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SMS Centre GETTING STARTED

SMS Centre needs to be configured with some details before you first attempt to use the program

The first step is to edit details from the Settings, Service Centres Menu along the top of the program window. You may add a new Service Centre or edit the existing item to accurately reflect the settings required by your network

Remember to select your modem and to **set the modem properties correctly** to connect to your Service Centre. For Cellnet in the UK this should be **14400, 8, n, 1**

NO password is required to access the Cellnet TAP service

Sometime around the year 2001 the numbers of the UK SMS Centres will be changing. Cellnet is due to change to 07860980480, with most other centres adding a 7 after the leading zero. Please check with your own network for further information

That's it. You're now set up and ready to go

SMS Centre Features

- Sends SMS messages using a PC and modem
- Remembers frequently used mobile numbers
- Saves a copy of all outgoing SMS messages
- Queues messages for single and multiple providers
- Can be used with a Command Line Argument
- Can broadcast the same message to groups of recipients, even if on different mobile networks and in different countries

SMS Centre is a 32 bit Windows® Program capable of sending out standard SMS messages using the TAP Protocol from a PC connected to a telephone line via a modem. SMS Centre can additionally connect to Orange (UK) and Vodafone (UK and Australia)

Command Line Argument

It is possible to use SMS Centre with a command line argument to automate the sending of specific SMS Messages in response to scheduled tasks using scheduler type software or by shelling to SMS Centre from another program in response to system message

The syntax is as follows:

SMS Centre.exe <name> <message text>

For example, a Desktop Shortcut could be created (a .lnk file) where the Target is shown as:

""C:\Program Files\SMS Centre\SMS Centre.exe" David This is a test message"

As you will see, this differs slightly from previous versions of SMS Centre in that the first argument should be a name that is present in the SMS Centre Telephone Directory

However, the name is restricted to a single word without any embedded spaces. It is probably best to set up specific single word Telephone Directory entries to cope with regularly required tasks. A single space should occur between the last character of the name and the first character of the message text

Apart from the usual limitations on the size of a PATH statement in 32 bit Windows®, there is a 50 word or 160 character limit on the message text body. Characters in excess of this limit will be truncated

Using the command line argument, SMS Centre will load minimised to the task bar, send the message as instructed, then automatically close down

It should be noted however that automation of any communication program, SMS Centre included, may result in unattended dialling which could cause an open telephone line in the event of a program or system crash unless precautions are taken to prevent such an open line (usually by configuring the modem to disconnect after a short period of line inactivity)

It should also be noted that SMS Messages, whilst usually virtually instantaneous, can sometimes take a considerable time to reach their intended recipient for various reasons not least of which are cellular network errors which can from time to time occur. SMS Centre should not, therefore, be relied upon as the only means of communication (automated or otherwise) and is not intended to be used in life threatening situations

Dial Attempts

SMS Centre will only make a maximum number of dial attempts as specified in the Settings, Dial Attempts Menu. Dial attempts apply to blocks of queued messages, a block being the current network being dialled and the maximum number of messages allowed for that network in that transmission

In other words, If we have queued 5 messages for Cellnet, who only allow a maximum of 4 messages per transmission, then we end up with 2 blocks (1 block of 4 and 1 block of 1). If we exceed the maximum dial attempts (or if we press STOP) then block 1, consisting of 4 messages, will be aborted. Attempts will continue to be made to transmit block 2 (the last message) to Cellnet until either we exceed the dial attempts again or we press STOP

Interrupting Sending

In the event that you wish to stop sending a message or messages then a menu item has been included for just that purpose. However, the following should be noted:

When the menu item Send All Messages (or the Telephone icon on the toolbar) is selected, the Message Queue is transferred to an internal buffer and the Message Queue Window will appear empty. As each message is about to be transmitted the message text, service provider and telephone number details will appear in their respective program windows. ONLY that message will be stopped from transmission if STOP is pressed prior to dialling and the aborted message will be saved in the Outbox. Further dial attempts will be made for each and every other message queued in the internal buffer

If STOP is pressed whilst actually online, the aborted message will still be saved in the Outbox but SMS Centre will disconnect from the network before trying again with any remaining queued messages left in the internal buffer

Exiting from SMS Centre whilst there are still messages stored in the internal buffer will cause all messages to be lost

Modem Settings

It is usually not necessary under 32 bit Windows® and TAPI to set up anything at all for SMS Centre. Provided always that your modem (or other TAPI device) is correctly installed under Windows® 95/98/NT and provided that this device is device 0 (the first device) on your computer then SMS Centre will automatically apply the correct settings for each network for you

It is wise however, before using SMS Centre for the first time, to edit each Service Provider from the Settings Menu to ensure that the correct modem is selected and that any optional properties are set to your own preference

Orange and Vodafone

Although SMS Centre is primarily a TAP client (Telocator Alphanumeric Protocol) which accords with version 1.8 of the published protocol support has nominally been added for Orange (UK) and Vodafone (UK and Australia). Orange and Vodafone do NOT accord to the TAP protocol

Orange and Vodafone are reserved words which may not be used together in a single Service Provider Name. ANY use of either word in a Service Provider Name will cause the appropriate logon script to be used and will prevent a logon to TAP compliant systems including the Orange TAP Subscription service in the UK (use a name other than Orange and you will be able to log in successfully on this system)

It is likely (but not tested) that some other terminal based systems will work with either of these scripts, particularly worldwide Hutchison systems, merely by including either the reserved name Vodafone or Orange within the Service Provider name

Orange and Vodafone networks may use the Message Queue but there is a 2 message limit on Vodafone systems

The Outbox

The Outbox is not a list of messages waiting to be sent (that is the Message Queue) but is a list of messages that have been sent. It is possible to create new folders in the outbox and to move and/or delete messages

Messages will show the date and time of sending together with the mobile phone or pager number sent to and whether transmission was successful or not

Phone Book

The SMS Centre Phone Book has been kept as simple as possible

Regularly used numbers may be added, edited or deleted from the View, Telephone Directory Menu. Note, however, that the Name of a Telephone Directory entry can not be changed directly

To prevent the accidental deletion of critical records, any attempt to change the name will result in a new entry being created based on the settings of the original entry. The original can then be deleted if desired

Optionally, a network to use may be allocated to each telephone directory entry by checking the Always use this Service Provider checkbox. Once you have selected this option the Service Centre box will activate and you can then select a network from the drop down list

Server Timeout

Although several timeout procedures are already in place an additional, user configurable, timeout option has been included from version 5.24 onwards

The Server Timeout, reached from the Settings Menu, will allow you to specify in seconds the amount of time that SMS Centre should wait for an acknowledgement from your service centre. The minimum timeout allowed is 30 seconds (which is also the default setting) and anything entered over 90 seconds will in practice be ineffective due to SMS Centre's own internal timeout and disconnection procedures

Under the TAP protocol it is specified that a minimum of 25 seconds should be allowed for an acknowledgement from the server. Most times response is far quicker than this although Orange systems which are not TAP compliant appear to be very temperamental. Sometimes extremely fast in acknowledging a message at other times they can be excruciatingly slow

To overcome the problem of the user assuming that SMS Centre has 'hung' because it is still waiting for an acknowledgement from the server and appears to be doing nothing, an additional message will now be seen on the status bar stating "Waiting for acknowledgement" and, every second, a period (.) will appear. When the timeout seconds are exceeded a message box will appear giving the user the option to continue waiting for another timeout period or of disconnecting. If messages are still waiting in the Message Queue then SMS Centre will attempt to connect and send those messages up to the maximum dial attempts configured

For when SMS Centre is being used in command line mode or otherwise being used unattended then the message box will unload itself after a further period of 60 seconds and auto disconnect from the network

Service Provider Settings

For reference, the following Service Providers are pre-set within the smsc.dat file to be found in the SMS Centre root folder. It is usually not necessary to specify a modem speed (or baud rate) when running under 32 bit Windows®

BT EasyReach UK
44 0901 1130000
7,e,1

BT Pager UK
44 0345 581354
7,e,1

Cellnet UK
44 0860 980480
8,n,1

D1 Alpha Germany
49 171 2092522
8,n,1

D1 Alpha ISDN Germany
49 171 2521001
8,n,1

One2One UK
44 0958 879889
7,e,1

Orange UK
44 0973 100602
8,n,1

PageOne UK
44 0640 900199
7,e,1

PageOne MiniCall UK
password = HOMCPP
44 0640 900139
7,e,1

Telstra Australia
password = mnmail
61 180 18767
7,e,1

Vodafone Australia
61 414 100200
8,n,1

Vodafone UK
44 0385 499999
7,e,1

VodaZap UK
44 07666 699699
8,n,1

VoiceStream USA
1 800 9378941
8,n,1

Setting A Default Network

Each telephone directory entry may be allocated a network which should be used to send messages to that person. The drop down list of network names will NOT be available to you until you check the Always use this Service Centre checkbox

If you choose not to enter a specific network against a telephone directory entry then either the default network (as set up in the Settings, Service Centres, Edit menu - one network is allowed to be specified as the default) will be used when using Group Lists with the broadcast facility or, when entering single messages from the main program window, the network whose name appears in the Service Provider drop down list will be used

The Message Queue

A message (or messages) needs to be queued before it can be sent. If you are only sending messages one at a time then SMS Centre will automatically handle this for you when you choose to send by queuing the message prior to sending but, if you are sending multiple messages, then you do need to remember to add the LAST message to the queue before pressing the Send button

It is possible to simultaneously queue messages that will be routed via different networks

If there is more than one message in the queue, SMS Centre will sort your messages by network. An attempt will then be made to dial each network's service centre and send as many messages as allowed in each transmission. The maximum number of messages allowed for each network is set up in the Settings, Service Centres, Edit menu for each network concerned. When the maximum number of messages has been sent then SMS Centre will disconnect and, if there are more messages for the same network, attempt to re-connect and send the remaining messages. If there are no further messages for that network then the next network in the queue will be dialled and so on

Seeing The Message Queue

By default, the message queue is not visible. From the View Menu select Message Queue and you will then be able to see each message as it is queued with the option to edit and delete entries

ASCII Character Set

The TAP Protocol has a limited character set, using only the standard 0 to 127 codes

If a character's keyboard ASCII code lies outwith this range then SMS Centre will substitute either a replacement character or the correct code for TAP service centres to interpret

For example, \ and | will be replace by / whereas a £ or a ¥ will be replaced with a code recognisable by the TAP service centre but which can not be displayed on your PC. Other illegal characters will be replaced by a <space>

This is largely invisible to the user and does not affect your visual perception when creating or editing SMS messages. However, you may see odd looking characters in saved (Outbox) messages or, from time to time, in the Message To Send window as the message is in the process of being transmitted. In the case of a £ or a ¥ the substitute will appear as a black bar

Disclaimer

This software is provided as-is, and no warranty of any kind (including, but not limited to, warranty for a particular purpose) is expressed or implied. The author will not be liable for any damage, data loss etc. caused by this program.

This software controls external calling devices such as modems. No liability is admitted for any failure to set up or clear such calls. Automatic repeat call attempts are made by this software. The user is liable for all call costs generated through the use of this software

Please remember that calls to access many cellular network paging and SMS services are charged at higher rates than standard telephone calls. In the United Kingdom calls to access Cellnet, One2One, Orange and Vodafone from BT residential lines are currently charged at the 'f' rate which, per minute at the time of writing, was 30 pence Peak, 20 pence Off Peak and 10 pence Weekend. Costs may vary depending upon your telephone company and are subject to change. Please contact your own telephone service provider for accurate and up to date information regarding their pricing structure

SMS Centre LICENCE

SMS Centre is Copyright © 1998-1999 by David Gillham and may not be sold or distributed except with express written permission of the author or in accordance with the information following

A limited licence to use SMS Centre is granted to individuals for the purpose of evaluation only. Such period of evaluation may not exceed 30 days, after which period the program will cease to function

A permanent licence may be purchased on payment of a fee and licences may be obtained from:

The Thompson Partnership
Lion Buildings
Market Place
UTTOXETER
Staffordshire
ST14 8HZ
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 1889 564601 Fax: +44 (0) 1889 563219

Registration and Support

SMS Centre is distributed in the United Kingdom by The Thompson Partnership

You can order SMS Centre by mail at:

The Thompson Partnership
Lion Buildings
Market Place
UTTOXETER
Staffordshire
ST14 8HZ
United Kingdom

By Telephone:

+44 (0) 1889 564601

By Fax:

+44 (0) 1889 563219

Online:

Go to [The Thompson Partnership Secure Web Server](#) and complete the online registration form

Email: To The Thompson Partnership at sales@ttp.co.uk

Technical support for this product is available to registered users at support@ttp.co.uk

More information about SMS Centre is also available at [The Thompson Partnership Web Site](#)

SMS Centre Order Form

for countries outside North America

To: The Thompson Partnership
Lion Buildings
Market Place
Uttoxeter
Staffs
ST14 8HZ
England

Tel:: +44 (0) 1889 564601
Fax: +44 (0) 1889 563219
e-mail: sales@ttp.co.uk
web: http://www.ttp.co.uk

From: Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone no: _____

E-mail: _____

Please supply me with the following materials:

SMS Centre on floppy disk @ £19.95 each: £__

Shipping, £3 per order: £__

VAT at 17.5%: £__
(EC Residents Only)

Total payment: £_____

Non-UK VAT registration number _____

VISA, MasterCard, American Express card Number:

_____ Exp ___/___

Signature _____ Date ___/___/___

You can pay by either cash, cheque, or credit card as detailed above. Please make cheques payable to "[The Thompson Partnership](#)". If you pay by cash or cheque in a currency other than pounds sterling, please add the equivalent of £5 to cover the cost of currency conversion.

[] Please tick should you not wish to receive information concerning this or other products in the future. This future information will only be sent by The Thompson Partnership or the author of SMS Centre.

Please print out this order form (using the Print button above) and, after filling in the details, post it to The Thompson Partnership. Alternatively, to register online by credit card go to: [The Thompson Partnership Secure Web Server](#) and complete the online registration form

Message Text

Enter the text of the message you wish to send here

SMS Messages can not contain carriage returns or other non-standard characters

SMS Service Centre

The SMS Service Centre provider shown in this box will be the one used to place your messages.

Message Queue

Messages sent to the Message Queue will appear in this window. Queued messages may be edited or deleted individually or the entire queue cleared

Queue Current Message

Messages must be placed in the Queue before it is possible to send them. If your Service Centre supports it, queued messages will be transmitted together during a single call

Message Contents

The contents of the message currently highlighted will appear in this window

Messages, once sent, may not be edited but they may be moved (to another folder) or deleted

Folders

The Messages window shows a list of messages available in the current folder

Messages may be moved

Outbox and Folders

SMS Centre can automatically save all outgoing messages

By default, messages are saved in the **Outbox** although new folders may be created and messages moved between folders

The Outbox may not be deleted

Send All Messages

When messages are waiting in the Queue then it is necessary to use the Send All Messages Button to place a call to your Service Centre

I Am Dialling From

This is the standard default Dialling Location registered on your PC. If you have set up alternative locations then they will be available to you from the drop down box

Locations

The Locations Button provides instant access to the standard Windows® Control Panel applet that will allow you to configure new alternate dialling locations

Mobile To Send To

This is the Mobile Phone Number to which you intend to send your Message

The Mobile To Send To boxes are divided into three distinct elements in keeping with the international features of Windows® TAPI

The first part should contain the Country Code (44 in the UK), the second part should contain the Area Code (something like 07801 for Cellnet) and the third part should contain the actual telephone number (usually the last six digits of a mobile phone or pager number in the UK)

Numbers may be stored in the Telephone Directory and can be recalled from the View, Telephone Directory Menu with an option to Use (or insert) the full international number into the Mobile To Send To boxes for you

Do not try to circumnavigate the international numbering convention as to do so will produce unpredictable results in both TAPI and in logging onto your network Service Centre. Numbers to which SMS Messages are sent must always be specified in international format

Country Codes

Selecting a Country from the drop down list will insert the correct International Dialling Code into the first part of the telephone number to be dialled for the current message

Status Window

The Status Window will become active when SMS Centre is logged on to the SMS Service Centre

Characters Used

SMS Messages sent to GSM Mobile Phones are usually limited to a total of 160 characters

Characters Used gives a running count of how many characters have been entered in the Message Text box

When the maximum (user defined in the Settings, Service Centres, Edit Menu) number of characters have been entered it will not be possible to enter additional characters into the Message Text box unless some characters are deleted first

Groups Available

This contains a drop down list of all Groups that you have set up to receive messages

Telephone Directory

You can drag names from the Telephone Directory and drop them into the 'Names In This Group' window. Alternatively, highlight and then double mouse click to transfer names

Do not forget to press the 'Update This Group List' button or your changes will will lost

Names In This Group

These are the names that are held within the Groups Available List shown at the top right hand corner

Names can be dragged from the Telephone Directory and dropped here or the Telephone Directory name can be highlighted and double mouse clicked

You may not have two instances of the same name in a group listing and entries can be removed by highlighting and right mouse clicking

Do not forget to press the Update This Group List button or any changes you have made will be lost

Update This Group List

Saves any changes that you have made to a group listing

If you do not press update then your changes will be lost

Group Message Text

The text that you enter in this window will be sent to every member of the group that is selected in the Groups Available drop down list at the top right hand corner of the program

Text may be inserted from any ASCII text file and will be truncated if exceeding the maximum character limit for the Service Centre selected in the main program window

Use

Pressing the Use button will queue the text displayed in the Group Message text window to each of the names listed in the currently selected group

Show or Hide Directory

Pressing the Show Directory button will cause the Group Message Text window to disappear and the Telephone Directory window to appear. Pressing again will reverse the process

Create A New Group

Adds a new Group to the Group Available database

Remove Group

Removes the Group that is currently selected in the Groups Available drop down list

