in your union? Excellent inter-personal skills are a great start, but harnessing mobile technology with SMS communications to improve those skills could make a significant difference.

Retaining members is about maintaining the highest possible levels of satisfaction by improving & maintaining regular contact, as well as anticipating unions/members needs. With the wide spread use of mobile phones SMS mobile technology lends itself perfectly to helping unions maintain a reputation for excellent relations and using SMS is less time consuming and intrusive than other means of member communication.

SMS communication solution enables communication via SMS to members' mobile handsets.

Advantages of SMS

- . Speeds up administration
- . Improves member experience
- . Reduces missed announcements
- . Releases more administration time
- . Improves response times for additional work authorisation
- . Reduces telecoms spend

Benefits of using SMS messaging

1. Discretion

An SMS message is less of an intrusion in a union environment as well as demonstrating a sensitivity towards privacy when communicating with your members.

2. Accuracy

Your message is there in black and white so there are fewer distractions compared to other channels, like background noise disrupting phone calls. This is particularly important when disseminating important information.

3. Succinct messaging

Why use 10 words when five will do? Most messages can be articulated in one 160-character message.

4. Mass communication

The same message can be broadcast to thousands of handsets at a touch of a button.

5. Cost savings

The standard rate of a text message is only a few pence. When you send out thousands of messages the cost savings compared with traditional communications methods quickly become evident.

Methods of sending SMS:

- **Using mobile handsets**
- **Using a web based sms solution**
- **Using software / instant messengers like ICQ. Skype etc.**
- **SMS using mobile handsets**



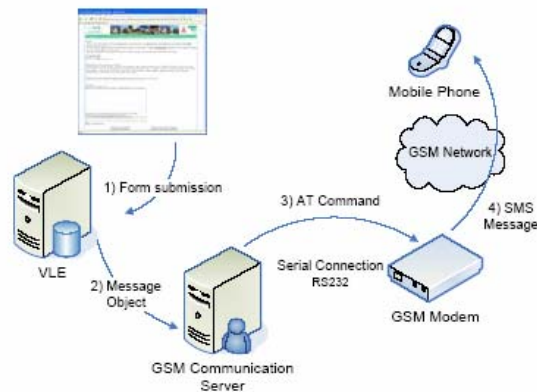
SMS as used on modern handsets was originally defined as part of the GSM series of standards in 1985 as a means of sending messages of up to 160 characters, to and from GSM mobile handsets. Since then, support for the service has expanded to include alternative mobile standards such as ANSI CDMA networks and Digital AMPS, as well as satellite and landline networks. Most SMS messages are mobile-to-mobile text messages, though the standard supports other types of broadcast messaging as well.

The benefits of SMS to subscribers center around convenience, flexibility, and seamless integration of messaging services and data access. From this perspective, the primary benefit is

the ability to use the handset as an extension of the computer. SMS also eliminates the need for separate devices for messaging because services can be integrated into a single wireless device—the mobile terminal. These benefits normally depend on the applications that the service provider offers. At a minimum, SMS benefits include the following:

- [SMS using a web based account](#)

Web based SMS account can be used to send bulk SMS from anywhere using internet. You can send SMS to any phone with your own personalized id. You would need to purchase SMS credits from the software / service provider to use the account.



Picture illustration of Web based SMS message communication

Advantages:

Member Database: Maintain a list of your members enabling you to send personalised messages to your members whenever you wish.

Message broadcast: Send one message to multiple members with bulk SMS.

Confirmation of message receipt: Guarantee your members have received the text message.

Reply functionality: Lets your members reply via SMS on their mobile phone and the replies will drop straight back into your desktop.

Web based SMS: No hardware or software to purchase, install or maintain. Users can access SMS account from anywhere in the world using internet.

Salient Features:

- **2 way SMS**

SMS for effective 2 way communication with staff and members

Text messaging opens up new ways to communicate and 2 way SMS is particularly effective for communicating with field-based personnel. In many applications service can be further improved by allowing field-staff or members to reply to text messages simply and efficiently.

By providing a simple, effective and low-cost 2-way SMS reply mechanism you can reduce the need for field-based personnel or even members to make return telephone calls, which incur cost and tie-up office resources.

The SMS gateway allows the sending of personal or bulk SMS messages to a group of recipients with replies fully managed making 2 way SMS as seamless as sending an invitation or email via conventional channels.

Union SMS solutions including 2 way and bulk SMS are an effective and affordable way to make union processes leaner using the popular and agile text message medium.

Simple: The recipient simply replies to the message.

Accessible: 2 way SMS Replies are delivered back to the desktop account from which it was sent.

Flexible: Connect provides options to re-direct the replies to e-mail, mobile, pagers or a secure web-based account.

- **SMS appointment reminders**

Tackling missed appointments

SMS reminders are for any union or service provider who regularly schedule appointments between staff and members. Missed appointments are bad news for any organisation, wasting valuable time and resources. Most people who fail to turn up on time simply forget, so why not take advantage of the popularity of mobile technology and the Internet to jog their memories?

Text message reminders could save you time & money

SMS reminders could help your organisation to cut the cost of missed appointments.

- **SMS Staff communication**

Effective Staff Communication on the move

Now that virtually everyone has a mobile phone, it's easier than ever to take advantage of SMS messaging to ensure your colleagues or union members always have your updates and calls to action at their fingertips.

Reliable 24/7 Staff Communication

It's a reliable, low-cost solution, which can increase productivity, reduce costs and keep track of your colleagues' responses.

With an online messaging account, you can send pager, email and SMS messages from anywhere, 24/7, to a large group of people at a touch of a button.

Keep Track of what is being said

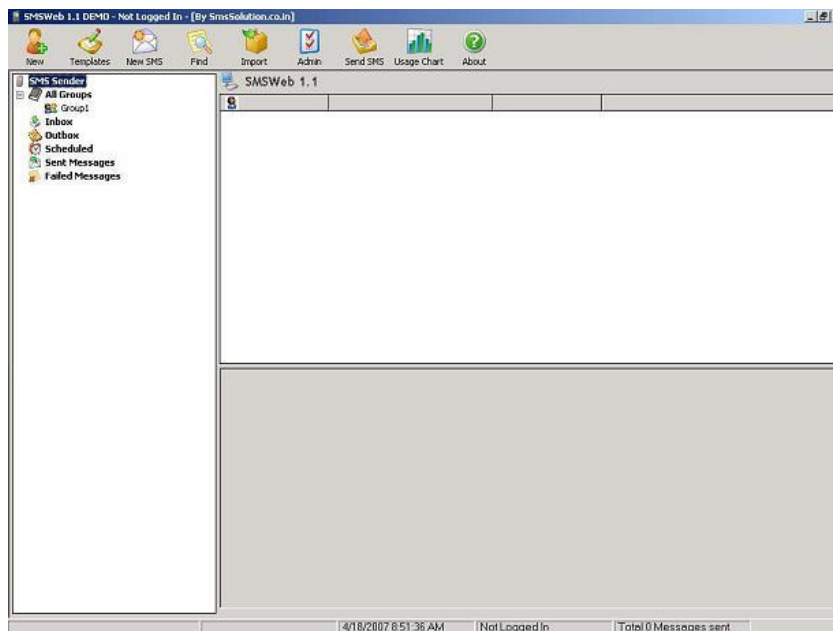
An audit trail to help keep track of colleagues' replies, indicating their ETA or just confirming they have got the message – important in closing the communication loop.

The message expiry option means that any messages not delivered to the handset within a pre-defined timescale will be cancelled, minimising the chances of confusion for colleagues starting a shift after an issue has been resolved.

Versatile communication ensures everyone is kept up to date

It's not just mobile phones – you can send messages to laptops, PDAs, Blackberrys, pagers – any device or combination of devices which work for your organisation.

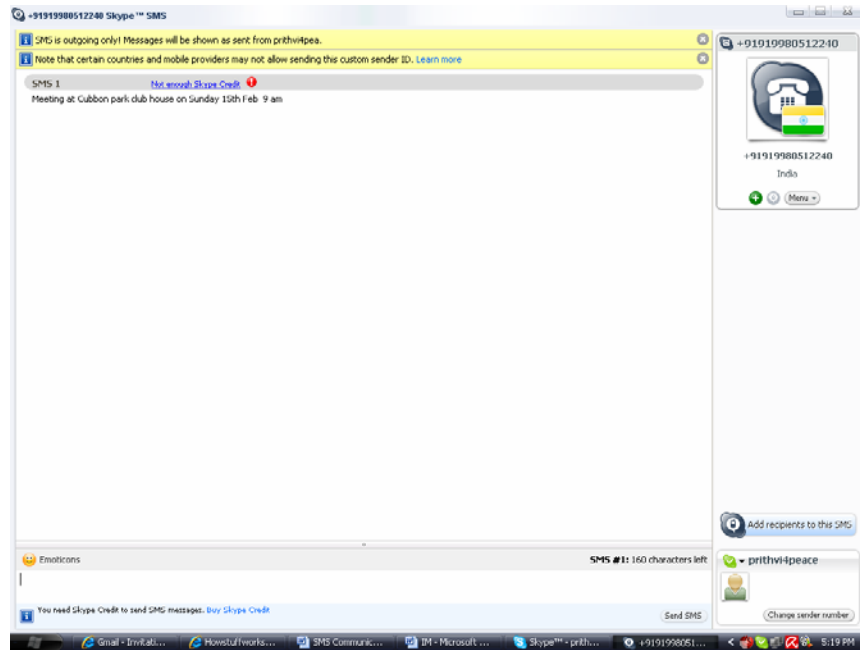
- [SMS using SMS Software / Instant Messengers](#)



[SMS using software:](#)

SMS software can be used to send bulk SMS through your computer. You can send SMS to any phone with your own personalized id. You would need to purchase SMS credits from the software / service provider to use the software. It has features like unlimited groups, Import Contacts, generate Numbers, Birthday & Anniversary Reminders, Templates, Schedule SMS & Usage Chart. There is no need of any Website to send bulk SMS. A PC with internet connection and software will help a user to send SMS to multiple recipients.

SMS using instant messengers:



Picture illustration of SMS feature in Skype messenger

Another alternative to using SMS is using an [instant messaging](#) program, such as Yahoo messenger, AOL IM, Skype etc, on your cell phone. This can be in the form of software that's pre-installed on your phone, or you can use **WAP** (Wireless Application Protocol) to access the Internet and sign into your IM account. WAP is a protocol that gives you small, simplified versions of web pages that are easily navigable on your mobile phone or PDA. You can use it to send instant messages or actual [e-mails](#) from your phone.