



0000 1234 5678 9000

Newsletter February 2009

2009 Is going to be a challenging year! How can we help?

2009 is finally upon us and we all know it's going to be a difficult year.....or is it? We've been working hard on a constant stream of service updates and enhancements designed to help you get through the difficulties facing us all this year. Read our February newsletter to learn about the new linked text message features in Rapide Desktop or how we've enhanced our conference call services. There's also articles on how to begin thinking of mobile technology as a great way of building customer loyalty and retention plus much more...

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

- ❖ **Loyalty: Now & in the Future - Page 2**
Your phone is always with you and your loyalty card isn't. Imagine if the mobile phone could be used as a method of sending out personal invitations to events, redeemable coupons, and related money back offers.
- ❖ **January Sales & Credit Card bills! - Page 3**
Our services run 24/7/365 to provide fast and effective communication for our clients. So we have been very busy over the Christmas period – especially supporting projects for our retail, financial services and utilities clients.
- ❖ **New for 2009 – improved services in Rapide Desktop - Page 4**
New for 2009 we are pleased to introduce new improved functions to the Rapide services.
- ❖ **5 Awards in 2008 – find out what all the fuss is about! - Page 6**
Here at Rapide we work hard to make technology accessible and effective for our clients. So we were delighted to have this recognised in a whole series of regional and national awards throughout 2008.

Customer Loyalty: Now and in the future

Your phone is always with you and your loyalty card isn't. Imagine if the mobile phone could be used as a method of sending out personal invitations to events, redeemable coupons, and related money back offers.

There are four key mechanics of a loyalty programme, all of which are well suited to the mobile phones that are already in the hands of more than 90% of consumers: - earning points - tracking points - spending points and - receiving information. Clearly, loyalty programmes need to differentiate more to build both engagement and participation - with the main areas of concern being:

- Clear rules
- An acceptable currency
- Simple redemption
- Relevant/valuable rewards
- Achievable results
- Flexibility

Mobile phones may hold the key. Could the mobile phone actually replace the traditional plastic loyalty card? In practical terms it would be a relatively simple matter for almost any modern handset to display the customer's ID bar code (or other machine readable image) on-screen, either as wallpaper or as a saved image or MMS message.

Even in more manual systems, the mobile phone number itself can be used as a unique identifier (although this has some potential problems in countries where prepaid cards are the norm). The consumer then only needs to show their phone (or quote their phone number) at the check-out. And it certainly would encourage interactivity, leading to additional engagement in the programme. And they could be reminded by SMS before Happy Hour promotions and other loyalty programme-related events. They can have their points balance available at all times, encouraging them to redeem more regularly. Already, mobile promotions from brands such as Heineken have shown that mobile voucher redemption is dramatically different to paper-based promotions: Heineken achieved a redemption rate of over 80% in one campaign.

Rapide has delivered quite simple campaigns for loyalty programmes. For example, send out a voice call with a personal invitation to an event at the store, follow up with an SMS with the details. They work. That's why stores keep using them. But how much more powerful are they when the SMS is personalised with a relevant offer and when it is sent at the right time? So much so, that the stores that have used it, are now no longer sending out those expensive letter drops.

Busy start to the year – January Sales and January Credit Card bills!

Our services run **24/7/365** to provide fast and effective communication for our clients. So we have been very busy over the Christmas period – especially supporting projects for our retail, financial services and utilities clients.

One major retail customer has enjoyed a credit crunch-busting sales growth of over **50%** by promoting their Christmas and January sales using Rapide's text and voice services.

Another retail client is standing out from the crowd with a mobile based competition – getting their customers to send MMS pictures and then visiting the store to win a spot prize.

Rapide supports all of the UK's major high-street banks and right now our credit-card clients are especially busy! All that Christmas shopping turned into credit card bills in January, and our clients use Rapide to

improve their payment collections. Some clients can collect **400%** more revenue when they use Rapide for reminder messages!

The extremely cold weather mean that a number of our clients have been using Rapide for Incident, Alert or Emergency Communications to both staff and customers. Power and utility companies co-ordinate their field engineers with Rapide's text services, train companies manage their repair teams using Rapide and retail clients have been able to warn customers of delivery delays due to the bad weather.

So with our services saving clients money, improving customer satisfaction and services, and helping win more sales – Rapide has had a very busy start to 2009!

To find out how we could help your business sell more, inform fast and engage everyone call us on:

02476 011 911

New for 2009 – improved services in Rapide Desktop

New for 2009 we are pleased to introduce new improved functions to the Rapide services.

- **Linked Text Messages**

The traditional text message is a maximum of 160 characters long but sometimes you want to say a bit more than that.

Which is why we have enhanced Rapide Desktop to send Linked Text messages. Your texts can now be up to **450** characters long – which means that you have room to say exactly what you want to.



The screenshot shows the 'From' section with options for Name, Company, Mobile, and Office. The 'Message' section contains a template selection dropdown and a text area with the message: "character limit, so I have room to say exactly what I want. Happy New Year!". The right-hand panel shows the 'Num of Recipients' field (0), 'No. of characters used' (239), and a 'Credits per Message Length' table:

Credits per Message Length	Character Range
1 Credit	1 - 160 chars
2 Credits	161 - 306 chars
3 Credits	307 - 450 chars

The 'Message Preview' shows: "From Mike McMaster - This is a linked text message to show the new capability in Rapide Desktop - it is 239 characters long - much longer than the previous 160 character limit, so I have room to say exactly". Other fields include 'Schedule Date: 2009-01-08', 'Schedule Time: 11:43', and checkboxes for 'Enable Replies', 'Confirm Delivery (1 extra credit)', and 'Flash'. A 'Send' button is also visible.

(cont....)

New for 2009 – improved services in Rapide Desktop (cont.....)

Linked messages are available on your Rapide Desktop account right now – just log in, and start typing! Or you can, of course, call the Rapide Assistant team on **1500** (from a Vodafone mobile) or **09060 001 500** from any other phone. Linked messages are not currently supported on the Rapide Remote Text, Rapide Campaigns or Automated Text services...but watch this space!

• Large-scale Conference Service

Many of our clients have been making conference calls using the simple, fast, easy-to-use Rapide Conference Call service. In fact, we handle over 500,000 conference minutes every month!

And now we are pleased to announce our new Enhanced Conference Call service for larger conference events:

No-Frills Conference Service	Enhanced Conference Service
Immediate access 24/7	Up to 256 people on one conference call
Set up a conference yourself via Rapide Desktop	Separate Speaker Line and Audience Line
Automatic text reminders for the start of the call	Live Moderator to manage Audience questions
No waiting for a Chair – as soon as you dial in you enter the conference call	Capability to Record the entire conference call
Re-usable Conference PINs, so you can keep the same dial-in number and PIN Access to reuse next time	PIN access control
Maximum 20 people on any one conference call	Management Information on the Audience – callers, call time and duration
	Run the conference on 0800, 0870, 0871 or geographic dial-in numbers
Call Cost = 10p per minute!	Call Cost = 10p per minute!

For more information, or to book your large scale Enhanced Conference Call, please contact your account manager on **02476 011 911**.

Or to start using the No-Frills Conference service straight away, call the Rapide Assistant team on **1500** (from a Vodafone mobile or **09060 001 500** from any other phone).

5 Awards in 2008 – find out what all the fuss is about!



Here at Rapide we work hard to make technology accessible and effective for our clients. So we were delighted to have this recognised in a whole series of regional and national awards through 2008.

We started small(ish) – winning the regional award for **Innovation Through Technology** from the Warwickshire & Coventry Chamber of Commerce. And the winning service? Rant & Rave.

Spurred on by this success we won the **Best Innovative Service** at the 4th Annual ICT Excellence Awards, beating local and national competition with our rant & Rave service.

And on the same evening, still admiring our Best Innovative Service Award, we were delighted to hear our name called out again – we won the **Best Overall Champion** award (as well as a cheque for £2,000!).

The judges said: "This year we've seen the highest standard of award entries yet and competition has been incredibly tough, but Rapide Communication really stood out for us.

And about the Rant & Rave service, they said that the "Rant & Rave service is a highly original concept using emotional response indicators and we were impressed by its success in the UK".

And then, to finish the year on a high, we won the national Award for **Innovation Through Technology** at the British Chambers of Commerce Awards 2008!

Monique Bonner, Dell's SME Sales Director UK and Ireland, commented;

"Rapide Communication Ltd is a very innovative organisation. Its competitive edge is driven by its ongoing quest to identify, develop and implement new ways to help their customers achieve their goals using unique and pioneering communication solutions"

The service that won all of these awards is Rant & Rave – our unique solution to capture customer feedback through just about any route (email, text, phone calls, websites, blogs etc), underpinned by our market-leading Sentiment Engine technology to automatically analyse, score and categorise the information – live!

To find out more about how this award winning technology can help you find out what your customers really think about your products and services, call us now on **02476 011 911**, or click here.

