Broadcast SMS: Useful Service for the Local/National Government by Avena Sowell

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Broadcast SMS is basically a short message service (SMS) allowing the delivery of text messages from one source to many recipients. It allows the use of web based text message API to send hundreds and thousands of SMS to mobile devices within a particular area or within a specific demographic group. The three major uses of broadcast SMS are as a marketing campaign, for emergency alerts and for sharing important/relevant information. Let us take an in-depth look at broadcast SMS for alerts and information drive-

Firstly, letâ€™s look at the functioning of a broadcast SMS service. Usually a city or state or even a country has its own designated websites for citizens. At these websites, the citizens can register their name and mobile numbers so that important alerts and information can be easily sent to them. This creates a database which can be stored in the SMS server of any text messaging API which is used for the broadcast SMS service. When the need arises, the message/messages to be delivered are typed on PC and sent through text messaging API to the SMS servers. These servers then direct the message to individuals who have registered. The use of text message API assures that all the messages are delivered quickly to the respective recipients. Also the use of this system is very low cost and more effective as most people have 24x7 access to mobile phones/mobile devices. The individual SMS servers ensure no traffic problem for the broadcast SMS.

In recent times the use of broadcast SMS has gained tremendous importance for the local/national governments of the world. In 2005, with the help of broadcast SMS services, the London authorities were able to connect with the people and ensure safety and surety to the public after the terrorist bombings. Similarly, when the tsunami hit Sri Lanka, the government was able to connect with the public and inform them about the situation through the use of broadcast SMS services. These are just few of the instances when broadcast SMS services have been useful to the government agencies. There are several other useful advantages of broadcast SMS services such as:

â€¢ Nationwide or area wise alerts

â€¢ Weather alert especially during extreme weather conditions like tornadoes, hurricanes, tsunami, etc.

â€¢ Traffic alerts

â€¢ campaigns or drives for help after natural calamities

â€¢ Polling and campaigning

Broadcast SMS services are of utmost importance during a natural calamity or catastrophe. They can help provide the subscribers ongoing and updated information about the events transpiring. They can be used to inform people about the next tremor or big tsunami wave or tornado coming and in which areas to stay clear from. They can give news updates and information when the power lines are down. Even after the calamity these broadcast SMS services can be useful for arranging supply and distribution drives as well as donation drives.

The broadcast SMS is an extremely useful service for the local as well as national government. They can be of utmost advantage during crisis situations and can help the government restore or ensure some order during the chaotic situations. Also, they can be helpful in transferring important information and messages to the public.

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