RWTexting

Automated SMS Text Messaging

RentWorks
Version 4.1

RW-Texting
**Automated SMS Text Messaging
User Guide**

Table of Contents

Revision History

Date	Initials	Revisions
02/10/12	MMC	Created.
07/02/12	AMM	Edits.
10/03/12	MMC	Edit to show utlautotext utility for initial load of Auto Text Messages.
11/20/13	MMC	Added "RA Closed – Thank you" option.

Overview

The SMS text message module provides the ability to send text messages to renters' mobile phones, both manually and automatically. (**S**hort **M**essage **S**ervice is a common method of sending short messages between cell phones.)

From the reservation and contract Drivers tab, a text message can be sent to any driver listed.

The automated SMS text messaging portion allows a car rental company to send text messages to their customers' mobile phone for:
1) upcoming reservations
2) rental agreements that are due to check-in soon
3) rental agreements that are past their scheduled check-in date
4) to thank them for their business after a vehicle has checked in

The module consists of a maintenance program to enter the various parameter settings for
- when reservations and contracts are to be checked,
- when a text message should be sent, and
- the actual text message that will be sent.

The module also requires a System Task to be setup.

A checkbox has been added to the Renter's preferences, "Text Messaging". This field is used by the module to verify if the Renter will accept Text Messages.

The module supports only the cDyne SMS interface at this time. Bluebird will set up an account with cDyne Corporation for the car rental company before text messages can be sent. CDyne covers over 800 carriers throughout the world. However, all outbound traffic is considered as originating in the U.S.

The module can be run in a Test Mode, which will log all messages to a file on the server (in the logs directory) without making an actual call to the SMS service.

Setup

The current version of the module only supports an active account with cDyne Corporation, which provides RentWorks with a single interface to all mobile carriers. An account must be activated with cDyne by Bluebird for the car rental company. The license key that is provided is entered into the cfg\sms.ini file. The Web Services parameters file, cfg\smsmsg.pf, should be present as well.

For the automated services, a maintenance program is available under the Settings menu. The **Auto Text Message Setup** comes with the three records already preset.

For a new installation, these three records need to be loaded using the utlautotext utility.

Reservations Due (Type ID = 1)

The user can set how many days in advance the system should check the Pick-Up Date on the reservation to send a text message. Then set what hours of the day the process should send a message. You may not want to send text messages to someone's cell at 2 in the morning, but you can. The "Hours Before" field is not used at this time.

The default text message can be edited but should be kept at or below the 160-character limit usually imposed by cellular providers. The module offers "fill-in" fields that can be used by the module to fill in data from the reservation or contract.

Contracts Due (Type ID = 2)

The Contracts Due window is similar to the Reservations Due.

Contracts Overdue (Type ID = 3)

For contracts overdue, we may want to look at contracts that are overdue sometime today, so the field after "TODAY plus" is set to hours. This allows some grace period before the renter is reminded of the situation. Overdue contracts will be sent a text message every two days until they are closed.

Contracts Closed Thank You (Type ID = 4)

The day after a contract is closed, send a "thank you" text message to the renter. The process will check contracts closed within the past 3 days but only send this message once to the renter.

Fill-In Fields

These are the fields available for substituting reservation or contract data in a text message.

%FirstName%	%LastName%	%ContractNumber%
%ConfirmationNumber%	%PickUpDate%	%PickUpTime%
%PickUpLocationName%	%DueBackDate%	%DueBackTime%
%DueBackLocationName%	%CompanyName%	%CompanyPhone%

%CompanyName% and %CompanyPhone% are pulled from the pick up Location's record.

%firstName% will insert the renters first name making the SMS message personalized.

Default Message: %firstName%, Thank you for renting from us. We hope you will consider us the next time you need to rent a vehicle. Call us for assistance. BlueBird 800-304-5805

Automated Operations

All four processes are listed in the Available Tasks of the System Tasks window. They can be run as often as you like; the settings in each Auto Text Message Setup will determine which hour of the day the process actually operates. The default setting for the System Tasks on these processes are set for once an hour and expect to run continuously. If you require that the System Tasks only run at specific times of the day, then you must be ensure that the "Send the SMS text message sometime during these hours" field entries match with the System Tasks run time. For example, if System Tasks run at 8 PM, you should be setting the hours to send to "20-21".

Actions taken during the running of these processes will show in:
1) the Message Log (Inquires->Message Log Inquiry). Use "sms" to filter.
2) the Audit Log, accessible from the reservation/contract, or Inquiries->Contract & Reservation Audit. Use "sms" to filter.
3) in the logs directory on the server

You can also switch on logging in the utility utdiaglog for more detail. Logging levels are set in the cfg\sms.ini file.

The logs directory on the server will have a smsmsg.log file. If TESTMODE is set in the sms.ini file, **all** text messages will be written to this log, overriding any log level set. The log level should be set to a minimum of 2 so that all text messages are logged. This will provide an audit of what messages are sent.

Only failed connections to the cDyne service are reported (i.e., there is no means to determine if the message has actually reached the mobile phone or not).

Once a text message is sent to the renter, a tag is stored with the reservation/contract showing the date a message was last sent. This prevents a Renter from receiving a text message every hour for the same transaction. As the LastSent tag is tied to the reservation/contract, this still allows the renter to receive messages if they are on other reservations or contracts. The processes will send messages every two days, if the transaction calls for it.

Manual Operations
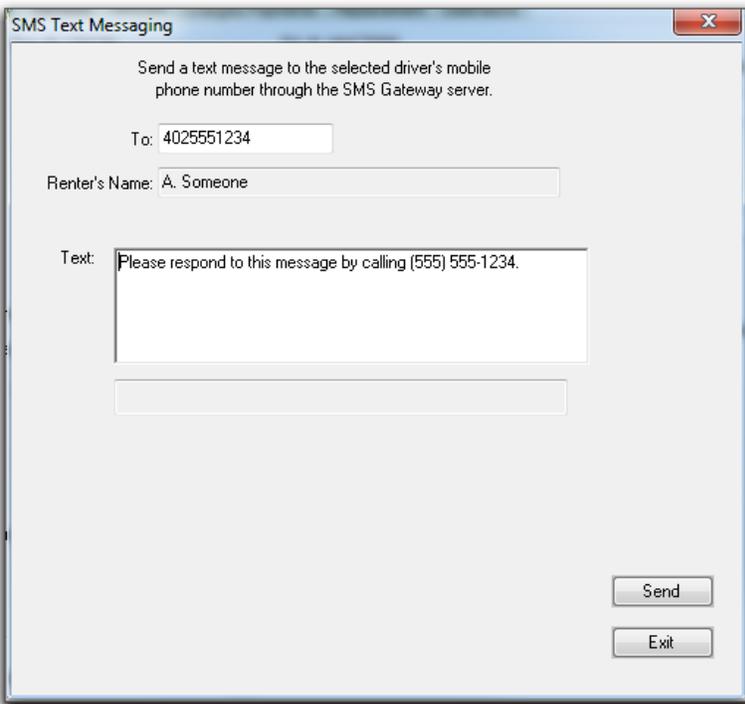
There are two ways to manually send a text message:

1) On the Reservations and Contract Drivers tab screen, a toolbar button is available to send text messages immediately to any of the Renters listed in the tab.

If the mobile phone number is populated and the "Text" box is checked,

a dialog is presented where you can enter the message you will send.

(Note that the phone number is for guidance only and should be over-written!). The dialog will display if the message was sent or not. **Logging** will be the same as that for automated texts.

2) You can also send manual text messages from the FILE menu option for Text Message. Just enter the cell number and the message and click SEND. However, since there is no associated contract, texts sent with this method will **NOT be logged**.