

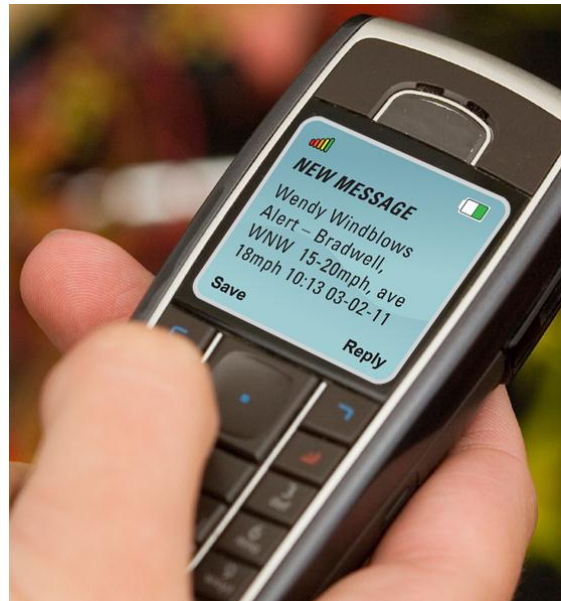
CASE STUDY
BULKSMS.COM
07 February 2011

Let your text glide you | Wendy Windblows

Rod Buck, a hang glider pilot and owner of Telespeed Weather Systems, runs [Wendy Windblows](#), a weather data collection service that sends a text message or an email to relevant subscribers when predetermined weather conditions are met.

Rod developed the Wendy Windblows service in the late 1980's (it started as a phone-in electronic weather station) after arriving one too many times at a hang gliding site after driving hours to get there, only to find that the weather conditions were not conducive to flying. He wished that there was some way to find this out BEFORE leaving the house.

Wendy Windblows was developed for hanggliders and paragliders in the United Kingdom. As well as the phone-in and web services, Subscribers can set wind or weather condition preferences at a certain location and Wendy Windblows will send a text alert or an email when these conditions are met. The system gives real-time information to the subscribers and helps them to decide whether or not the travel time will be worth it – now they know the actual wind conditions at the remote site.



Wendy Windblows initially started out with subscribers paying a nominal fee for a subscription code. This code would be entered when calling the weather station to find out what the wind speed, wind direction and temperature were in the last 30 to 90 minutes at the weather station of choice. By 1994, Rod had placed over 20 weather stations at various hangliding and para-gliding locations all over England and Wales.

The internet filtered in and provided the perfect platform to display the weather conditions at the weather stations. Once again, all one needed to do was subscribe to the service in order to access the current and past weather conditions. This gave all subscribers prior knowledge of the sites and allowed them to make an informed decision as to whether or not they could engage with their adrenalin-filled sport. But this meant that the subscriber would need internet access and login details before being able to access the relevant information.

In 2006, Rod noticed that almost everyone had a mobile phone and decided to start using text messaging to push information to the gliders. His company, Telespeed, with the help of Mesotier Ltd (web programmers), then built a text message interface to the Wendy Windblows website using the [BulkSMS.com Application Protocol Interface](#) (API).



“BulkSMS is at the heart of this sort of service, and we look forward to making much further use of them in the future,” says Rod. He continues with “You will appreciate that reliable and speedy delivery is vital to our service – it’s no use if the text doesn’t arrive for two hours or more. We route the text messages via BulkSMS.com, and delivery has always been within seconds, or minutes at worst.”

Wendy Windblows has around 1000 subscribers and will be enhancing their service offering, with the help of the BulkSMS.com systems, by allowing users to send text messages to an incoming number. These messages will then appear on the Wendy Windblows website and will also be echoed out to every relevant subscriber who has opted to receive the alerts for that site. It will give up to date accurate reports to the potential gliders. This will be done to “reinforce the good days”, in the hope that the subscribers will see what they are missing and go to the relevant site.

“We loved this effective integration of SMS into an already existing system, which is why we awarded it first place in the BulkSMS Messaging Award Competition which took place in the UK in November 2010,” said Dr Pieter Streicher, managing director of BulkSMS.com. “Wendy Windblows supplies people with the information they want, when they want it, in the way that they want it.”

About Wendy Windblows

[Wendy Windblows](#) is a service run by Telespeed Weather Systems Ltd. (supported by an agent network) to provide weather information for anyone whose outdoor activities are dependent on the weather.