



CTN Tip Sheet: Premium SMS Subscription Services

What is a Premium SMS subscription service?

Subscription services deliver content to your mobile phone on a periodic basis. A premium SMS (short message service) subscription service involves paying to send and receive SMS. They are “premium” because they cost more than a normal SMS (which is usually around 25c). You can sign up to subscription services via SMS, websites and m-sites (web or WAP sites configured for mobile phones). There have been occasions where consumers have been signed up to premium SMS services unknowingly, so CTN has developed this tip sheet to help better inform consumers.

What sort of information is delivered via Premium SMS?

Content and services provided via premium services can include news, financial data, weather information, horoscopes, ring tones, games capable of being played on mobile telephones, and chat services.

How much does it cost?

The price for these services varies depending on the type of content or the frequency of delivery. So for example, a news service may cost \$1 a week to receive a daily SMS report, while a ring tone subscription service may cost up to \$4 a day. The maximum you can be charged per message is \$4.95. Some services send you multiple messages each day and you are charged for each message you receive, without being able to control how many you will receive. It is very important to find out of how often you will receive SMS and how much they will cost before you sign up. Also look out for “free” offers this may mean only the first SMS of the subscription will be free and you pay for subsequent messages.

How do I stop a subscription service?

You can unsubscribe from these services by typing STOP in reply to a received message, or by contacting the provider of that content service. Contact your mobile phone provider if you are having trouble finding any contact details.

Problems or complaints?

If you are unable to stop the messages, or didn't agree to the subscription, or feel you have been misled about what you agreed to, firstly contact the company sending you the SMS and then your mobile phone provider. If you can't resolve your complaint, contact the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman on 1800 062 058 or visit: www.tio.com.au

Last updated May 2007. If you have any comments or corrections, please email ctn@ctn.org.au or call 02 9572 6007.