

# SMS IN STYLE

**S**MS in its current state simply means to convey information...all too blankly. This definition seemed apt until recently but with the advent of SMS 2.0, the messaging world is in for a makeover. Apart from the regular text, now one can animate, colour, highlight, italicize and add blinkers to the text message. Not only that one can also avail freebies

and even speak out the messages. Yes our dear old SMS service is changing and we tell you how.

## Power Voice

There are times when you can't write a text but don't want to make a call either. Here voice messaging comes to your rescue. It is the SMS service which allows you to verbalise your message and send it.

**Anannya Nath** tells you  
about the latest trends in  
text messaging

One gets 30 seconds to record and it costs the same as your normal SMS. This service has been launched by Kirusa, Nuance and Spivox. The recipient gets a SMS from the service provider, and can 'click' on or dial a number in the short SMS to directly access the spoken message. One can also get that message in the text format and this service is provided by Spivox. The recipient can either reply by voice or text and can also forward it. These messages can be saved and accessed later. Spivox however has more in store for you. Not only does it convert voice messages to text and delivers them to your phone but also delivers them to other mediums like blogs, facebook walls or myspace.

Kirusa has deployed voice SMS service in India with Idea Cellular, BPL mobile and MTNL. Infact MTNL provides this service for landlines too. Service charges are defined by the operator itself. However, Nuance is yet to introduce it in India and Spivox has no such plans as of now.

There are many who wouldn't buy this technology arguing that what is the need for it when there is a facility of voice calling? Well, it comes handy for reaching someone directly when you don't want to spend time on a live conversation.

## Make It Cool!

Since we started texting, we've been sending out the dull bland SMSes with equally uninteresting



smileys. But now this trend is changing and there are ways and means to add some cool quotient to them. To do that just log on to [www.celcom.com](http://www.celcom.com) or [www.farsa.gr](http://www.farsa.gr) and get going. If you are an Airtel, Idea or BSNL subscriber all you need to do is to ask your service provider to upgrade you to SMS 2.0. Through it, you can send personalized messages in a different backgrounds, colours or fonts with moving emoticons and animation. ,

To use this service, both sender and receiver need to download the applet into the phone. However, they need to have a GPRS enabled phone to download the app. If they don't have the applet they will receive the message in



normal black and white font.

### Blogging Via SMS

Another type of messaging that has grown significantly in the past few months is SMS blogging. It allows you to connect to friends and peers on social networking communities. These can be done via SMS especially when 160 characters limit that text messages impose is more than enough. The good thing is that it's almost free! Webaroo, Twitter and Reliance are some companies that have taken a step forward in this direction and launched SMS communities. Here the group creator or owner of a community creates a message and then forwards it to all who have subscribed to his community at no cost at all.

The only cost incurred is of sending one SMS. In addition to this Reliance allows its users to upload posts, images and videos on its blog with a single SMS. Every time the user posts an update, all subscribers to the community get SMS alerts. The point is that only Reliance has deployed this service as of now. On the other hand Twitter and Webaroo can work on any operator.

### Adding Value to SMS

Till location based services come to India in a full fledged manner, SMS 2.0 can also fulfill the need of finding the best restaurant or movie in town and that too free of cost.

The mechanism is that your handset will be updated with cached ads throughout the day after fixed intervals. So every time you go to text someone an ad will pop up. These cached ads that are updated via GPRS in the background are supposedly based on user relevance. This means it will identify the messaging patterns of the user and then send ads based on it, while he composes or reads an SMS. For now this service is only available on Airtel.

Are other operator's listening?

Finally, one doesn't necessarily need to be a genius to realise that we Indians are data friendly and SMS still remains the most popular form of data services. These applications further enhance your experience and have taken messaging to a new level for sure.

So try these out and enter the new world of messaging.

