WHAT IS SMS?

Short Message Service (SMS) is a communication protocol allowing the sending and receiving of short text messages between mobile devices via the Short Message Peer to Peer Protocol (SMPP).

Short codes are required for SMS application/campaigns targeted at mobile subscribers in the U.S.

WHAT IS A SHORT CODE?

A short code is a 5-6 character number, much like a phone number, that text messages are sent and received on. You can obtain a vanity or a random short code. A vanity is a code with numbers in succession, for example “111222” or “44444” or a code that correlates to the letters on the telephone keypad such as “TEXTME”. Random short codes are randomly generated 5-6 character numbers.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS WITH SMS PROGRAMS?

There are two types of SMS programs available – Standard rate and Free to End User (FTEU).

- Standard Rate holds the consumer accountable for any message and data rates incurred as a result of receiving or responding to messages on a short code
- FTEU is a free message to the consumer and the owner of the shortcode incurs the message and data rates associated with sending or receiving messages
HOW MANY CHARACTERS CAN BE SENT IN ONE TEXT MESSAGE?
For all programs character limit is 160 characters (including spaces). For Canadian short codes and programs the limit is 136 characters.

WHAT CARRIERS ARE SUPPORTED?
West partners with tier 1 aggregators that support over 60 tiers 1, 2 and 3 carriers domestically as well as in Canada.

Four major carriers represent 95%+ of the wireless market (in order from largest to smallest % of users):
- Verizon
- AT&T
- Sprint
- T-Mobile

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO SET UP AN SMS CAMPAIGN?
Timing of the application development of an SMS campaign is contingent on the complexity of the design as well as resource availability. Purchasing and provisioning of the shortcode with the carriers has a 8-12 week timeline (from the time program brief* is submitted); this can be done in tandem with application development.

*Program brief is requirement document submitted to the carriers outlining the use of purchased short code

DO CUSTOMERS HAVE TO SIGN UP TO USE SMS?
Yes, for all programs that provide messaging to an end-user, expressed consent must be granted prior to executing any messaging. Two types of programs exist, Subscription based and One-Time.

- Subscription based programs are recurring message campaigns (e.g., monthly payment reminders, regular coupon offers, refill reminders)
- One-Time programs are single-message campaigns deliver a one-time message in a response to a user opt-in request (e.g., informational alerts, purchase receipt, delivery notification)
  - Require one time opt-in
- Inbound customer initiated programs (such as text “Keyword” to “Shortcode” to get a coupon code) do not require opt-in
COMMONLY USED SMS TERMINOLOGY:

- **Aggregator** – An organization that acts as a middleman between application and content providers, and mobile carriers. Provides campaign oversight, and administration, as well as billing services.
- **Carrier** – A company that provides wireless telecommunications services.
- **Vanity Short Code** – Short codes that are specifically requested. Eg. DISNEY = 347639 or 88888.
- **Opt-in** – Verifies a mobile subscriber’s intention, gains explicit agreement to participate in a mobile program/initiative.
- **Opt-Out** – Subscriber revokes consent after receiving Notice from the Mobile Marketer. Example: not limited to, a Subscriber replying to an SMS message with the phrase “stop.”
- **Double Opt-In** – Confirming a mobile subscriber’s wish to participate in mobile program by requesting the subscriber to opt-in twice, prior to engaging the subscriber.
- **Keyword** – A word or name used to distinguish a targeted message within a Short Code Service.
- **Landing Page** – A secondary page a user is directed to when they click on an ad (often to make a purchase or get info.)
- **MMS** – Multimedia Messaging Service that contains multimedia objects including text and/or video.
- **SMS Chat** – Program that enables asynchronous interactions between a person and an application or person and rep.
- **SMS** – A message sent via a Short Message Service. 160 characters in length.
- **Dedicated Short Code** – Common 5 or 6 digit numbers assigned and administered by CSCA.
- **Long Codes** – 10 digit virtual phone numbers, supporting voice, SMS and fax, similar to local landline or mobile numbers. Used for countries whose networks do not support short codes or for initiatives running in multiple countries.
- **Visual IVR** – Is similar to voice IVR with visual menus. User interacts with visual interface by touch/click commands on mobile device. Can be used either on a mobile device app or directly over the web thereby leveraging a single access point.
- **Free to End User (FTEU)** – Subscriber opts-in and receives MT SMS/MMS messages without standard charges. Subscriber may send SMS/MMS messages (including, but not limited to, messages for the purpose of opt-in, opt-out and help).
- **Standard Messaging** – Programs or messages with normal charges applied to mobile subscriber’s wireless bill or that result in messages being deducted from a subscriber’s messaging plan allowance.
- **Pull Messaging** – Content sent to wireless subscriber upon request, on a one time basis. Eg. a customer requests the local weather from a WAP-capable browser, the content of the response, including any related advertising, is Pull Messaging.
- **Push Messaging** – Content sent by or on behalf of advertisers to wireless mobile device at a time other than when the subscriber requests it. Includes audio, SMS, e-mail, multimedia messaging, cell broadcast, picture messages, surveys, or any other pushed advertising or content.
- **SMS Survey** – Program that enables the mobile subscriber to interact with a survey application via mobile messaging.