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Wireless Communications

Wireless communications are everywhere. People around the world regularly send and receive messages wirelessly, that is, transmitted through the air. Three types of wireless communications include wireless messaging services, wireless. Internet access points, and global positioning systems.

People use mobile phones, PDAS, and other mobile devices to access text messaging, instant messaging, and picture messaging services (Davies 34-42). Through text messaging services, users send and receive short text messages, which usually consist of fewer than 300 characters. Wireless instant messaging is an internet communications service that allows a wireless mobile device to exchange instant messages with one or more mobile devices or online personal computers. Users send graphics, pictures, video clips, sound files, and short text messages with picture messaging services.¹

In many public locations, people connect to the Internet through a wireless Internet access point using mobile computers and devices. Two types of wireless Internet access points are hot spots and 3G networks. A hot spot is a wireless network that allows mobile users to check e-mail, browse the Web, and access any Internet service-as long as their computers or devices have the appropriate wireless capability. A 3G network, which uses cellular radio technology, enables users to connect to the Internet with a mobile phone or computer equipped with an appropriate PC Card.

A global positioning system (GPS) is a navigation system that consist of one or more earth-based receivers that accept and analyze signals sent by satellites in order to determine the receiver's

¹ Podpora and Ruiz indicate that some messaging services use the term, video messaging, to refer separately to the capability of sending video clips (79-82)

geographic location, according to Shelly and Cashman (How a GPS Works). A GPS receiver is a handheld, mountable, or embedded device that contains an antenna, a radio receiver, and a processor. Many mobile devices, such as mobile phones and PDAs, have GPS capability built into the device.

Mobile users communicate wirelessly through wireless messaging services, wireless Internet access points, and global positioning systems. Anyone can take advantage of wireless communications using mobile computers and devices.

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