

## MEDIA RELEASE

BULKSMS.COM

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### Cellphone etiquette for people on the move

The cellphone has become an indispensable part of our working life, but it has made us less mindful of others within earshot.

“We need an etiquette tailored for business people who communicate on the move. The increase in cellphone usage for work and private calls or messaging is becoming a source of irritation and psychological stress within, and outside, the workplace,” says Dr Pieter E. Streicher, managing director at BulkSMS.com, a global mobile messaging company headquartered in Cape Town, South Africa.

#### *Etiquette for a Mobile World*

How do you feel when someone answers a call during a meeting? Or your co-worker makes a personal call in the adjoining cubicle? Or your business partner sends and receives several SMS messages while you are out for lunch together?

Are you guilty of the same lack of etiquette? What steps are you willing to take to minimise the decibels associated with cellphone calls and receiving SMS messages?

“Responsible cellphone use is the key to better social relations. We need to look carefully at our current use of cellphones and find ways of being more considerate of others at work as well as at home, the coffee shop, the movies, theatre, on the golf course, or at the beach,” says Dr Streicher.

Dr Streicher suggests that we use SMS messaging intended for business communications more effectively and recommends the ten ways of fostering a cellphone etiquette (or “metiquette”).

#### ***Met-i-quette***

[pronounced: mĕt'ĭ-kĕt', -kĭt]

[m(obile phone) + (et)iquette]

*noun* - the manners that apply to the use of the mobile phone (cellphone) for communications; including voice calls, SMS messaging, and mobile instant messaging.

#### ***Cellphone Etiquette Tips***

1. *Use SMS to reduce the social intrusion of a call.* When a cellphone call is replaced by an SMS message it is less intrusive as it gives the recipient an opportunity to reply or call back when convenient. Cellphones should be viewed differently from fixed line phones. Unlike fixed line phone calls, cellphone calls are often received in situations requiring our focused attention such as driving a car, during meetings, or at social gatherings. The public use of the cellphone intrudes into the social space of anybody within earshot, making a private communication a public spectacle.
2. *Enable the “Silent” setting on your cellphone in public places or open offices spaces.* This will allow you to minimise the noise your ringtone or message alert makes in areas where several people may be disturbed by a ringing or beeping cellphone.
3. *Use SMS like a pager.* SMS is an unobtrusive way to get hold of a person as there is no immediate compulsion to reply to the SMS. If a cellphone is turned off, the SMS will be delivered shortly after it is switched on. When fixed line calls are not answered it is assumed that no one is home. It is therefore acceptable to continue calling a fixed line number until someone answers. In contrast, a

cellphone is usually carried on your person. When a cellphone call is not answered it may not be an opportune time to speak. It may be viewed as unnecessary harassment if calls are made continuously to a cellphone.

4. *Use SMS as a notepad.* Request callers to SMS the required details after the call. A pen and notepad are common items near fixed line phones for writing down instructions and phone numbers. In contrast, it is often difficult to take notes during a cellphone conversation, especially when driving a car (with a hands-free kit) or when listening to multiple voice messages.
5. *Change your voicemail greetings to include: "Don't leave a message, rather SMS me".*
6. *Instead of leaving a voicemail message send an SMS.* This removes the need to write down details while listening to messages. Furthermore, scrolling through SMS messages is much quicker than listening to many voicemail messages.
7. *Use SMS to send regular updates on a business process directly to a customer's cellphone.* Businesses are finding that customers appreciate receiving regular updates in any extended business process; such as the repairing a car, the delivery of items ordered online, or when new a cheque book is available for collection.
8. *Avoid the inappropriate use of SMS messaging.* Consumers do not appreciate unwanted marketing messages. Unwanted messages are seen as spam. There are regulations prescribing opt-in and opt-out procedures via SMS. Businesses contravening these codes of conduct for commercial messages can be heavily fined by the regulatory authority.
9. *Ensure that there is an opt-out mechanism for consumers when sending out marketing messages via SMS.* An SMS channel ensures that a consumer does not have to make unnecessary phone calls to networks or wireless application service providers to remove themselves from a database. To opt-out from unwanted commercial SMS messages, a consumer should be able to reply with the word "Stop". Visit [www.waspa.org.za](http://www.waspa.org.za) for more details.
10. *Use a desktop SMS messaging solution, such as the BulkSMS Text Messenger, that supports the sending and receiving of personalised individual and bulk messages.* This allows you to customise your communications and track conversations with your consumers, clients or suppliers and promotes efficient internal and external business communications. Businesses should heed the changing social norms of cellphone use. In certain situations, customer, client or supplier preference to receive SMS messages rather than voice calls necessitates the implementation of an SMS solution across all departments of a business.

ENDS

[894 words]

#### **About BulkSMS.com**

BulkSMS.com is a leading wireless application service provider offering bulk SMS messaging solutions to large and small businesses, public benefit organisations, and individuals. BulkSMS.com has a global market presence, including Europe, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

BulkSMS.com offers two-way bulk SMS messaging (notifications, alerts, customer relationship management, etc), premium rate solutions (weather, financial markets, etc) and mobile marketing campaigns in support of clients' business communication needs.

BulkSMS.com provides the following messaging solutions:

- BulkSMS Text Messenger (desktop SMS application).
- Web2SMS (online messaging interface).
- Email2SMS (messaging using MS Outlook).
- Mobile2Group (messaging to phonebook groups using a cell phone).
- SMS integration with client applications via an e-API (electronic application programming interface).
- Reseller solution (allow clients to enable their customers with the BulkSMS.com messaging solution).
- Premium rated services (shortcodes for advertising, content, subscription and WAP services).
- Community.BulkSMS (part-sponsored messaging for public benefit organisations).

In certain markets, BulkSMS.com provides full coverage of all ported numbers as well as an automated STOP reply feature to ensure client compliance with wireless industry opt-out requirements.

The company has been in operation since 2000 and has its headquarters in Cape Town (South Africa). BulkSMS.com is a division of Celerity Systems (Pty) Ltd. Celerity Systems (Pty) Ltd is represented in the UK by Celerity Messaging UK Ltd, a company based in the United Kingdom and incorporated in 2007. The company has offices in Crawley, West Sussex.

BulkSMS.com is a member of the following industry associations:

- Wireless Application Service Provider Association (WASPA)
- Wireless World Forum (W2F)
- 160 Characters

For more information about BulkSMS.com's services visit [www.bulksms.com](http://www.bulksms.com). For direct enquiries please email [service@bulksms.com](mailto:service@bulksms.com) or contact the company telephonically on +27-21-552 6321.