

Mobile Marketer

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Chicago-based housing developer cuts costs via SMS

By [Jordan Crook](#)

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Text-message reminders

UAS Properties, a housing development company recently used mobile to save company costs and provide a quicker, simpler way to stay in touch with tenants and prospective renters.

The company was founded in 2001 based in Chicago. UAS hopes to provide affordable housing through development and renovation in Chicago and surrounding communities.

"Text messaging is a cheaper and more efficient way to reach a lot of people," said Atukwe Newell, managing partner at UAS Properties, Chicago, IL. "We use EZ Texting in both our leasing business and our property management business.

"In both cases it was a much more efficient way to get out information," he said.

Managing over 800 rental properties, UAS spends a great deal of time communicating by phone to collect rent payments, and maintain and renovate units and usually receives over 150 calls a day from potential renters.

Whether it's caring for current customers or communicating with potential new ones, UAS has to stay in contact with a large number of people daily.

However, phone calls are time-consuming and economically inefficient. So UAS implemented EZ Texting for both aspects of the business, property management and leasing.

During this economic slowdown, UAS often deals with late payments.

Instead of making dozens of tedious phone calls, UAS sends rent collection notifications through EZ Texting.

These text messages give renters a number to call to make their payment automatically by phone.

On the leasing side of its business, UAS provides potential renters with a texting update system.

With permission, UAS sends text messages with new listings that fit the customer and any price reductions available.

The texts normally go out around lunchtime when phones quiet down a bit. UAS claims that only minutes after the messages are sent, their phones ring off the hook with prospective business.

The potential renters on the texting list can opt-out at any time and will not receive text messages after 60 days. This is the only form of communication between UAS and customers during that period.

The plan seems successful as Mr. Newell estimates \$140,000 in savings, traded up for a texting bill of less than \$100.

"Mobile is all about real time," Mr. Newell said. "Within a few minutes we can coordinate when we're getting responses.

"Mobile is more effective for the volume of communication we have," he said. "We believe it stands out a little more, if you are looking for an apartment it is a lot more efficient to get updates, a text message a day as opposed to having updates fall into your spam box or checking a Web site."

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