

Newsletter

April 2007

We're sharing secrets for spring

There's something about the sunshine that makes you feel like cleaning up, sorting things out and getting life in order. So our April newsletter is here to help you to go with that new, spring kind of urge. Scrub up your debt collection communication, clean up your mobile marketing and dust down Rapide's new look system.

Have your say – what do you think about our newsletter and the topics we've raised? email us at news@rapide.co.uk

Or call our automated feedback line
0870 428 0436

This Month's Stories

❖ Debt collection secrets - Page 2

Sometimes you're not paid on time. It's a fact of life. But why, with technology roaring ahead to make communication cheaper, faster and more direct, are debt collection processes practically the same as they were in the 1960s? Here's an exclusive chance to find out our secrets.

❖ All dressed up - Page 3

We've been very impressed with your response to our new website and as a result of your feedback, we're refurbishing the rest of Rapide to match. It's also time for a bit more than a wash and brush up.

❖ Cleaning up mobile marketing - Page 4

Text competitions and text voting have been grabbing headlines for all the wrong reasons. Even Blue Peter has been embroiled in scandal, with the BBC being forced to apologise for a fake winner. Is mobile marketing dead? Far from it.

❖ When three minutes just isn't enough - Page 5

Three minutes is the length of time available in a voicemail before the networks typically get bored, decide you're taking up too much space and cut you off. Team Call & Listen means you never run out of time – Aviva demonstrates how to make it work.

Debt Collection – a secret we'll share

We know our debt collection secrets already work for our clients. In fact, one of our clients – a major UK bank - has increased the amount they recover from customers by £1million a year.

It makes you think doesn't it?

What's our secret?

1. Send a text message to your customer, asking them to call you.
2. That's it.

Why does something so simple make so much difference?

- A text message is cheaper to send than a letter
- 95% of all text messages are read but only around 25% of emails are opened - so you get a better response
- A text message is delivered directly into your customer's hands, no matter where they are
- You don't have to wait for your customer to get home to open the post or log into their emails
- Mobile phones are a personal and emotional way to communicate – giving your message the importance and urgency you need
- Customers usually respond immediately
- The customers call you, converting your outbound debt recovery team into a more efficient inbound collections team.

We can integrate our system into yours. Once it's set up, your text messages can be sent automatically, so the system practically runs itself. You can control text delivery speed, managing the rate that customers call into your call centre.

Interested? Call us to see how it can work in your business on 024 7643 0180

All dressed up – Rapide's new look

Dior's new look had nothing on the one planned at Rapide!

You might already be familiar with our shiny new website at www.rapide.co.uk. It's full of fresh ideas and inspiring case studies about how Rapide can help your business.

In response to your feedback, we've decided to refurbish the rest of Rapide to match. It starts with a bit of a spring clean and over the next couple of months you'll notice the screens change to look like the one here www.rapide.co.uk/new. The first one to make the leap will be the home page you see just after you've logged in.

We don't want you to think that we've been taken over by aliens, so we thought it was best to let you know what's going on.

Here are some of the improvements we've got planned

- Some of the names in the menu on the left hand side will change a little bit to make it easier for you to understand what they do
- White backgrounds make the text on the screen easier for you to read
- A few screens will be rearranged so entering and sending information flows in a more logical sequence

Don't worry, we'll warn you on the homepage as changes are made, and add in 'help' areas so you won't lose anything when you're in a hurry.

Love it or hate it?

You're working with Rapide every day so it's important that our changes fit with the way that you use it. So if there's a change you'd like to make, or something you'd prefer to stay the same – this is your chance to get involved. Contact us and let us know.

Cleaning up mobile marketing

Q: What have The X-Factor, Blue Peter and I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here got in common?

A: Scandal!

Prime time TV shows are being hauled over the coals by the premium rate phone regulator, ICSTIS. Complaints were made against them for taking cash from text messages and phone calls where customers have no chance of winning, and in some cases of even entering, a competition. The timing could have been better for broadcasters. While text competitions have grown exponentially over the last year, ICSTIS also gained extra power in 2006 to bar services and impose fines of up to £250,000 a time.

There were even questions in the House. Tessa Jowell was so concerned that she waded into the debate at the House of Commons to grant even more power to the regulator in future, forcing broadcasters to display more prominent pricing information and on-screen updates of the number of entries received.

So where does that leave you?

Mobile marketing is far from dead, but like any marketing channel, know the rules before you start. Read up.

1. Remember the basics. The Advertising Standards Authority's rules govern all marketing communications, and you can't go far wrong when you stick to them.

- All marketing communications should be legal, decent, honest and truthful.
- All marketing communications should be prepared with a sense of responsibility to consumers and to society.
- All marketing communications should respect the principles of fair competition generally accepted in business.
- No marketing communication should bring advertising into disrepute.

Check all the details at http://www.asa.org.uk/asa/codes/cap_code/

2. There are 32 delicious pages of best practice at the Direct Marketing Association
<http://www.dma.org.uk/DocFrame/DocView.asp?id=1897&sec=-1>

3. Go to the horse's mouth – read the ICSTIS guidelines
<http://www.icstis.org.uk/publications/cop/default.asp>

4. Call an expert like Rapide – 02476 430 180 – we've got a proven track record in mobile marketing in the UK and internationally. We can run client funded or 'pay to enter' campaigns for text, voice messages, phone calls, WAP and multimedia messages.

Team Call & Listen

For when three minutes just isn't enough

- You have something delicate and important to say?
- It's not possible to tell everyone personally?
- Your message is going to be longer than three minutes?

Some messages simply need more time – maybe it's something delicate that needs a tone of voice to give it context and make the meaning clear. Or your message is more complicated and needs explaining. Or perhaps you just have a lot of information to get across at the same time.

We have the solution. And it's simple.

Instead of sending your voice message direct to mobile phones, it's recorded in a central place.

- Record your message – take as long as you like
- We can send a text message asking people to call in to listen to your message (the clue is in the title!).
- Or you could publish the number to call on an email, or in your company newsletter or on your intranet or...well you get the idea.
- You can offer options at the beginning, allowing the caller to choose what they hear.
- We keep an audit of who's called in.

It doesn't have to be all one way either.

At the end of your message you can ask callers to

- press 1 to be connected directly to your call centre,
- press 2 to leave their feedback about what they've heard,
- press 3 to hear more about how this affects the marketing team,

Team Call & Listen working for Aviva

Richard Harvey, CEO of Aviva uses Rapide to communicate key messages about the organisation with his staff across the world. You can see the details at www.rapide.co.uk/aviva-case-study