



CLIENT CASE STUDY: NZ PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, VOTER ENROLMENT VIA SMS/TEXT MESSAGING



Client(s):

New Zealand Elections Enrolment Centre & NZ Post

Project:

Contact centre solution using SMS

Systems:

CONTACT™ SMS solution, WAM-E SMS Gateway, Web Server Technology

Project Duration:

Project planning, development and implementation: 2 weeks.
Service launched in April 2005, on-going.

The Elections Enrolment Centre needed a solution to enable the SMS channel for the 2005 Parliamentary General Election voter registration campaign with real time 2 way SMS communication.

CONTACT™ more than met the challenge!

OBJECTIVE

1. Ensure as many eligible people as possible are enrolled to vote for the NZ 2005 parliamentary elections.
2. Deploy a campaign and contact centre solution that focuses heavily on the following consumer segments: people who have never voted before, people who have recently turned 18, people who have recently moved house and people for whom English is a second language.
3. A SMS contact centre solution capable of handling very high volumes of consumer contact in short timeframes which could also support back-office processing in multiple service bureaus in different locations.
4. A SMS contact centre solution able to queue and process real-time, 2 way SMS contacts with detailed reporting and KPI metrics (grade of service, wait times, handle times etc...)

PROCESS

Working with the Election Enrolment Centre and their advertising agency, the CONTACT™ solution was configured and deployed. CONTACT™ processes and queues inbound SMS contacts and manages outbound SMS contacts using a call centre's existing business processes.

Because the solution is able to be hosted (ASP based*), running off centralised servers and is accessed via secure internet connections, the Elections Enrolment Centre and its out-sourced call centre bureaus did not need to install any new software or hardware – significantly reducing costs and set-up time.

Inbound SMS contacts are delivered to agents directly via the CONTACT™ solution for review and processing. Detailed real-time reports outlining contacts and traffic analysis (for workforce management forecasting and rostering) were made available.

In addition, the CONTACT™ solution provided a full colour coded contact history for each customer.

* ASP = application service provider



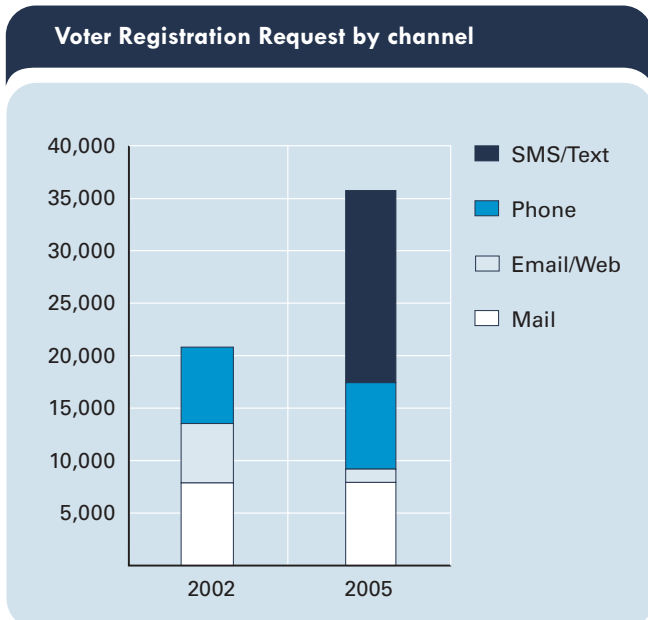
RESULTS

The Elections Enrolment Centre has generated AMAZING results with the use of SMS as a mainstream contact centre channel.

With a mandate to ensure as many eligible people are enrolled for the parliamentary general election, the centre received 72% more requests to enrol in the first 2 weeks of the project when compared with the 2002 campaign.

A staggering 51% of all enrolment requests were received via SMS, despite all consumers also having the choice of a 0800 phone service, internet / email service, and freepost mail service.

When compared with 2002, consumer usage of the mail and phone channels was about the same, with the web/email channel usage down in 2005 by a significant 80% (consumers preferring SMS over email or the web.)



Source: Electoral Enrolment Centre, September 2005, 2 weeks into campaign

The response to the SMS channel was unprecedented and the volumes of contacts received were far greater than envisaged, so much so that the Elections Enrolment Centre were required to contract additional out-sourced contact centre bureaus to cope with the customer demand.

Because CONTACT™ was deployed as an “On Demand” hosted solution, the client was able to cope with the extra demand easily. Each new site was able to deploy the solution in minutes with agents accessing the solution using web browsers over the internet. The intuitive nature of the application meant user training was brief and service levels were easily maintained.

While the consumer usage of the SMS channel was high, the set-up and running costs of CONTACT™ are not. The average cost per customer contact is up to 80% cheaper to process via SMS than via voice.

A real win win solution!!

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the 2005 voter registration campaign, the NZ Government has firmly established the SMS channel as the preferred mainstream communication choice for the general public. The Elections Enrolment Centre are thrilled with the results they have achieved with the use of the SMS channel and the CONTACT™ solution, with both now key tools for all future election campaigns.

KEY LEARNINGS

- SMS is the **preferred** channel for the general public when communicating with Government.
- Introducing the SMS channel **increased customer accessibility** by more than 50%.
- A SMS offering **stimulates a customer to act** faster than other channels like voice and email. Contact volumes were up 72% in the first 2 weeks of the campaign when compared with 2002.
- The SMS channel may reduce existing email / internet contacts. The Elections Enrolment Centre saw an 80% decline in these channels and attribute that all to the introduction of the SMS channel.

CLIENT FEEDBACK

“We introduced the text message option to break down barriers to enrolling to vote – particularly for young people, who can kick their enrolment off with little hassle or delay.”

“The first fortnight of the campaign has been overwhelmingly successful. The new technology seems to be making it easier for people to get an enrolment form”

“Thousands of extra requests for enrolment forms are coming to us. We’ve more than doubled the number of people wanting enrolment forms in the first fortnight of the Enrolment Update Campaign, and it’s all because of text messaging.”

Murray Wicks,
National Manager, Electoral Enrolment Centre

See how CONTACT™ will add value to your organisation. Send **INFO** as an SMS to the appropriate number below or you can call or email us, or visit us online. The choice is yours!

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