

Go text yourself!

(or someone else for that matter...)

Dictionary.com defines SMS “**Short Message Service**” as...

A message service offered by the GSM digital cellular telephone system. Using SMS, a short alphanumeric message (160 alphanumeric characters) can be sent to a mobile phone to be displayed there, much like in an alphanumeric pager system.

So, basically what that means is Short Messaging Services (SMS) offers the ability to send and receive text messages between mobile devices over wireless networks. Once used exclusively by cellular carriers to push notifications of new voice messages down to smart cell phones, SMS is now on a fast track to universal adoption by the cellular subscribers around the world, who have adopted it as a two-way personal messaging medium.

Also known as “texting” it’s a phenomenon that has taken off which has netted the cellular companies billions of dollars. If you have a teenager and have supplied them a cell phone, then you have probably had some heated debates with their use of this service. You may have seen it demonstrated with the ability to text voting shows like the American Idol.

...and you ask; “What’s in it for me?”

While its principal use is still for personal messaging, SMS is also being used for receiving weather reports and traffic information, mobile shopping, banking, and stock trading. SMS is being enhanced to support the delivery of long-text messages, images, and video as well.

About 45 percent of young adults 18 to 24 use the text-messaging feature on their phones, according to a study by wireless marketing and consulting firm Telephia, Inc. They use it as a tool for organizing events, playing games or just to stay in touch. For older texters, SMS provides a convenient way to request and receive useful small increments of information, such as a number needed for a report during a meeting.

Some examples that apply in our industry:

- Include an SMS shortcut link on your web site to allow your clients to interface with you immediately! (visit www.pristow.com for an example of how I used it in my web page)
- Utilized services that your cellular provider offers, or services like MSN mobile, or Google SMS to provide you certain weather or traffic alerts
- Work with your e-mail service provider and create notifications to your phone when certain types of important e-mails are sent to your account.
- Provide your office with your SMS information, so that they text you when you receive important information while you are in meetings, rather than leaving a voice mail. This is handy, since the information is instantaneous and you can quickly decide whether or not to take immediate action on it, or simply keep it stored on your phone for later.
- Enhanced messaging also includes images (a.k.a. ‘picture messaging’). This comes in handy when sending picture information to your out of town clients, directly from your phone to theirs.

What about spam?????

To help stem the growing concern over wireless spam (on which consumer advocates are increasingly buckling down), most carriers and SMS services providers require clients to certify that their messages are delivered only to recipients who have “opted-in” to alerts, in accordance with anti-spam laws and industry standards approved by mobile marketing associations.

So, take it for a spin and **Go text yourself!**

Send a text message from your cellular provider's web page.

Cingular http://www.cingular.com/sendamessage	Cingular (Former AT&T subscribers) http://www.mymmode.com/messagecenter/init
Nextel http://messaging.nextel.com	Sprint http://messaging.sprintpcs.com
T-Mobile http://www.t-mobile.com/messaging	Verizon http://www.vtext.com

Remember!!!

Most carriers charge for SMS messages. So, be sure to consult with your cellular carrier's rate charts for their service pricing guidelines.

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