sendQuick®

# SMS Service & Maintenance Industry
# Optimising Operations & Driving Business Efficiency

# Contents


| | |
|---|---|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Business Process Efficiency is Key to Driving Cost, Improving Margins & Accelerating Customer Service Delivery | 3 |
| SMS as a Low Cost Tool for Communication & Automation of Processes | 3 |
| SMS for Job Assignment & Management | 4 |
| SMS for Customer Service | 4 |
| SMS for Marketing & Promotional Campaigns | 4 |
| SMS for Sales Support Operations | 5 |
| SMS for Human Resource Management | 5 |
| SMS for Customer Intellgience & Feedback | 5 |
| SMS for Enterprise IT Systems Notification | 5 |
| sendQuick SMS Solution for the Service Industry | 6 |
| Technical Overview | 7 |
| Return of Investment (ROI) Computation | 7 |
| Conclusion | 8 |
| A Customer's Successful Experience: Far East Organisation | 8 |

## INTRODUCTION

### BUSINESS PROCESS EFFICIENCY IS KEY TO DRIVING COST, IMPROVING MARGINS & ACCELERATING CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY

Enterprises today must produce services faster, cheaper, better and improve profit margins in the face of mounting competition and other economic pressures. It is worthwhile for service driven companies to review their business processes and identify areas for improving efficiency. This will ultimately translate not only to cost savings for the business, but also improvement in customer service delivery and satisfaction.

Targeted at companies with a large mobile workforce and field operations, this white paper aims to identify the areas for automation and efficiency in business and operations processes. Potential industries/businesses include the following:

- Service, repair & maintenance
- Facilities management
- Logistics & delivery
- Public utilities
- Telecoms services
- Cleaning services

### SMS AS A LOW COST TOOL FOR COMMUNICATION & AUTOMATION OF PROCESSES

The mobile phone has become the most dominant device for many users globally. In 2010, mobile phone vendors shipped a total of 1.39 billion units worldwide, representing 18.5% growth from 2009. Furthermore, countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan have mobile penetration rates of more than 100%. As an indispensible device that many users carry wherever they are, the mobile phone has become one of the most ubiquitous tool for communication.

SMS (short messaging service or otherwise known as text messages) are found on all mobile phones across all technologies, including GSM, CDMA and 3G. The key advantages of SMS communication are as follows:

- Wide reach as it is a default service for all phone users and not handset dependent.
- Higher likelihood of being read as compared to emails.
- Low cost medium (some providers offer it free) while most cost less than a normal voice call.
- Instant delivery and always available (as phone is always on)
- Enables delivery of short (160 characters), focused messages that better captures attention. Current improvements also allow a few SMSes to be read and delivered as a single message (known as concantenated SMS)
- Messages are delivered across networks (roaming capability)
- Good interoperability between networks and technologies (GSM and CDMA)
- Non-intrusive in nature
- Personal

The following section outlines the various applications how SMS can be used to support internal operations as well as a platform to improve customer service.

1 IDC, January 2011

**SMS FOR JOB ASSIGNMENT & MANAGEMENT**

Managing a mobile workforce in the field with different schedules can be challenging. The traditional method of phone calls to a staff coordinator to coordinate schedules and assign jobs is both time consuming and costly.

SMS offers a low cost and efficient alternative. When used in tandem with an internal job management system or ERP/CRM system, it can be a powerful resource management tool. These are some of the possible applications using SMS:

- Send SMS to notify staff on upcoming jobs
- Staff using SMS to acknowledge job assignments and job completion.
- With an SMS solution that allows integration into the company's ERP/CRM system, this information can be seamlessly updated into the ERP/CRM system. This enables companies to monitor and measure the time taken to complete the job. It also provides real-time information that can be communicated to clients whenever a job is completed.

**SMS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE**

The advantage of using SMS for customer service is that customers can use this channel anytime and anywhere. For companies, it not only provides an alternative channel to reach out to customers, it also frees up valuable service staff resources.

Some examples include:

- Enable customers to use SMS to make and change appointments
- Send customers appointment reminders
- Notify customers by SMS when service request/job is completed
- Complement call centres by allowing customers to receive information by SMS. This frees up phone resources for service staff to support more customers

**SMS FOR MARKETING & PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS**

SMS marketing and promotion is an effective tool for promoting products, services or to increase brand awareness in the market for the following reasons:

- Cost effective (mail cost about S$1.00 compared to SMS cost of S$0.05)
- Instant interaction with a large audience at a relatively low cost
- Flexibility to do targeted marketing to a niche segment of the business
- Personal and direct form of advertising that tells customers what they need to know
- Environmentally friendly compared to brochures or flyers

In addition, the emergence of smart phones in the market has enabled an exciting way of engaging with customers. Messaging can now be interacted with internet browsing as SMS marketing can be combined with the internet.

Some possible SMS marketing campaigns:

- SMS customer of new services and company updates
- SMS customers of offers and promotions. This could be deployed across a broad group of customers or exclusively to a select group of repeat customers as a loyalty program
- Send promotion codes via SMS and get customers to provide codes to enjoy discounts or redeem special privileges

In engaging SMS marketing activities, retailers need to be mindful to incorporate opt-in or permission based features, to allow customers to opt-in to receive SMS messages or opt-out at any time.

**SMS FOR SALES SUPPORT OPERATIONS**

Not only is SMS a powerful tool for communicating and engaging with the customer, SMS can also be used to improve sales operations.

Some examples:

- Mobile sales staff can send SMS to instantly retrieve sales-related information such as pricing, schedules, stock availability etc.
- As a management tool, management can send SMS (e.g. to an ERP system) to obtain updates on daily sales performance

**SMS FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Using SMS is an efficient way for the mobile workforce to log reporting time and clockout time. The information can be used to integrate with other HR applications such as performance management, payroll and so forth.

**SMS FOR CUSTOMER INTELLIGENCE & FEEDBACK**

With its instant delivery, high readership and response rates, SMS is one of the most convenient and low cost methods for deploying SMS surveys to a large group of customers to gather intelligence and feedback.

Some ways SMS can be used to gain consumer insight and improve customer service:

- SMS every new customer to rate his/her feedback on the service experience
- SMS to testbed customers' response or preference on new ideas through text and vote
- SMS customers calling into the call centre to rank the level of customer support. As SMS responses tend to be immediate, this allows retailer to follow up promptly to address any negative responses received

**SMS FOR ENTERPRISE IT SYSTEMS NOTIFICATION**

At the heart of all enterprises is a reliable IT and network infrastructure. Network and systems availability is a critical function for any enterprise, from delivering internal corporate services to call centre operations, supply chain management etc. IT support team needs to be informed immediately when there are critical events affecting the IT network and systems infrastructure.

Using SMS to deliver system and network alert notifications provides instant notification. This enables the IT team of increasing its response time and proactively solve potential problems before services and ends users are impacted.

**SENDQUICK SMS SOLUTION FOR THE SERVICE INDUSTRY**

sendQuick SMS gateway is an appliance based solution for businesses. sendQuick supports multiple types of configuration, from single server to RAID and High Availability (HA) infrastructure to ensure continuous SMS service availability to customers.

sendQuick has the following features to support retail operations as listed below:

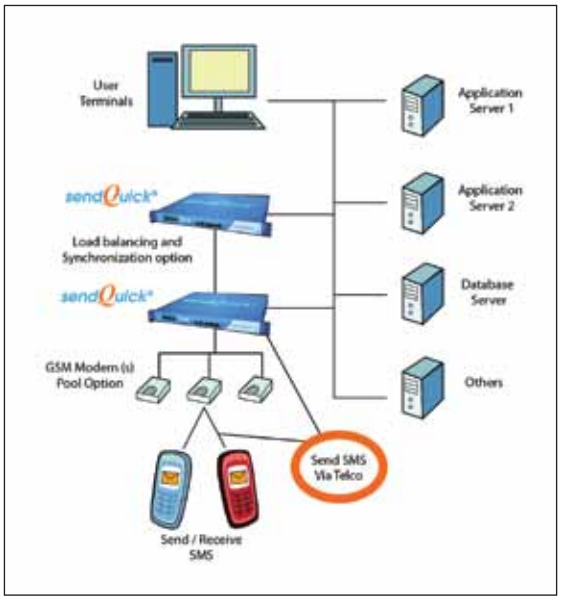
- Web interface for direct messaging for different users to send different messages
- Bulk messaging capability
- 2 way messaging for transactional based campaigns or enquiry
- Integration to back end systems (e.g. ERP) via HTTP Post, TCPIP messages, Secure FTP and others
- IT notification messaging format (SMTP, SNMP Trap and Syslog)
- High throughput via Telco connection via HTTP Post, TCPIP messages, Secure FTP and others
- GSM modem messaging as backup capability
- Database integration via ODBC connection
- Other connection method that can be customised

Unlike normal applications, sendQuick is delivered as an appliance server bringing the benefits of appliance server to the IT and application teams. sendQuick has a low Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) and is maintenance free. All sendQuick systems comes with one (1) year standard warranty. As an appliance, it is easy and quick to deploy for the standard modules.

sendQuick has been deployed by more than 1300 customers worldwide in more than 15 countries across all industries and applications.

**TECHNICAL OVERVIEW**

sendQuick works on standard TCPIP protocol, connecting to the network using standard 100BT with normal RJ45 cable. For Gigabit ethernet, the server that support this high speed network can be chosen. The schematic diagram is illustrated below.




**RETURN OF INVESTMENT (ROI) COMPUTATION**

sendQuick presents a good ROI for most service companies. The illustration on ROI computation below is based on a select usage of SMS. A higher SMS usage will result in a higher ROI.

Assumptions on service company:

- customer base of 1000 and acquires 500 new customers a year (total 1500)
- 500 customer service calls handled by call centre per month (6000 a year)
- 500 call transactions handled by call centre per month for job scheduling and assignment (6000 a year)
- Per SMS cost is S$0.05
- Per mailer cost is S$2.00 (materials, printing and postage)
- Per call centre cost is S$2.00 (labour, operations, call charges)

Scenario 1: Cost savings from using SMS as a channel to handle internal job assignments/scheduling

Cost of handling job scheduling/assignment calls per year (6000 x S$2.00) = S$12000

Assuming 80% of job assignments/scheduling transactions can be handled via SMS
Cost of handling internal job assignments/scheduling (SMS & calls) messages per year = (80% x 6000 x S$0.05) + (20% x 6000 x S$2.00) = S$2640
Annual cost savings = S$9360

Scenario 2: Cost savings from using SMS as a channel to handle customer requests

Cost of handling customer service calls per year = (6000 x S$2.00) = S$12000

Assuming 20% of customer requests can be channeled via SMS
Cost of handling customer requests (SMS & calls) per year = (20% x 6000 x S$0.05) + (80% x 6000 x S$2.00) = S$9660
Annual cost savings = S$2640

Scenario 3: Cost savings from sending company news or promotions via SMS

Cost of sending brochures/mailers via post = (1500 x S$2.00) = S$3000

Cost of sending SMS promotions = (1500 x S$0.05) = S$75

Assuming 4 of such promotions are done in a year
Annual cost savings = S$11700

The above examples show that service companies can achieve annual cost savings of at least S$23700 from implementing SMS for the 3 services

**CONCLUSION**

SMS is a powerful enabler and tool to help retailers achieve a personal, more engaging communication with the customer. This contributes to higher customer loyalty an deeper customer insight which in turn translates to higher sales. An investment in a reliable SMS system can also achieve significant cost savings.

**A CUSTOMER'S SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE:**

**FAR EAST ORGANISATION**

Far East Organisation is the largest private property developer in Singapore. Its operations span the full spectrum of the real estate market, from residential to hospitality, commercial, retail and industrial sectors. It is also the largest private residential landlord and one of the largest owner operators of hotels in Singapore.

Far East Organisation has been using sendQuick since 2008. It has deployed sendQuick to integrate with its Property Management System and CRM system. sendQuick is being used to notify contractors such as plumbers and electricians on job/service requests for its Far East managed properties. The company is also using sendQuick for SMS broadcasting and marketing activities for its customers. sendQuick has helped Far East Organisation improve its internal communications, business efficiency and customer satisfaction.

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sendQuick® is the industry's leading appliance based SMS gateway specifically designed for enterprise messaging. Developed in 2004, it has since been implemented by more than 1300 companies worldwide across all continents.

As a low cost plug-and-play appliance that is reliable, scalable and compatible with key mobile technologies like GSM and CDMA, sendQuick® has been applied successfully across various industries. Examples includes banking, finance, insurance, manufacturing, retail, government, logistics, education, healthcare; for purposes like IT alerts and notifications, 2 factor authentication with SMS OTP (One Time Password), marketing campaigns, emergency broadcasting.

sendQuick® is developed by TalariaX Pte Ltd, a Singapore incorporated company focusing on mobile application development specifically on SMS, MMS and 3G technologies. Based on the channel development business model, TalariaX™ takes pride in working with strong partners, distributors and resellers to bring the benefits of SMS to enterprise customers worldwide.