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BanaPads: Administration Manual for Mobile Inventory Management

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Administration Manual for
Mobile Inventory Management

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Administration Instructional Manual for Mobile Inventory Management

Introduction

FrontlineSMS is an open source platform that allows for high volume communication through SMS. It allows for two-way communication between the platform user and the recipient of the message. These servers only rely on the cellular network in the area; therefore FrontlineSMS connects areas that do not have access to smart phones and Internet through mobile networks. FrontlineSMS has been successful for enterprises throughout different rural areas in Africa, Mexico, and South America. Through the mobile inventory test period, FrontlineSMS is the most suitable platform for Bana.

For Bana, FrontlineSMS will allow the administration to communicate with Champions to receive sales reports in order to efficiently manage inventory. This will allow for Bana to regulate production based on Champion needs and to ensure that the sanitary pads are delivered to the proper areas in a timely manor. Through this data integration, Bana will be able to track the amount of pads each Champion is selling, in order to analyze the different sales levels of Champions. In addition, through FrontlineSMS Bana can send menstruation health tips and reminders to customers.

Features:

FrontlineSMS offers many features for the administration. Each of the following features will be useful to Bana. FrontlineSMS allows the user to:

- Create contracts and groups
- Send and receive messages
- Manage message history for each contact
- Create auto-responses to incoming messages
- Create polls
- Export data into PDF or CSV form

Getting started:

In order to use FrontlineSMS the administration will need a computer and a GSM modem (Global System for Mobile). The computer needs to be able to download FrontlineSMS from frontlinesms.com. Bana should have a GSM modem for MTN and Airtel in order to communication with Champions that have both mobile networks to reduce the costs for Champions. Before downloading the software, you must create an account. Once you have

downloaded FrontlineSMS onto your computer, Internet is not required. It can be managed through a GSM modem, therefore only a strong cellular network connection is required.

Organizing and creating Contacts:

FrontlineSMS allows Bana to create and organize a Champion contact list. This list can be organized by district, village, and by core team. Each contact will have the Champion's name, location, and phone number and her cellular network preference. Within the contact section groups can be created to indicate region or core team. Additionally, under the note section label if the Champion is an active seller or inactive to ensure inventory messages are only sent to active Champions. Once groups are created Bana can send and track messages by group in order to efficiently view data (figure 2). The contact sheet can be exported into PDF form or excel to merge FrontlineSMS data with Champion records in order to have proper information and numbers of the current Champions.
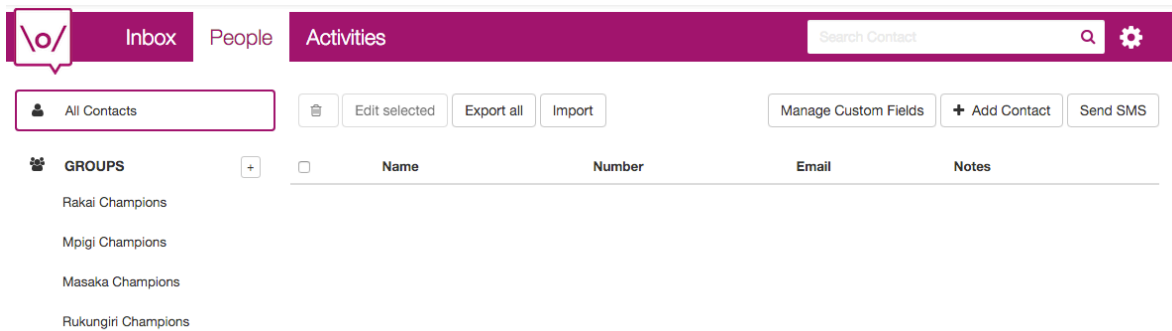
Figure 1

Figure 2

Inventory Management:

Once a week Bana will send a message through FrontlineSMS to champions requesting their sales for the week and if they need more inventory. This message will need to be sent out in local language. For instance, in Masaka the main language is L'Uganda and therefore the message would reflect Figure 3. The following messages will be sent depending on the Champions language preference:

English Version:
- This is a message from Bana. Please reply with how many boxes did you sell. How many do you need?

L'Uganda Version:
- Eno ye Message eva mu Bana Damu ne boxes meka z'otunze ne meka zewetaaga.

Rukiga Version:
- Obu nobutumwa Kuruga omu Bana. Garukamu neebi: Nobu-box bungahe obumu-gurize? Hamwe, nobumuretaga?

Figure 3

Once the messages have be sent and the Champions have responded, a preset message will be programed and sent to ensure Champions that their message was received into the database.
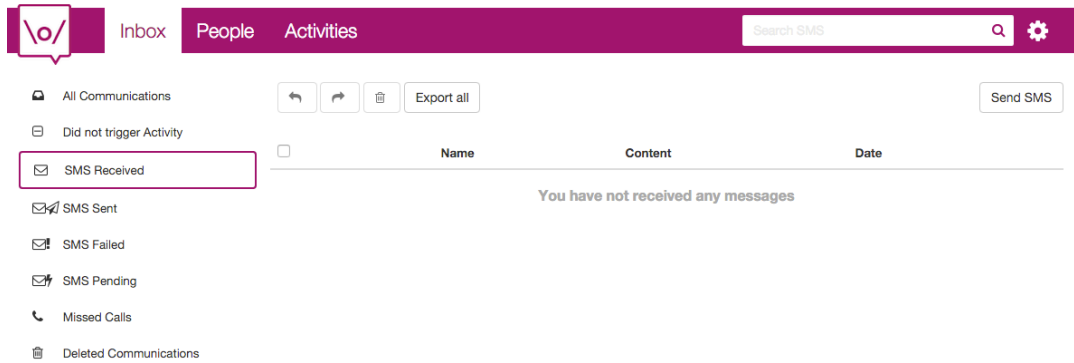

Figure 4

Figure 5

Analyzing Data

Once Champions have reported their sales and if they require more inventory Bana can sort and analyze data. This data can either be viewed through the inbox function on Frontline. The message will appear with the Champions name, message and the date the message was received. Messages can be exported into excel or PDF. From these files, Bana can organize Champions based on their response to ensure pads are delivered promptly. This will also

systematize Bana's inventory and provide records on the progress of each Champion. Additionally, Bana can compare each region's sales in order to advance their sales.