Common Short Code
Primer

Common Short Code Primer

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Overview

The Mobile Marketing Association's (MMA) Short Code Working Group developed this primer to provide an overview of the process that a brand, content provider, agency or technology provider should follow when considering launching a short-code-based marketing campaign or initiative.

About the Mobile Marketing Association (MMA)

The Mobile Marketing Association (MMA) is the premier global association which strives to stimulate the growth of mobile marketing. The MMA is an action-oriented association designed to clear obstacles to market development, to establish standards and best practices for sustainable growth, and to evangelize the mobile channel for use by brands and third party content providers. MMA members include agencies, advertisers, hand held device manufacturers, wireless operators and service providers, retailers, as well as any company focused on the potential of marketing via the mobile channel. The Mobile Marketing Association's global headquarters are located in the United States. For more information, please visit www.mmaglobal.com

Short Code Working Group

The MMA created the Short Code Working Group, chaired by Mobile Accord and Twelve Horses, to establish administrative and technology guidelines for short-code utilization. In a future phase, this group will reconvene to evaluate the feasibility and market demand for short codes that will work in both Canada and the United States.

The Short Code Working Group developed this primer in collaboration with representatives from ipsh!, Mobile Accord, NeuStar Inc., Sprint Nextel, Syniverse Technologies and Twelve Horses.

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Executive Summary

Common Short Codes (CSCs) are phone numbers, usually four to six digits, that mobile phone users utilize to send Short Message Service (SMS) messages to in order to receive information, sports scores, weather alerts, or to participate in contests and receive electronic coupons. By making it fast and convenient for mobile users to select and receive information, CSCs greatly increase consumer response to advertising and marketing promotions.

CSCs also put consumers in control because they can customize the information that they receive. That ability is important because under most rate plans, users pay for incoming SMS messages. By giving users a way to specify exactly what they want to receive, CSCs improve the chances that they'll participate in SMS-based campaigns.

CSCs are provided and managed by an ecosystem of companies, including the Common Short Code Administration (CSCA), participating wireless carriers, Mobile Application Service Providers (MASP) and Aggregators. Any company can use a CSC, but it must be obtained from this ecosystem through a series of steps, which include applying for a CSC and submitting the CSC-based campaign to wireless carriers for review and testing.

This primer provides an overview of CSCs, including the available types and how they are currently used in advertising and marketing promotions. This primer also describes the roles of each of the ecosystem's members and their relationship with the company conducting the CSC-based campaign. Finally, this primer provides step-by-step instructions for successfully developing, applying for and executing a CSC-based campaign.

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Background & Ecosystem Definition

The Common Short Code Primer was created to help brands, content providers, agencies and technology providers better understand what's involved in implementing Short Messaging Service (SMS) campaigns using Common Short Codes (CSCs).

Since their creation in 2003, CSC-based campaigns have evolved in terms of acceptable use and business requirements. The CSC ecosystem is still evolving, so it's recommended that new entrants work with companies that have experience in the implementation of CSCs. This primer documents the process and expectations for registering and provisioning a CSC in the United States.

The following section provides an overview of the CSC ecosystem, the companies involved and the process of developing and executing a CSC-based campaign.

General CSC Ecosystem and Processes

1. A wide variety of companies use CSCs to build their brand and generate product awareness. One way to launch a successful CSC is to work with a Mobile Application Service Provider (MASP), which is a partner that provides guidance for understanding CSCs and adjunct wireless technologies. Although this primer provides a basic overview of CSCs, working with a MASP is recommended in order to address the nuances and complexities of a mobile campaign.

   Depending on your in-house resources and capabilities, you may choose to either completely outsource to a MASP, or work with the individual provider partners in the eco-system. MASPs have a varying level of capabilities and services, so it's important to pick one that meets your needs. For a list of MASPs, visit the MMA membership directory at http://mmaglobal.com/modules/content/index.php?id=8 .

2. MASPs typically – but don't always – complete a CSC application form for leasing a short code. If they complete the application, it will then be reviewed according to wireless carrier guidelines and approved pending payment with the Common Short Code Administration (CSCA). Although companies may submit an application without the

help of a MASP or an aggregator, their assistance is highly recommended. The MASP's assistance with the application improves the chances that the campaign will be accepted the first time, although it's not a guarantee. Once payment is approved, your CSC is assigned as a random code or a vanity code. A CSC can be ordered either on your behalf or directly by your company. CSCs are required by the CSCA registry to be registered on behalf of the content provider, which is the legal owner of the CSC and thus responsible for any disputes or changes.

3. It's important to clearly outline your campaign before submitting the application for a CSC lease with the CSCA. For tips on submitting applications, see the Best Practices section at www.mmaglobal.com/bestpractices.pdf. A later section of this primer provides more details about the application.

   Once the CSC application is accepted, the next phase is carrier provisioning and certification

4. When working with MASPs, you will seldom, if ever, have to work directly with an aggregator. Many aggregators have the capability to be the application provider; however, the capability varies from aggregator to aggregator. If you decide not to work with a MASP, make sure that you review the aggregators' capabilities and functions to assure that they meet your needs. Some aggregators won't work directly with a brand or a content provider. Not all aggregators will submit your CSC application for you; however, it's important to note that this often assures acceptance of the campaign the first time. For a list of aggregators, see http://www.usshortcodes.com/csc_find_con_agg.htm .

   Aggregators will typically work with a MASP, wireless carriers and/or you to provision your CSC within the carrier network(s). Provisioning is the process of establishing and opening the connection between the aggregator and each carrier's network to allow for testing by the MASP and prepare the application/campaign for certification. Aggregators are the first point of wireless network connectivity. Carriers rarely allow brands or content providers to connect directly to their networks.

5. Carriers have the right to accept or deny any campaign, hence the importance of clearly defining your campaign in detail. If it's not clearly defined and doesn't follow the MMA Best Practices Guidelines, it will be rejected, delaying your campaign. The application is reviewed for legal risks to the carrier because they're responsible for delivery to their customers. Depending on your campaign goals, you may need to provision your CSC on multiple wireless carriers.

   While the provisioning of a CSC does permit the delivery of the content or campaign to any of the carriers' subscribers, handset type, wireless plan, preferences, credit class and other variables will limit your actual addressable base of subscribers delivered to the carrier's or carriers' entire customer base(s). Instead, it often means that content can be delivered only to phone numbers that have been white listed or pre-approved by the carrier(s). Provisioning is an interim step that allows for testing and certification to occur. Once that's complete, the campaign must be certified. Certification is a process that includes testing the application, reviewing your campaign to verify that it's functioning and delivering content as outlined within your CSC application.

6. Once testing and certification are complete, you can launch your campaign. If you decide to change the type of campaign, eco-system providers or its message flow, a CSC modification request must be made to the CSC help desk which will then inform the carrier(s) and affected ecosystem partners. Failure to submit this request will result in termination of the campaign.

CSC Types and Categories

All CSCs are five-digit numbers available in two different versions: random and vanity. Random CSCs are numbers that the CSCA assigns to you following approval of your application. Vanity CSCs are numbers that you select from a database of available CSCs. Before submitting an application for a campaign that includes a vanity CSC, you must search the CSCA's on-line database to determine its availability.

There are two types of CSCs: Standard SMS, where there's no charge for the content, and Premium SMS (PSMS), where there is a charge. The way you use the CSC in an SMS campaign determines the CSC type. For example, if you use a CSC to send messages that aren't billed to the end user by the carrier, then a Standard CSC applies. (However, keep in mind that depending on their rate plan, users still may be charged for each SMS.) With a PSMS, the user is charged a fee for the content in addition to any basic messaging charges that apply under their rate plan.

CSCs also can be grouped into use-case categories. Although agencies, application providers and carriers may use different titles and definitions, the basic categories include:

- iTV
- iRadio
- In-venue
- Ringtones and graphics
- Contest
- Consumer packaged goods
- Movie promo
- Information & Entertainment
- Alerts
- Chat
- M-commerce
- Coupons/advertising

SMS Information and Alerts
This is a "pull"-based method to deliver information, statistics and schedules about a certain topic or event. Users text a keyword to a CSC and receive or "pull" instant news and information. Users can also sign up to receive alerts on any topic – also known as "permission-based" services. Examples include weather alerts, store openings, the winner of a baseball game and medical alerts.

Interactive Media
CSCs enable users to interact with mobile marketing campaigns. As a result, they're a way for traditional media channels – such as TV networks – to provide a new form of content interaction with current or

potential customers. For example, a radio station could use CSCs so that listeners can receive alerts when their favorite songs are about to be played. CSCs can also give traditional media channels more options for attracting new audiences and creating additional revenue streams. One example is promotional games, which are a fun, interactive way to increase brand loyalty and awareness.

Tones and Images
Most cell phones sold over the past two years support ringtones and wallpapers. This content is ideal for promoting a brand. For example, a record company could promote a new album by creating a CSC-based campaign that distributes wallpaper photos of the artist and ringtones based on the album's first single.

Mobile Tickets and Coupons
Using cell phones to purchase products such as songs and movie tickets is common, particularly among younger demographics. Known as mobile commerce, or simply m-commerce, this approach includes secure payments and delivery of the product – such as a song – directly to the handset. M-commerce is extremely cost-effective and an excellent opportunity for cross-promotions and sponsorships. Examples include tickets for sporting events, movies, hotels and transportation, as well as coupons.

Tips for a Successful CSC Application

The first step in launching a CSC-based campaign is to register with the CSCA and then submit an application documenting your program. The application-review process takes less than two business days. Payment is due upon approval of the campaign, and a random CSC is not assigned until payment is received.

Regardless of whether the application is submitted by an application provider, agency and/or aggregator, it should be as detailed as possible. Insufficient detail, including not answering all of the questions in an application, is the most common reason for rejection.

The application submitted to the CSCA differs from the Campaign Brief Application that will be submitted to the wireless carriers via the MASP and/or aggregator. Every application provider, agency and aggregator has its own format, and every wireless carrier has its own submission process. As a result, approval at one stage doesn't guarantee approval at other stages. The industry is working to streamline this process and combining the application process. Until the new procedures are in place, it's important to work closely with your application provider, agency or aggregator because they have a greater understanding of what the CSCA and wireless carriers will accept.

If you choose to select and contract with an MASP to work with you, you can expect the following:

- The aggregator will assist in creating a campaign brief for submission to the carrier(s). The brief is based upon the application submitted to the CSCA and the information obtained from the MASP.
- The aggregator will submit the program to the requested wireless carrier(s).
- The aggregator's account manager will track the program submission, provide updates and monitor launch process. They will also provide detailed reporting following launch at a pre-determined interval as described in the contract.

If a wireless carrier rejects a program, you may be able to modify it to meet the carrier's requirements. Once the changes have been made, the program can be resubmitted to the carrier. However, resubmissions aren't prioritized ahead of first-time applications, so companies should be aware the second review may result in delays for launching the campaign.

The campaign must follow the program brief that was approved, as well as the MMA Consumer Best Practices guidelines. The carrier will test each aspect of the program, including billing. Once this testing is complete, the program is considered "launched" and "live" on the network. The entire process can take anywhere from one to over eight weeks, depending on the number of participating carriers and the campaign's use-case category.

Campaigns that have a detailed marketing campaign with an associated and committed ad support are likely to be approved faster than those without a plan.

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MMA Best Practices

The aggregator submits the campaign to the carrier's messaging organization, which reviews it for both content and complexity. The submission is first checked for compliance with the MMA Consumer Best Practices guidelines, and those that don't meet the guidelines typically are rejected immediately.

For more information about the guidelines, see www.mmaglobal.com/bestpractices.pdf.

Carrier Content Standard Guidelines

Content is considered restricted if it contains any of the following:

1. Intense profanity
2. Intense violence
3. Graphic depiction of sexual activity
4. Nudity
5. Hate speech
6. Graphic depiction of illegal drug use
7. Any activities that are restricted by law to those 18 years of age and older, such as gambling and lotteries

Campaigns that include restricted content or that violate individual carrier standards will be rejected immediately. If the carrier's department determines that a campaign may be in violation, it may ask other members of the department to review it or send it to the carrier's legal department for a formal review. These additional review steps can delay approval.

Large-Volume CSC Campaigns

Some campaigns are referred to as "spike-inducing", suggesting that they could produce sudden increases in messaging volumes. One example is a CSC that TV viewers use to vote for a contestant on a show. Within the hour or half-hour that the show airs, messaging traffic can increase suddenly and significantly. Wireless carriers must be prepared for such spikes in order to ensure that messages aren't lost or delayed. Companies conducting CSC-based contests have a vested interest in helping carriers anticipate and accommodate traffic spikes: For example, if the contest awards a prize to first 100 people who send a message to a CSC, participants whose messages are lost or delayed are unfairly penalized.

Each carrier has different spike thresholds. Companies should be aware that if a particular campaign adversely impacts the network, it may be rejected. When a spike-inducing campaign is submitted, the carrier's messaging department will work with its colleagues in other business units, such as engineering and network operations, to determine if there will be problems once the campaign is underway. The process of working with multiple departments may create delays in CSC approval.

Billing & Network Provisioning

After a campaign is reviewed for MMA Guideline compliance, content and network impact, it may be subject to another review for billing, such as if it involves a new price point for premium campaigns. This is especially true for campaigns that require aggregator involvement for supporting either a new billing procedure, price point(s) or billing system. This additional step varies by carrier and may delay the CSC approval process.

After the billing components are approved, the carrier follows procedures – which vary throughout the industry – for provisioning the campaign on its network. Carriers often work with the aggregators for notification of network readiness and end-to-end testing of the campaign, all the way out to the handsets.

Business Issue

The Aggregator model is the current business model for CSC campaigns.

Broadly speaking, under the Aggregator Model, carriers will not have a contract with you directly. Instead, each carrier has a master agreement with each of their connected aggregators/MASPs, which will in turn have a contract with you. As a result, the carrier does not have to contract individually with each of the thousands of content and application providers seeking to have their campaign accessed via a CSC.

If you have not already chosen a connection aggregator/MASP, you should check with them to see how they provide access to the carriers and geographic areas that you wish to market to. For more information, visit the Connection Aggregator Information site at www.usshortcodes.com/csc_find_con_agg.htm.

Depending upon the type of campaign you're running, the type of messages involved (Standard or Premium) and your agreement with your connection aggregator/MASP, you may be able to participate in revenue sharing. The revenue share from the carrier to your connection aggregator/MASP is included in their contract. That contracted share percentage will also vary by each carrier.

Testing

Once the carrier messaging point of contact is made aware that the campaign is available on the network (which may entail provisioning on multiple network elements), testing can begin. Testing ensures that the language and content are suitable, program flow is logical, handset rendering (display) is proper, keywords (including opt-out and help) work and the billing is functional.

The aggregator will be notified of any deviations or errors at this point. These may cause further delays in the campaign's launch. A program that passes testing is ready for launch, and the aggregator is notified.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Below is a list of issues and mistakes that can result in the delay or denial of a CSC campaign:

- Deviation from MMA Consumer Best Practice Guidelines
- Violation, or questionable conformity, with Carrier Content Standard Guidelines
- Spike-inducing or massive-volume programs
- Unusual billing requirements
- Network-provisioning considerations
- Testing issues
- Lack of forward planning or consultation of experienced partners
- Technical aspects of your campaign are not in place well before the intended launch date.

CSC Requirements Checklist

The following items must be completed/ implemented in order for a campaign to be approved by carriers:

1. Terms and Conditions (T&Cs): All campaigns must have associated T&Cs. These can be added to the message text. The most basic acceptable T&Cs must include billing rate, help instructions and opt-out instructions. An alternative to using limited text messaging characters to define the T&Cs is to include a URL in the message to a Web site that includes the T&Cs. If the campaign is a sweepstakes, this is highly recommended because certain carriers require an alternative way to enter the sweepstakes other than using the CSC.
   a. It is recommended that if you choose to set up a Web site that you provide the T&Cs, as well as information about the campaign, the HELP access procedure and opt-out information.
   b. Include help and opt-out verbiage. All campaign messages must include the methods to get help or opt out.
   c. Help verbiage must include a phone number to get help, as well as an e-mail address. If there's a Web site established for the campaign that includes help information, that site's URL should be included.

2. Opt-out verbiage: Reply STOP to opt out must be included in all messages. If a user opt outs, an opt-out confirmation must sent to the user and include help verbiage.
   a. Opt-in All Contacts: All contacts must receive an opt-in message and be required to reply with specified opt-in text in order to be added to the contact list for the campaign. Sending messages to contacts that have not opted in is considered Spam. Spam will not be tolerated and will result in immediate termination of the campaign.

3. Define the message flow: For all campaign applications, you must define the flow of all messages, including opt-in, confirmations, help and opt-out verbiage.

4. Help and opt-out functionality: Help and opt-out functionality must work for anyone, including those not opted-in to the campaign.

5. CSC receipt: If you choose to procure a CSC on your own, you will be required to submit a copy of that receipt to the MASP.

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Acceptable Campaigns

The following is a list of acceptable campaigns:

1. Sweepstakes: Examples include giving away an item at a booth at a convention by routing sign-ups through a CSC campaign and notification of the drawing time.
2. Voting applications: Examples include voting for your favorite booth at a convention or for a favorite sports player.
3. Information alerts such as weather and road conditions
4. Downloads such as ringtones, music and graphics
5. iTV/iRadio, such as streaming audio/video and Podcasts.
6. In-venue
7. Movie promo
8. Coupons and advertisements
9. Chat

Unacceptable Campaigns

The following campaigns are not acceptable unless on a restricted content carrier that has implemented the appropriate access controls:

1. Those that promote the use of illegal drugs.
2. Offering sexually explicit images, pornographic content.
3. Any content that facilitates or promotes illegal activity.
4. Prejudicial comments, communications and/or content that facilitates or promotes unlawful violence, and/or discrimination based upon gender, ancestry, race, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, age, disability, national origin, veteran status, creed or color.

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Information required for CSC Application

There are several components to a CSC application, and each serves a purpose through the ecosystem. Hence the importance of providing as much detail as possible. One of the biggest frustrations is successfully leasing a short code from the CSCA and then having the application rejected by a carrier because insufficient detail was provided.

Below are the general categories that you'll be expected to complete for a CSC lease.

Applicant details – This section of an application form lists the contact information for any questions that the CSCA may have with the initial CSC application. The applicant also pays the CSC registration, either for themselves or on behalf of the content provider.

Content provider details – This is contact information for the entity providing the content that will be delivered to the handset. This information is used by the carrier to allow them to put the end user in contact with the entity providing the content in order to allow resolution of billing or problems such as opt-out and delivery failures.

In the event of any dispute, the CSCA looks to the Content Provider as the ultimate responsible and decision-making party.

Application provider details – This is contact information for the entity that will be providing the application infrastructure to deliver the messages to the aggregator for delivery to the carriers. This information is important for carriers and aggregators because it tells them whom to contact if there are problems with the campaign, such as messages not being delivered properly.

Connection aggregator details – This is the contact information for the entity doing the connectivity/bind with the carriers. Carriers use this information when there are problems with a campaign. As noted earlier, carriers don't work directly with companies or content providers. Instead, they work with aggregators, so this information needs to contain your primary contact at your aggregator. If you are working with a MASP, you'll need to get this information from them if you lease the CSC directly from the CSCA.

Payment method – This information specifies how you will pay for your lease. Payment is expected upon approval of your campaign application.

Term – This is how long you will be leasing the CSC. There are three options for the lease length. You must stay current on you lease payment or the campaign will be shut down and you will have to start the whole ecosystem over again. Failure to stay current on your payment will also put the CSC number back into the number pool and could mean that you lose that number for further use.

Requested CSC – This section describes the kind of CSC you want to register. If you choose a vanity CSC, you must verify that the number is available before requesting it.

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Application type – In this section, you must provide information about the campaign's category type. For example, you'll need to select Contest if you are running a contest. This information is provided to make it easy to identify and track the various types of campaign requested and used.

Duration – You will need to determine ahead of time how long you will be conducting your campaign. This information helps carriers and the CSCA determine when a CSC will be available for re-use. You will need to provide a start and an end date; however, it's possible to select ongoing if you do not have an end date determined.

Time of day/day of week – You will be expect to provide information on the day and week the program will be available or unavailable. This information helps the carriers and aggregators to better understand traffic/volume models of the campaign so that they can properly plan and scale their networks for capacity needs.

Campaign advertising/marketing – When completing the CSC application, you must provide information about how you plan to advertise the campaign. You will need to provide information such as where it will be available for use, the distribution reach of your advertising and how you'll be promoting the campaign, such as in magazines or on TV. You also must provide details about when these materials will be issued. This information helps aggregators and carriers better understand the needs of the campaign in order to scale their networks to assure availability and deliverability.

Traffic volumes – It's important to have an understanding of the expected traffic volumes the campaign is going to create. It's better to overestimate traffic volumes than to underestimate them. You also must explain how you estimated the traffic volumes. For example, 5% of the print readership is expected to participate, and the circulation of the printed material is 1,000 people, so it is expected there will be 50 people participating in the campaign. Of those 50 people, you will the need to define how many of them are going to be participating from each carrier.

Step-by-step message flow – Before you will be able to lease a short code, you must fully develop your campaign. To do that, you must think about every step the end user will go through as they participate. Common practice is to use the terms MO (Mobile Origination) and MT (Mobile Termination). Both terms define where the message starts from. An MO is a message that was generated by the end user from their handset and is delivered to the application. An MT is a message that is generated by an application and is sent to the end user. You also should provide a contextual description of the campaign. This information is necessary for carriers to be able to understand the campaign and determine if it meets the best practices guidelines.

Message rate – You will be expected to define the type of CSC you are planning to run: a Premium SMS or a Standard Rate SMS. This information helps carriers and aggregators in handling billing for the content delivery.

Help – You must provide information about how end users will be able to get help. If the end user experiences problems, you are expected to provide resolution. You must provide information about how they get this information within the campaign, as well as through a Web site and a toll-free number. This information is required so that the carriers can point the end user to you if there is a problem.

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Opt-out – You will need to define the text for the opt-out message, which must include the help information and a confirmation that the user has been opted out. Opt-out functionality must work for the following keywords at a minimum: stop, quit and end.

Short description – You should provide a short description of a campaign within the application. This short description is give to customer support within the carriers to better answer end user questions when a customer calls requesting information.

Definitions

> Aggregator: Aggregators are the first point of wireless network connectivity. Aggregators work with carriers to implement the functionality of a CSC.
> Carrier: Wireless carriers that provide cellular service to their users.
> Campaign: the series of messages and marketing activities that comprise a CSC campaign.
> CSC: Common Short Code
> CSCA: Common Short Code Administration
> MASP: Mobile Application Service Provider
> MO: Mobile Origination is a message that was generated by the end user from their handset and is delivered to the application
> MT: Mobile Termination is a message that is generated by an application and is sent to the end user.
> MMA: Mobile Marketing Association
> Opt-Out: The means by which the wireless subscriber takes action to withdraw permission.
> Opt-In: The process that requires the wireless user to grant permission to the party that wants to send it information.
> PSMS: Premium Short Messaging Service require billing to the end user's account by the carrier.
> SMS: Short Messaging Service

FAQ

Q: How long will it take to launch a program?
A: This timeline depends on the application type and number of participating carriers. Assuming a fully developed, ready-to-run program/application, it may be six to eight weeks (or more) from carrier acceptance. If the program is rejected during this process for any reason, the timeline obviously can increase.

Q: Once the program is submitted to the wireless carriers, how long will it take for an initial response?
A: All wireless carriers have their own review processes, but typically a response with an approval or rejection will be within five to 10 business days.

Q: How are programs tracked?
A: The MASP/Aggregator account manager will track all steps during the process of approval and provisioning and is responsible for sharing this information with you in a timely basis as determined during initial consultation. Most wireless carriers are utilizing online submission applications which are accessible by the carrier operations staff at the aggregator. The program submission may be viewed along with its status and forwarded to your account manager for tracking.

Q: Can I get updated information on my submission at any time?
A: Typically the first week following submission there is little or no information to share regarding a program. After the first week the account manager should have a status update on the whether or not it has been reviewed.

Q: What is acceptable content and what is not?
A: Each wireless carrier has their own specifications regarding content. Your MASP/aggregator knows these specifications and is alerted by the carrier when changes are made. The account manager will be able to share this information with you. Some examples of what is not acceptable by some carriers are pornography, the use of firearms and tobacco and some religious content.

Q: What types of information must I provide in addition to the program brief description given to the CSCA?
A: The wireless carriers have individual requirements that must be fulfilled in order to launch a program. The application for the CSCA may not provide the necessary level of detail to submit to the wireless carriers but serves as a starting point for describing the program's highlights and what it is designed to accomplish.

Q: At what point in time does my program development need to be finalized?
A: This date must be prior to the planned test date.

Q: Why does my marketing plan need to follow the launch dates assigned by the aggregator?
A: If the launch process is delayed due to requested changes in the program by the wireless carrier, or backlog in the aggregator or carrier's internal organizations, the marketing release date may lapse prior to launch. If a major ad buy is involved, the provider will need to have a clear understanding of the launch dates in order to submit program applications with ample lead time to meet ad dates.

Working with the account manager to identify solid release dates will alleviate many of these concerns.

Q: How long does it take to completely implement the provisioning process?
A: After a program has been approved and submitted to an aggregator, the provisioning process phase will begin with the selected wireless carriers. Depending on each carrier's provisioning cycle and backlog, it can take anywhere from one to over eight weeks to be provisioned and certified.

Q: Where can I locate the Mobile Marketing Association guidelines?
A: Visit www.mmaglobal.com/bestpractices.pdf for the consumer best practices.

Resources

CSCA (Common Short Code Administration), www.USshortcodes.com

CSCA (Connection aggregator list), http://www.usshortcodes.com/csc_aggregators.html

Mobile Marketing Association (MMA), http://www.mmaglobal.com/

Mobile Marketing Ecosystem, http://mmaglobal.com/modules/content/index.php?id=53

MMA Code of Conduct, http://mmaglobal.com/modules/content/index.php?id=5

MMA Consumer Best Practices, http://www.mmaglobal.com/bestpractices.pdf