

# Digital Times®

Digital Times is a "for eCommerce newsletter reporting on the development and/or availability of interactive products and services."  
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*Digitally Cool*

**Need info?**  
Just text message  
**GOOGLE** - Here's  
*How...*

When the Verizon cellphone salesman showed me *this* trick, I was SOLD on the \$2.99/mo. package for 100 text messages... Benefit? No more looking for the yellow pages, expensive phone calls to the information operator, or needing to be in front of my computer and connected to the Internet! How about [weather dallas tx](#) or [pizza 89119](#) OR enter a movie title and with a little additional info, get the times and locations, i.e. [Hitch Las Vegas](#) or [Hitch 89119](#)... COOL, right?

How to use **Google SMS** (Short Message Service):

1. Compose your question as a TXT message.
2. Send the message to the 5-digit U.S. shortcode **46645** [that spells GOOGL on most phones].
3. Receive text message(s) with answers to your question. If there are multiple responses, your messages may be labeled "1 of 3", "2 of 3", etc.

\*For a **HELP** text message, send the word 'help' to 46645, or visit: <http://sms.google.com>

SAMPLE Queries:  
<http://www.google.com/sms/how-touse.html>

Get Google's wallet-sized Tips Sheet:  
<http://www.google.com/sms/tips.pdf>

-editor

## THE BEAUTY OF TEXT MESSAGING!

Nowadays, it's hard to find someone who doesn't carry a cell phone.

There is evidence of this everywhere, as a ring tone is heard, and everyone reaches for their purse or pocket to see if it is originating from THEIR phone. It is almost comical at times! The modern day conveniences of the cell phone can't be denied, however, and they are one of the most useful and versatile products on the market today.

It is hard to remember a time when I didn't have a cell phone, but it really wasn't that long ago. I don't know how I could get along without one now. When I don't have it, I somehow feel cut off from the world! I have become spoiled in the knowledge that my kids can contact me at any time, whenever they need me, and that provides a peace of mind that can't be replaced.

I have recently discovered new ways to appreciate my cell phone. At first, just the magic of being able to call information from my car and ask for directions was enough; what more could a person ask for?! I didn't even bother to explore the options that seemed so foreign to me; I was content. But kids have a way of teaching us things, even though we often times don't like to admit it.

I began to observe my teenagers and their friends, and realized that they often preferred text messaging to phone calls. It was almost like a game. They could leave a sassy message and wait for a response. They could avoid confrontation, but get their messages across. It's like having portable e-mail!

Often times when I go online and e-mail someone, I wonder how many days, hours, or minutes it will take them to check their messages. With text messaging, one can pretty much guarantee the message will get there faster, because most people who have a cell phone are in the habit of carrying it with them. Like most people, I am a very busy person, and I like to get my message across quickly and then move on to the next thing.

by: Lisa A. Jones  
Staff Reporter,  
Digital Times

The first few times my daughter text messaged me, I was almost irritated; I didn't want to take the time to figure out the buttons on my phone to respond to her. But, I soon realized that teenagers don't always want to talk to their parents, and I was grateful that she wanted to communicate with me in her own way. So, I took the time to learn. It turns out that it was very easy.

I am now a big fan of text messaging. The other day I called my daughter, because I had something important to tell her. She responded with a text message, "I am in class right now; I can't talk." So, I text messaged her back. Then she responded again. We had a great conversation, and I felt relieved and happy that we were able to communicate.

Sometimes you CAN teach an old dog new tricks! The monthly fee for text messaging is usually pretty minimal. Mine is included with my Sprint PCS plan. Check with your provider to find out more details, and get onboard with the new wave in communication!

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## TypeMatrix



For a solid month now, I've been using this EZReach ergonomic and space saving keyboard by **TypeMatrix**.

The keys are VERY responsive and have a good feel. I love the placement of the return [or enter] key. It's right in the MIDDLE. Above it is the backspace key, which I used a lot. I continued to make a lot of errors as I failed to negotiate the C and V keys a high percentage of the time, forcing me to look down at the keyboard a lot -- a high price to pay if one is a fast typist, as I am. Also, I can't deal with the fact that some of my graphics and desktop publishing application(s) don't work properly with this board!

I am sending it back for these reasons. If a small footprint is important to you, and don't mind looking at the keyboard, and you do not work with graphics and desktop publishing software applications, the EZ Reach might be great for *you*.

-editor

Price: \$99

For: PC, Mac, Sun

Where to Buy: [www.typematrix.com](http://www.typematrix.com)

### **E BAY E WASTE RE-CYCLING INITIATIVE!**

By Lisa A. Jones

Staff Reporter, Digital Times

On January 6, 2005, eBay launched a major initiative to confront the problem of "e-waste"- unused or obsolete computers that may pose environmental hazards.

The Rethink Initiative coordinates efforts by industry leaders to recycle and reuse retired computers. Currently 133,000 Pc's PER DAY are being replaced with newer technology, yet only 10 percent of unwanted Pc's are being recycled. That needs to change.

"eBay's millions of users can be a powerful force for good," said Meg Whitman, eBay president and CEO. "The Rethink Initiative will educate consumers on how to properly dispose of or recycle the millions of tons of e-waste they confront each year. We're extremely excited about the positive role eBay's user community will play in confronting this environmental dilemma." To find out how you can be a part of this important program, go to [Ebay.com](http://Ebay.com).

## VOIP Report Card...

### Vonage Broadband Phone Co.

[cont'd from last issue]



Please know that with VONAGE Broadband Telephone [Voice Over Internet Protocol], I had to **apply** for 911 emergency service and state my physical address. That is because Vonage service is portable to any location with broadband Internet access. Vonage explains that they use the address information I provided to map my address and telephone number to my area's nearest Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). Vonage clearly states that: **YOU CANNOT DIAL 911 FROM THIS LINE UNTIL YOU RECEIVE YOUR CONFIRMATION EMAIL.** A few days ago there was an incident in Texas where a Vonage customer was being robbed and needed 911 assistance. This customer had NOT applied for and, therefore, did not have 911 service with Vonage. Now, the 'victims' are represented by an attorney, and have filed a lawsuit against VONAGE Holdings.

The instructions from Vonage [email and online] are not difficult to follow. Pleased with the full-featured telephone service from Vonage, I decided to add a FAX number to my account. After logging in, it was easy to ADD SERVICES. I ordered the additional service and immediately received a confirming email with my new FAX number! It works, too. One thing in common with numerous Internet services is that YOU manage, add and/or modify many features and details by logging into a virtual Web Account and specifying what you want and how you want it.

This situation is not completely unlike registering for a domain name and then not managing it. As a customer service representative for an Internet services provider for the past several years, I can tell you that many people lose their domains because they have not managed them. A common problem, for example, is not paying attention to when they expire. Another common one is *not notifying the registrar* of your new email address. In that case, **how can they notify you** when it is time to renew?

-editor