bulksms.com

A quick start guide to sending your messages using our Web App.

www.bulksms.com

TO 447812 123456

MESSAGE

Welcome to BulkSMS.com

You've made the right choice.
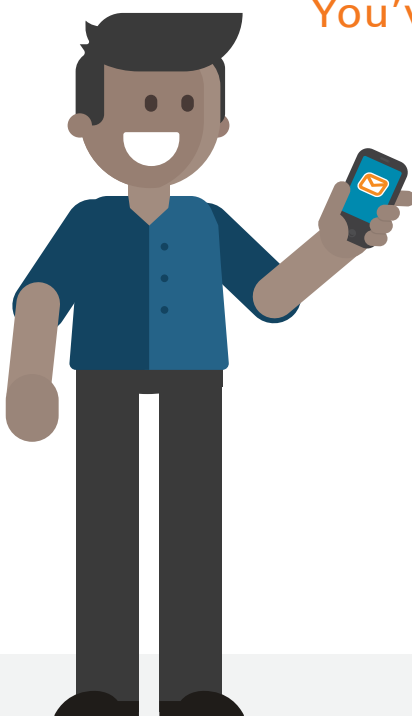
We're so glad you've chosen to send your SMS messages using our Web App, it's our favourite app and has been designed to make sending messages nice and easy.

And while we've kept you in mind when designing it, we know you'll have some questions about our platform, people and processes. Which is why we've put this quick start guide together.

Please let us know if we've missed anything. We want you to be able to get your message across quicker than a carrier pigeon can race home!

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Common questions

Do I have to stick to the 160 character limit?

No, not at all! Typically, SMS messages have a limit of 160 characters, which in some cases just isn't enough. Let's say you'd like to send a very important business SMS without having to shorten words or use text talk. Using BulkSMS, you can send SMSes of up to 918 characters, which will be delivered to the recipient as a single message.

What you do need to bear in mind is the cost. Even though you are sending one long message, you will still be charged per SMS part. For example, if one text message costs you 1,5 credits, and you send a message with 6 message parts, you will be charged 6 x 1,5 credits for delivery of that message.

Can I send my messages in any language?

Yes, you can. Whether you need to communicate with your clients in Arabic, Greek, Latin, or you'd just like to add special characters to your SMS communications, Unicode messaging lets you do just that. Remember though, that when sending Unicode messages, you only have 70 characters per SMS.

Fortunately for you, you can send long SMS messages through our platform, so your Unicode messages can have up to 402 characters in a single message.

Can I send SMS text messages from my company name or my mobile number?

The short answer is yes, you can, on most networks. It's called using a Sender ID. So, instead of the message coming from a system generated long number, you can choose your company name, campaign name or even a standard mobile number. By using a Sender ID, your customers will immediately recognise who the SMS text message is from.

Remember that while recipients can't reply to text messages sent using a Sender ID, you will need to include clear instructions on how recipients can opt out, especially if you're sending marketing messages. By doing this, you'll be sticking to the industry codes of **best practice** with every send.

This does need to be tested as it isn't available in all countries on all networks. For example, South African networks don't allow for sending of messages with a Sender ID.

Can my customers reply to the messages I send them?

Yes, and no.

Yes, your customers can reply to your SMSes if the network allows it; unfortuntely not all networks do.

Some networks that allow for replies would route the replies via another country's network. In which case, there will be extra costs involved for the person replying to the SMS. Our advice is to check whether or not the network you are sending to, actually allows for replies.

If you'd like to check which networks allow for local replies (i.e. the replies won't need to be routed to another country) you can **view this list here**. Please note that if you're sending an SMS using a Sender ID (the "from field" is a name and not a number) then you won't be able to receive replies.

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Buying SMS credits

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Buying credits: step by step

Step 1: Log in to your BulkSMS account **here**.

Step 2: Click on the orange "Buy" icon on the top right hand corner.

Step 3: Enter your billing details and click save.

Step 4: Select your credit package and the form of payment you'd like to use.

Step 5: Click buy and follow the prompts. Remember to pay attention to your *unique bank reference number* if you are doing an electronic transfer.

What is an SMS credit?

Before you can start sending SMSes, you need to buy credits. Credits are the "currency" of BulkSMS. To send an SMS, you will need a certain number of SMS credits in your account; the number of credits needed to send an SMS will vary depending on what country or network you are sending to. For example, in some countries you might need 2.5 credits to send one SMS message, where in other countries you might only need half a credit to send one SMS message.

How can I buy SMS credits?

When buying credits, you can choose one of three payment options: Paypal, credit card or bank transfer. There are a few important things to note about each of these payment methods.

If paying by Credit Card or Paypal:

Payments may not reflect immediately when buying credits for the first time. If you have any concerns, please email our Support Desk.

If paying by electronic transfer:

Please be aware that it may take up to 2 working days for a payment to clear. Your SMS credits will only reflect in your account once the payment reflects in our bank account.

How long do I have to wait to send my SMS text messages?

When paying with Paypal or a credit card on our site, the credits are likely to reflect in your account immediately. However, in some cases, the payment needs to be approved manually, which means the credits will take a few hours to reflect in your account.

If our team does need to approve the payment manually for whatever reason, your credits should reflect within 24 hours during the work week. However, this timing will depend on whether or not your payment is approved.

 If you choose to do a bank transfer, please make sure that you include your *unique bank payment reference number* when making the payment so we can identify your payment as soon as the funds arrive in our bank account.

Uploading your contact list

What format must my list be in?

We've found that the biggest problem our customers have is that they don't always include the country code which means their SMS sends fail or end up in the wrong hands.

We are a global SMS provider which means that we can send your SMS messages worldwide, it also means that if you don't add the correct country code, your message won't be delivered to your contact.

If sending to the UK, for example:

❌ **07812 123456**   ✔️ **447812 123456**

So here's the golden rule, your contact numbers should never ever start with a 0. If there's a 0 at the beginning, your SMS will not be sent to the contact you're trying to send it to.

Zero is no-one's hero.

Uploading contacts: step by step

We get a lot of questions about uploading contacts to your BulkSMS account, so here's how to do it. Follow these steps and you'll be sending in no time!

Step 1: Create an Excel Spreadsheet or csv or txt file with all the contacts listed in the correct format. You can use **this template**; remember to add in the country codes for each contact.

Step 2: Once your file is ready to go, log in to your BulkSMS account and select the "Contacts" tab on the left of your screen.

Step 3: Click on "Import Contacts" and choose to upload your file from your PC.

Step 4: Select which contact group you'd like to upload the file to, or create a new one. You can also choose not to upload it to any group.

Step 5: Click "Next". All your contacts will now be uploaded.

If you want to add your contacts one by one, you can do that too. Here's how:

Step 1: Log in to your BulkSMS account and select the "Contacts" tab on the left of your screen.

Step 2: Select "Create Contact" on the top right-hand corner

Step 3: Fill in the necessary fields; remember the country code and don't add spaces when adding the mobile number.

Step 4: Press "Save".

Step 5: Choose which group you'd like to add the contact to.

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Sending your messages

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Once you've bought credits and uploaded your contacts, you're ready to start sending! To send an SMS, simply click on "New Message" on the left-hand side of the screen. Here, you can also choose to personalise or schedule your SMS, or both!

Personalise your messages:

Personalising your SMSes is a great way to make your customers and clients feel valued. Using this app, you can personalise the name and last name of your contacts, even when sending the same message to a group of contacts.

If you'd like to know more about how personalising your SMSes can help improve your communication strategy, or you just need some ideas to get started, **click here**.
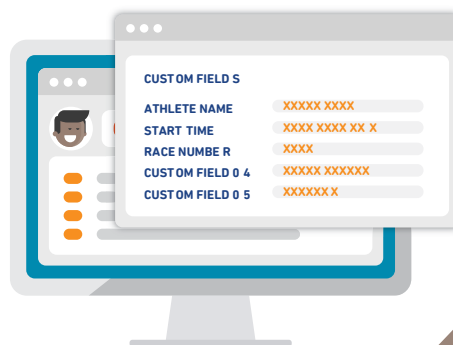
Scheduling your messages:

Our scheduling feature is one of our favourites because it lets you schedule your SMSes for weeks, months or even a year in advance. It can be used to set up a reminder message the day before an appointment, meeting or event. It can be used to tell customers about a one day only special, or even just to send yourself an important reminder.

If you'd like to cancel a scheduled SMS, simply go to your "Scheduled Messages" and press the trash can icon on the far right hand side. And lastly, when you schedule your SMSes, the credits will be deducted from your account, even though your message hasn't been sent yet. If you cancel the scheduled message, your credits will reflect the change.

Once you've decided what you want to do… Click Send.

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Checking your delivery stats

Viewing your sent messages

Once you've sent your SMSes, you can qualify your sends and check how many SMSes have been delivered (and read) successfully. This can all be seen in your delivery stats, which is available under the "Sent Messages" tab in your BulkSMS account. Remember to select the time frame you'd like to view by navigating through the date options on the top right hand side of the screen.

Our system will show the following four statistics:

1. The total number of SMSes sent
2. The total percentage of SMSes delivered
3. The total percentage of SMSes failed
4. The total percentage of unconfirmed SMS deliveries, which means we have been unable to get a reply from the mobile network.

Remember to keep your database clean and up to date by removing any contacts that SMSes aren't being delivered to. You will still be charged for SMSes sent to blocked or faulty contacts.

Delivery concerns

If we don't cover the networks, or your delivery results are not as expected, please **let us know**. We can only help if we know that there is a problem.

More Questions?

Regional regulations and best practice

SMS messaging has been around for over twenty years and is well regulated, more so in some countries than others. It might seem like a daunting task to ensure you're compliant with your regional regulations and codes of best practices when communicating via SMS, but it really doesn't have to be.

We've put together this **Best Practice Guide** to help you on your messaging journey

We're happy to help

If we haven't answered your questions, take a look out our **FAQ page** or you can **contact us**. We'd love to find out more about how and why you want to get your messages across and to help you engage with your customers.

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