Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (**USSD**) : sometimes referred to as "**quick codes**" or "**feature codes**", is a [communications protocol](#) used by [GSM](#) [cellular telephones](#) to communicate with the [mobile network operator](#)'s computers. USSD can be used for [WAP](#) browsing, prepaid callback service, mobile-money services, location-based content services, menu-based information services, and as part of configuring the phone on the network. The service does not require a messaging app, and does not incur charges.

USSD messages are up to 182 alphanumeric characters long. Unlike [short message service (SMS)](#) messages, USSD messages create a real-time connection during a USSD session. The connection remains open, allowing a two-way exchange of a sequence of data. This makes USSD faster than services that use SMS.

While GSM is being phased out in the 2020s with 2G and 3G technologies, USSD services can be supported over LTE, 5G, and IMS.