



# Newsletter

## April 2009

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In this month's newsletter we review the Mobile World Congress from Barcelona, where Nigel Shanahan our MD gives an insight into the event and the directions the mobile communications industry is heading. We also look at incident communications and how many of the leading organisations are turning to Rapide to help communicate more effectively when it's needed most.

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

Or call our automated feedback line  
0870 428 0436

### This Month's Stories

#### ❖ MD's report from the Mobile World Congress. - Page 2

Barcelona hosts the 3GSM in February, this is the World Conference for all that is 'mobile'. It's a staggering bonanza with exhibitions and conferences that spread across 8 gigantic halls making the NEC look tiny.

#### ❖ Turning serious incidents into simple exercises. - Page 3

What do heavy flooding in Newbury, the BACS bank payment system failing, Foot & Mouth disease and Premiership football have in common? Well, they all resulted in clients using Rapide for emergency incident communications to staff or customers, in order to keep business running.

#### ❖ Mobile service improvements from Rapide - Page 4

Find out how Rapide is changing to provide you with more effective, powerful solutions to help your organisation sell more, inform fast and engage everyone

#### ❖ Middlesbrough outsmart the snow with Rapide - Page 5

When heavy snow forced Middlesbrough to cancel their steward training and North Riding Senior Cup game they needed a quick way to alert all their staff. Calling everyone individually is both ineffective and time consuming so instead they called Rapide!

## Fresh back from The Mobile World Congress - Read our MD's report on how the future of mobile communications is shaping up!

Barcelona hosts the 3GSM in February, this is the World Conference for all that is 'mobile'. It's a staggering bonanza with exhibitions and conferences that spread across 8 gigantic halls making the NEC look tiny. 60,000 delegates and exhibitors descend upon Barcelona occupying all available hotel rooms, filling up tables in restaurants and wandering down Las Ramblas where the street performers entertain and the ladies of the night are aggressive! I was lucky enough to attend and enjoy some interesting industry perspectives alongside some good tapas and paella meals.

There were some fantastic presentations and discussions from major industry players reporting on the year past and looking into the emerging themes for 2009. The most impressive for me was the CTO of Google, followed by the CEO of Skype. Alongside the massive impact of Apple with the iPhone, what these players signal is that the market has changed for ever. The Mobile Operators will no longer dictate the customer experience on their mobile phone. Apple broke the mould and have showed that when you make the mobile phone interface intuitive and the applications useful, people will use their phone for everything that they use a desktop computer for and more. Google's CTO claimed that there are 3 major drivers for massive adoption of mobile's for mobile internet usage:

### 1) Data Plans

People are nervous about the cost of 'surfing' on their phone. When there is a 'flat' charge - as in the fixed internet world - people's usage patterns change. He backed this up with an example of a small US-based Mobile Operator called MetroPCS who have Flat Plans and users generate 10x more data traffic than a 'typical' user on a variable payment plan.

### 2) Powerful Internet Browsers on the Mobile Phone

Google's new Android, Apple and Palm have all adopted the latest 'open' standards around the W3C specifications for HTML5. This spec relates to the database, application cache and geo-location data. This all sounds a bit technical but what it means for developers of applications is that they can standardise their developments around this. It will no longer be a 'closed' shop and the specs have 'opened' for all to see. The Google CTO demonstrated the power of this standard by showing the latest version of Gmail, Google's free internet-based email service running on an Android phone. The way it worked was amazing, every bit as powerful as Outlook. Even when he turned the network off, the application worked.

### 3) Software that is optimised for the unique aspects of being Mobile

Clearly geo-location is important - where are my friends, are they 'present', where's the nearest cafe., petrol station etc - all played visually back to the user on a map, but without the user describing where they are. Point and click rather than complicated data entry works. The list goes on.

The message here is that the Mobile Operators do a great job of providing services to customers, they are vital in the eco-system, but so are the handset manufacturers and the developers of value-added applications. So when standards are adopted by the entire industry, and walled gardens opened, the customer has a greater experience. Perhaps what is most interesting is that they ultimately 'use' more **AND** are prepared to pay more, so everyone wins.

## Turning serious incidents into simple exercises

What do heavy flooding in Newbury, the BACS bank payment system failing, Foot & Mouth disease and Premiership football have in common?

Well, they all resulted in clients using Rapide for emergency incident communications to staff or customers, in order to keep business running:

**Flooding** – the Vodafone Headquarters in Newbury flooded. Rapide carried emergency text alerts and longer recorded briefings to nearly 10,000 staff, so everyone knew where to go to work on Monday morning.

**BACS** – when the inter-bank payment service failed, Barclays took immediate action to minimise the impact on customers. And part of that was using Rapide's voice broadcast service to ensure that every branch across the UK knew about the new measures and how to best support their customers.

**Foot & Mouth** – The National Farmers Union used Rapide to reassure over 25,000 farmers during the last Foot & Mouth outbreak. The NFU President broadcast his message via Rapide on the day of the outbreak, and informed farmers of the call centre and website options for more advice and support.

**Premiership football** – the recent heavy snowfalls threatened to disrupt Middlesbrough FC. Using Rapide they alerted staff to reschedule events and manage the blizzard conditions...in just a few moments:

*"It literally took 5 minutes to sort out from beginning to end and the staff at Rapide were very helpful. This service has saved us considerable time. I would definitely recommend this service"*

**Yvonne Ferguson, Admin & Human Resource Manager**

Rapide carry alert, incident and emergency communications by text and voice messages for many of our clients – getting the information to staff and customers fast.

To find out how we can help your organisation with your critical communications, please contact us on:

**02476 011 910**

## More service improvements from Rapide!!

### NEW from Rapide...

Since the launch of our Linked Text Message capability on our Desktop and Rapide Assistant services, we are pleased to announce that we have sent over **100,000** Linked Text Messages in just 1 month!

Don't forget that you can now send longer text messages – up to 450 characters – when you are typing your text into Rapide Desktop, or dictating your text to your Rapide Assistant. For more information, please call the Rapide Assistant team on **1500** (Vodafone) or **0906 000 1500** (any other phone).

And NEW for March 2009...

### Rapide Voicemail

You already know how effective the Rapide Voice Broadcast service is for getting your message across. But sometimes we just can't get through to a particular phone number – perhaps because the mobile is switched off or out of signal, and the voicemail is full.

Up until now that message has failed.

But from later this month we will be introducing Rapide Voicemail. If we can't deliver your voice broadcast, we will automatically text your recipient telling them that they have missed your message, and giving them the Rapide Voicemail number to call in and pick up the message.

Fast. Simple. Straight forward. And making sure that your messages get through.

For more information on Rapide Voicemail, please contact your Account Manager, or the Rapide Assistant Team on **1500** (Vodafone) or **0906 000 1500** (any other phone).

## Middlesbrough outsmart the snow with Rapide

*"I would definitely recommend this service"*

Middlesbrough Football Club has a colourful history stretching back over 100 years, including winning the League Cup in 2004

### The challenge

When heavy snow forced Middlesbrough to cancel their steward training and North Riding Senior Cup game they needed a quick way to alert all their staff. Calling everyone individually is both ineffective and time consuming so instead they called Rapide!

### The solution

Rapide were quickly in action and sent out text messages to all Middlesbrough's staff straight away informing them that the training was cancelled. Yvonne Ferguson, Admin & Human Resource Manager spoke about the service:

*"It literally took 5 minutes to sort out from beginning to end and the staff at Rapide were very helpful. This service has saved us considerable time. I would definitely recommend this service"*

### Incident Communications

Text messages are an up front and effective way to send out alerts and important information. It's easy for the recipients to reply back so you can have an immediate response.

Rapide is used as a major incident communication tool by many clients including the Metropolitan Police Royalty Protection Squad, Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Trust and the Ministry of Defence Nuclear Response Team.

To find how Rapide can support your urgent communications please call **02476 011 910**