



Barking – Case study



Quick Facts:

- **Founders:** Kustas Kõiv, Mikko Moses, Meelis Haidak, and Ott Reinhold
- P2P app on **iPhone** and **Android**
- **10,000+** parking spaces
- **35,000+** sessions per month
- **2,500+** active users
- Operating in **6 countries**
- HQ in **Tallinn**, Estonia

Technology startups strive to achieve hypergrowth by creating innovative products that challenge the status quo. Achieving hypergrowth requires selecting business partners that are prepared to scale, at times, without notice.

Estonian startup, Barking, learned quickly that vetting partners for scalability and ease of doing business is crucial to their own success.

Barking, Ltd. is creating access to the largest volume of parking spaces through one service in the world without owning a single parking garage or parking lot. Through peer-to-peer parking, drivers conveniently connect with any person, or lot and garage operator with available parking spaces near them, through Barking's platform. Parking spaces can be rented to drivers in need at the parking space owner's discretion, whether it be always, or for a few hours while the parking space is vacant. Drivers browse available spaces, reserve a parking space for a particular time, and pay the parking space owner, through the Barking app, available for the iPhone and Android devices. The cost of the space is typically less expensive than a traditional parking lot or garage, let alone the fact that the app tells you exactly where parking spots are available.

Over 10,000 parking spaces are currently available through Barking's platform in six major cities across Northern and Eastern Europe. The company will continue expanding across Europe, as the platform gains popularity. In addition to parking, the app helps drivers find car washes in their vicinity. Drivers pay as they go by credit card, pre-pay by adding money to their accounts in the app, or pay through their mobile carrier in Estonia. Average city dwellers get the opportunity to make some extra cash by renting their parking spaces when they're not using them.



Background

Prior to Barking, co-founders Kustas Kõiv, Mikk Moses, Meelis Haidak, and Ott Reinhold came up with a novel idea to help bicyclists in Estonia find places to lock their bikes securely and without having to carry their own locks. Bikeep became the digitally driven bike rack, with bike parking locations all over world, including the United States, where bike theft is a fundamental problem in its major cities.

The founders used their ingenuity from Bikeep and applied similar technology to help people find parking spaces in major cities, while also becoming a formidable price competitor, and partner, of major parking lot and garage operators. (Learn more: www.bikeep.com)

Quick success uncovers SMS scaling issues.

Barking officially launched on April 8, 2015. The launch was ushered by a premiere showcase of the Barking platform with the co-founders on Estonian national television (ETV,) on the show, "Ringvaade," which is an Estonian feature TV show. The audience response was overwhelming, with requests to sign up as the show aired surpassed 4,000.

"We had grand expectations, but we didn't expect that much traction during the show," says co-founder Ott Reinhold.



While the excitement of a successful launch reeled the co-founders, a problematic issue with the platform surfaced. The SMS API could not handle the volume of requests coming in through the app as user phone numbers needed to be verified. In addition, the SMS and verification partner at the time would only allow Barking to pre-pay for services, and once funds were depleted, the API shut off. As the co-founders could not have forecasted such high demand during launch day, the pre-pay amount could not be determined, which clearly creates uncertainty around the full functionality of the Barking app.

After the launch fluke, Barking clearly needed a new SMS and verification provider which develops an API that can handle hypergrowth. Margus Sütt from Messente proactively approached Ott and his team to

determine how he could help alleviate Barking's problems with SMS and phone number verification.



The company adopted both Messente's global messaging and user verification APIs. As a partner, Messente's APIs are part of Barking's infrastructure, allowing for global growth, as Messente spans over 190 countries and partners with nearly 800 mobile network providers. In addition, the ease of doing business with Messente is appealing, as a post-paid account option is provided for Barking. No longer having to guess SMS usage in advance allows the API to simply keep running. And overall support is included at no additional costs, with Messente's support and development team has been at Barking's beck and call since day one.

Problems

- Unexpected, immediate popularity of app
- Previous SMS API could not handle the volume
- Prepay billing not feasible, as SMS use could not be forecasted.

Solutions

- Messente APIs built to scale
- Providing service in all required markets -190 countries & 800 mobile networks
- Post-paid account made available
- Support included at no cost



Barking's use of Messente services

SMS & Verification

- Phone number verification for carrier direct billing
- SMS marketing to notify users of new locations
- SMS fallback for modems to open parking lot and garage gates

Direct carrier billing poses the primary requirement of SMS. Barking takes advantage of Messente's user verification API to verify user phone numbers to enable carrier billing. As Barking grows, they promote new locations using Messente's SMS API to send text-based marketing campaigns to users. SMS marketing proved to be the most effective way to notify users of new locations, because Barking experiences a higher conversion rate using SMS marketing when compared to email or social.

Barking uniquely uses the SMS API with the hardware they provide parking lot and garage owners. Coming through a mobile network connected modem with a SIM card, SMS messages have the capability to open parking lot and garage gates. While it is a backup option to using the data network, SMS is more reliable and Barking knows an SMS instruction to open a gate is successful when the API indicates a delivered SMS through a delivery report, and the Barking app transaction occurs. However, the delivery reports allow Barking to quickly act if an SMS happens to fail, giving their users a good experience.

The relationship continues

After over a one and half year relationship, Barking continues to choose Messente as their global messaging and verification partner. Barking plans to expand across the world with Messente providing a simple, yet crucial backbone service to make their innovative application work.

Learn more about Messente and our offerings:

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