

## What is an SMS supporter base?

An SMS supporter base is a list of mobile phone numbers of people who are happy to receive free to the user text messages at reasonable intervals from your organisation

The messages that you send can

- Request attendance at events (e.g. political parties reminding supporters to vote)
- Contain links to mobile internet sites
  - questionnaires
  - information
  - downloadable content like ringtones, images etc

## Why create an SMS supporter base?

Mobile phones are ubiquitous. There are more mobile phones in the UK than people and 30% of the UK population connect to the internet via broadband mobile phone devices – as many as the proportion that connect via home broadband<sup>1</sup>

The main reason to use an SMS supporter base is it is the most cost effective way to gather contact information at events – information that you can then follow up through a variety of channels

Your organisation is sending out communications to your existing opted-in supporters all of the time. Many of these communications can be replaced with SMS. SMS is cheaper than direct mail and less likely to be filtered and more timely than email because the mobile phones are more likely to be always on

Keeping an active supporter base using mobile phones allows timely communication with your supporters and prepares your organisation for a time when the mobile phones are the preferred means of accessing information from the web

## Creating an SMS Supporter Base

We recommend creating a supporter base from your own CRM data and by asking supporters to text a keyword to one of our short codes – they need not be used for donations. We recommend that you stipulate the maximum frequency of your messages and stick to it

You can also ask supporters to text their email addresses and other information after the keyword

If your supporter wishes to opt-out of a list they can text your keyword followed by OUT

---

<sup>1</sup> Source OFCOM Telecoms Industry Review August 2009

Your organisation should always collect mobile phone numbers as part of CRM activities, but remember people change their mobile phone numbers on average once every 2.5 years which means they quickly become out of date

You can also buy lists but we don't recommend that you do so because there are a lot of poor lists on the market and the data protection permissions are not always what they should be

## How Vir2 can help

We can provide you with either a dedicated short code or a keyword on a shared short code

We can provide you with a simple web based tool to

- Download responses
- Send messages to your supporters (up to 160 characters)
- Send several concatenated messages (for messages over 160 characters) that will appear as one message on your supporters phones

We can build you Mobile Internet sites or provide you with tools to build your own to a template

## Costs

A keyword on a shared short code costs £240 a year (ie £20/month) for a system limited to sending 160 character texts. The cost rises to £50/month for a system capable of sending concatenated texts

The cost of SMS depends on volumes typically 5p a message

Mobile Internet site prices on application

All prices subject to VAT

## Next Steps

Contact Vir2 on 08450 947 958 or [web@vir2.co.uk](mailto:web@vir2.co.uk) or text SMS to 84424 and we will call you back to arrange a free consultation

Regardless of your organisations needs we can advise you how SMS can help and design a pilot or full service to meet those needs cost effectively.