HOMEBASE

Our 123-txt SMS Gateway has helped Homebase transform the way they communicate with colleagues and customers.

Founded in 1979, Homebase is one of the UK's leading home improvement and garden retailers. The company operates over 180 stores across the UK and Ireland, employing in excess of 8,000 people throughout its store estate, distribution centres and support offices.

Changes at Homebase prompt search for new SMS Gateway Provider

After spending over a decade as a part of the Home Retail Group, Homebase was bought out by the Australian retailer Wesfarmers in 2016. During the ten-year period as a part of the Home Retail Group, Homebase shared elements of their IT infrastructure with other group members such as Argos. The 2016 buyout therefore brought about a need for Homebase to make certain changes to their IT infrastructure, creating an opportunity to review their existing systems and processes.

One set of requirements that emerged from this process was for a secure and reliable enterprise level SMS gateway provider. Over the previous few years Homebase had developed a number of services that utilised SMS as a key component including an automated click and collect system for customers. The changes of ownership meant that Homebase were now looking to the market to find a solution that would meet their current requirements, be able to adapt to future needs and represent excellent value for money.

How did the relationship come about?

Through an existing relationship with Konica Minolta, Homebase were introduced to ProcessFlows and their 123-txt platform. Tony Napier, a business consultant for Konica, writes that "it was during one of our regular account reviews that we discovered Homebase were in the market for a new SMS provider." Tony goes on to state that "partnering with ProcessFlows UK enabled Konica to offer a complete end to end SMS messaging service that is fast and secure with unrivalled support."

123-txt

What is 123-txt and how has it been deployed?

After an initial scoping meeting, it was agreed that ProcessFlows' 123-txt solution would be able to meet both the existing requirements, as well as provide the opportunity to grow and adapt in the future if required. Whilst 123-txt, a cloud-based SMS system, possesses a rich feature set accessible via a web-based interface, it was the ability to seamlessly integrate with Homebase's existing systems in order to 'text enable' them that was crucial.

With access to 123-txt's wide range of APIs, Homebase were able to set up automated application-to-person SMS messaging to provide a series of personalised notifications and reminders to customers as part of their reservation and collection system. Tony writes that "following several scoping meetings, we

were able seamlessly on-board Homebase with no service disruption for their Click and Collect team."

The utilisation of Alphanumeric ID's has also allowed Homebase to 'brand' their outbound messages. This means that when a message is received by a customer it will show HOMEBASE instead of a mobile number, improving confidence in the authenticity of the message and increasing brand recognition.

The 123-txt SMS Gateway has also been integrated into a number of Homebase's IT systems to provide systems alerts and notifications for staff internally. The ability to immediately notify the relevant individuals in cases of system changes or failures has become an important element of the business continuity strategy.

123-txt: the clear choice

In addition to meeting the existing requirements and providing opportunities to grow beyond them, the proven reliability of 123-txt stood out. Homebase send over 100,000 messages each month and due to the headroom possessed by 123-txt, even in instances of very high volumes being transmitted simultaneously, messages are always sent out immediately and usually arrive at the recipient's handset within a handful of seconds.

This led Darrin Knowles, IT Operations Manager at Homebase, to describe 123-txt as "one of those systems that can be relied upon to sit in the background and just work. Once it's set up and configured you no longer need to worry about it."

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Improving Business by Transforming Process

123-txt