

Drop-It v3.07

Installation Guide

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CONNECTION SOFTWARE

391 City Road
London
EC1V 1NE

Telephone: 020 7713 8000
Fax: 020 7713 8001
Email: support@csoft.co.uk
Web: www.csoft.co.uk

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1 Minimum System Requirements

Account Requirements

Before you can use Drop-It you will need your Connection Software account Username(s) and PIN(s).

Visit www.csoft.co.uk to sign up for an account, add child accounts, deposit funds or request your existing account login details again.

Hardware Requirements

In order to run Drop-It you will need a Windows PC with the following minimum requirements.

- Pentium 100 MHz CPU
- 32 MB RAM (64 MB suggested)
- 4.3 MB hard-disk space
- 600 x 800 VGA display
- A connection to the Internet whilst you are sending messages.
- If you have a firewall, proxy server, or your ISP uses port blocking, then port 444 (SNPP Protocol) must be opened for outgoing traffic.
- If you wish to receive messages using a two-way service, then a permanent connection is needed and port 444 must be opened for incoming traffic also.
- It is possible to a port other than 444 for receiving messages, but since this is the IANA (www.iana.org) assigned number for the Simple Network Paging Protocol it is not recommended unless you are using Drop-It to receive messages on more than one account (in which case each account after the first needs a different port).

Operating System Requirements

Windows Vista

Windows 2003

Windows 2000

Windows XP (including SP2)

It is fully supported on these platforms.

Windows NT 4.0

It is currently *untested* on Windows NT 4.0.

Windows Me

Windows 95

Windows 98

It is *not supported* on these operating systems.

2 Installation

Run the Drop-It-setup.exe installation program to install the software. Installation is simple and straightforward, requiring very little input, and does not need a reboot.

Once installed, however, you must perform the necessary configuration prior to starting the Drop-It service.

3 Configuration

Getting Started

When you sign up for the Connection Software text messaging gateway you will be sent your account Username, Password and PIN.

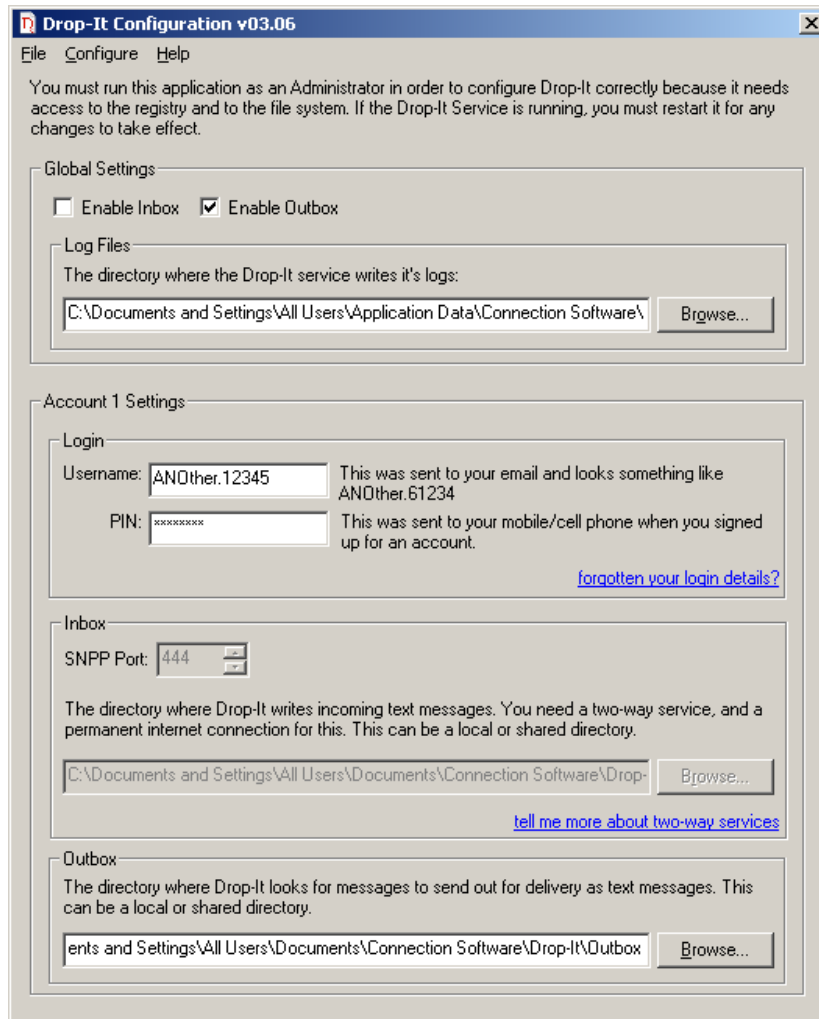
You will need your Username and PIN to configure Drop-It to use your account but not the Password. If you want to use Drop-It with multiple accounts, you must have the Username and PIN for each account before selecting "Add Account" from the configuration utility.

After you have completed installation the configuration utility should automatically start but, if not, you can run it from the start menu:

Start -> Program Files -> Connection Software -> Drop-It -> Drop-Conf

TIP: You must run the Drop-Conf utility as an Administrative user. This is especially important on Windows 2003 and Vista, because it tries to create folders and registry entries, which will fail otherwise.

Drop It Configuration is a single dialog utility that looks like this:



Drop-It Configuration Utility

Inbox & Outbox Directory

Drop-It uses two directories per account; one to read the text messages that you want to send from (the “outbox” directory) and another to write text messages that you receive to (the “inbox” directory).

When you run the configuration utility it will suggest defaults in line with the security policy for your operating system, but you can change these to whichever directories you prefer. It will also create those directories if they do not exist.

TIP: Remember that if you wish sources outside of the installed machine to read/write these directories, then the correct sharing permissions must be set up, and they must be able to reach the machine via your network. Likewise, the Drop-It Service must be able to read/write these directories. This is the cause of many “not sending” problems, particularly on the latest releases of Windows with tighter security policies.

Log Directory

This is the directory where the log files from Drop-It Service will be written. These can be very useful to technical support staff when trying to diagnose problems so do make sure the directory has the appropriate write permissions.

There is only one Log File directory no matter how many accounts Drop-It is servicing.

Login

Enter your Connection Software account Username and PIN in the boxes provided.

TIP: Note that your Password and PIN are not the same and that the PIN is required here, not your Password (this is a common mistake). Your PIN typically looks like a long number, whereas your Password is usually made of letters. Also, be sure to include all dots '.' and capitalisation in your Username.

Add Account

Drop-It can send (and possibly receive) messages via more than one account if you wish it to. This can be useful where you have multiple users, departments or applications which need the SMS facilities of Drop-It but which need their traffic to be isolated by account and/or directory.

For each account (up to a maximum of three at present) beyond the first that you need to use, you simply select the menu Configuration->Add Account.

This will create a new entry called "Account N Settings" where N is the number of the account you have just created. Enter the Username, PIN, Inbox directory, SNPP Port and Outbox directory you wish to use and then exit the application or change accounts to save the settings.

Remove Account

If you no longer need an account, select Remove Account to delete it. Note that you cannot delete the first account, and that delete removes the account with the greatest number. So Account 4, then Account 3 and finally Account 2.

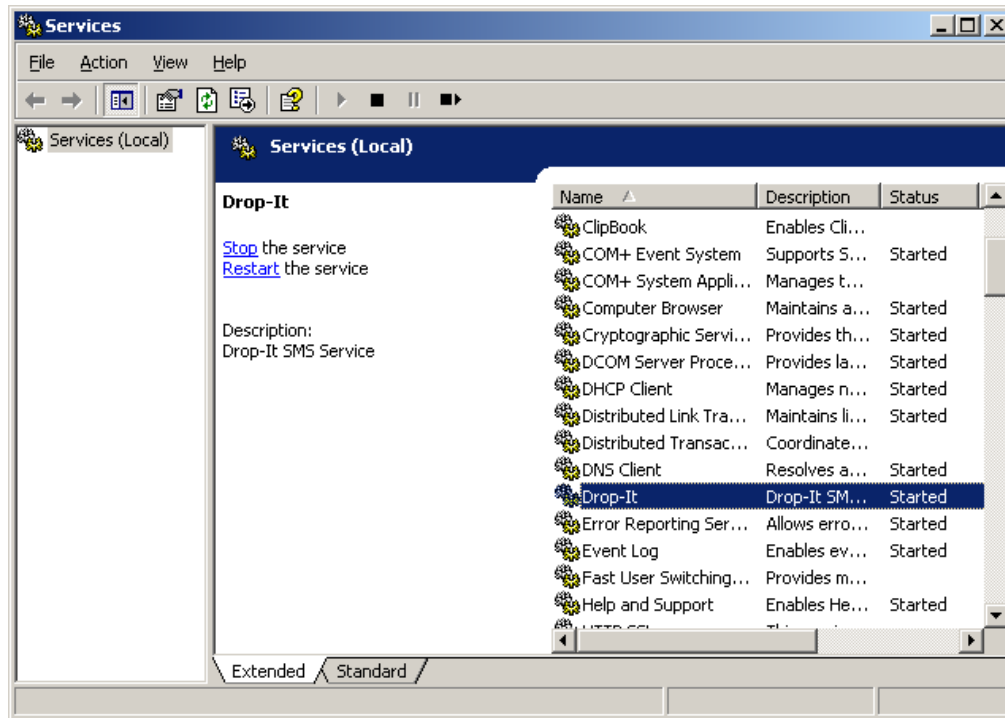
4 Starting Drop-It

Drop-It runs as a Windows Service without requiring anyone to be logged in to the machine it is running on. It is configured to auto-start when Windows starts but is not running immediately after installation, because you need to configure it with Drop-Conf first.

After running Drop-Conf you can either reboot the machine to start Drop-It, or you can start it for the first time from the Services Control Panel Administrative Tool.

Start->Control Panel->Administrative Tools->Services

If you make changes using Drop-Conf, you must either reboot the machine or stop and start the Drop-It Service from the Control Panel for the changes to take effect.



Services Control Panel

5 Sending Messages

To send a message all you need to do is to write a plain ASCII text file (see below for the format) into the 'Outbox' directory. As soon as the file is written, the Drop-It Service collects and sends it.

Because so many applications can easily be made to write a file to a directory, it makes it very simple to get programs running on your PC to send text messages without the need for custom API's or other costly development.

The maximum size of a outbox file is 2048 bytes. Files over this size will generate an error in the log and will not be processed. If you send a message that is larger than the maximum size of a single message (usually 160 GSM characters or 70 Unicode characters) then it will be sent as a concatenated message. The charge for a concatenated message is the charge per message multiplied by the number of messages needed to deliver it (check your online message history to see how many it took).

On phones that understand such messages, concatenated messages are displayed either as a single message or a series of messages marked x of n (where x is the current message part number and n is the total number of parts to the message).

To send a message in a non-ASCII language, such as Chinese or Hebrew, you must save the outbox file in Unicode UTF-8 format. Note that Unicode messages are typically only 70 characters long and any message longer than that will be sent as a concatenated message. Do not save the file in any other Unicode encoding, such as UCS-2 or UTF-16, as these are not compatible with Drop-It and will generate an error.

6 Receiving Messages

If you wish to add incoming messages for an account, you will need a two-way service on that account with Connection Software. Visit www.csoft.co.uk/two-way for more details and to set it up online.

When you configure the two-way account on the website it will ask you for an SNPP port. Normally, for a single account this is the IANA standard SNPP Port (444), but if you are adding more than one account, each will need a different port. We recommend using the IANA assigned private ports between 49152 and 65535.

You must also have an Internet connection with a fixed address (which you will need to enter during set-up) for this to work and have port 444 (and any others you have chosen) open in your firewall for incoming connections.

When you have configured two-way you will find replies appear in whichever directory you specified as the Inbox Directory for that account.

7 File Formats

Each file that you place in the 'Outbox' directory must contain just one text message. It must include the mobile phone number of the intended recipient, as well as the message in the following format:

```
|447700912345|The message you want to send||
```

Note that the line must contain exactly four pipe ('|') characters, with the last two pipes side by side with no white space. You should use the full international phone number format for the numbers, including country and area codes. For example, to send a message to the UK mobile 07700912345 you would create a drop file with the line

```
|447700912345|The message you want to send||
```

Spaces will be ignored (' ') in the number, but tabs are not allowed in any section. You should use characters in the GSM character set to be sure that your messages are delivered as you intended.

The file name and extension are not important, but you must ensure that the files you place in the 'Outbox' directory are not read-only. Any files that cannot be deleted once sent will cause the message to be re-sent forever (or until you run out of credit).

Messages that arrive from mobile phones will be placed in the 'Inbox' directory and will have the same format – but the phone number will be that of the sender.

8 Support

Detecting Problems

You should check the Log file directory if you are having problems with Drop-It. There will be a file with the abbreviated day of the week as its name, for example "Mon.log". Opening this in a text editor and scrolling to the bottom may help to ascertain the nature of the problem.

This file will often be asked for when requesting support from Connection Software.

Permissions & Sharing

The most common way to integrate Drop-It is as a server application reading/writing to/from shared directories. Only the server machine then needs access to the Internet while other users/applications send/receive messages as text files to the shared directories.

However, for this to work, you must remember to give everyone access to at least the Outbox directory so that files can be written to it for sending. If you write files to the Outbox directory and find that they are not being sent, one of the first things to check is whether the directory has the right permissions for the Drop-It application to read and delete from it and for others to write to it.

Similarly, if you have a two-way service and messages do not appear in the Inbox directory, you should check that Drop-It could write to that directory.

Common Errors

- **Invalid Login Causes The Service To Stop**

This is the intended behaviour of Drop-It in this scenario; Messages cannot be sent until you have run the configuration utility and changed the login details to the correct ones, then re-started the Drop-It Service.

If you are running Drop-It with multiple accounts, the configuration for each must have a valid Username and PIN pair, otherwise an invalid login when it is used will cause Drop-It to stop altogether.

You are strongly urged to use the “drop out.txt” test file with each account you have configured in order to confirm that you have set it up correctly. Because it is a service, it could fail silently if you don’t check this.

- **Missing mfc71.dll, msvcp71.dll, or msvcrt71.dll errors**

Drop-It should install these files for you, but if not then you need to install the Microsoft redistributable files for Visual Studio developed Windows applications. These are installed as part of a package put together by Connection Software called WASFiles200.zip on the website at <http://www.csoft.co.uk/microsoft>. Alternatively, you can source the appropriate files from Microsoft or another reputable source.

- **Error: can't interpret contents**

Check the format of the file matches that specified in this document. The pipe symbols are very important and must be present. Furthermore, the file should be written in UTF-8 format (of which ASCII is a subset).

If the file appears to correct but is still generating the error, try opening it in a binary editor so you can see the actual bytes that the file contains. The pipe symbol should be shown as 7C and should be the first byte in the file. If you see the characters EF BB BF at the very start of the file instead, then you have written the file in UTF-16/UCS-2 Unicode format as that is the Byte Order Mark (BOM) for such files. Drop-It does not support files in this format.

Getting Support & Updates

If you have problems that you cannot resolve, would like to request a feature, or just discuss your requirements, please do not hesitate to contact Connection Software Support using;

Web Page: <http://www.csoft.co.uk/Drop-It>
Support: <http://www.csoft.co.uk/support>
Two-Way: <http://www.csoft.co.uk/two-way>
Email: support@csoft.co.uk
Phone: +44 20 7713 8000
Fax: +44 20 7713 8001

9 Release History

This release supersedes all previous releases of the Drop-It application and provides:

3.07:

- Fixed logging error which can cause the Service to fail to start

3.06:

- Multiple Account Support
- Improved documentation including new screen shots.

3.05:

- Windows Vista Compatible
- New, cleaner installation

3.04:

- Implements fail-over between the two Connection Software SNPP messaging gateways.
- Free of time-outs or account locking.

3.03:

- The Drop-It Configuration utility will not report a false positive error when deleting registry entries that do not exist.

3.02:

- The Drop-It Configuration utility reports failures to correctly configure the application.
- The Drop-It Configuration utility generates ones of the initialisation files dynamically rather than it being statically installed. This provides much greater flexibility.
- Log files are compliant with DOS text file format.

3.01:

- Minor bug fix for false positive error reporting on start-up

10 Useful References

Unicode UTF-8

<http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc3629.txt>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UTF-8>

<http://unicode.org/>

11 Credits

Inno Setup Compiler

We use the free, open-source, Inno Setup Compiler to create our Drop-It installer.

<http://www.jrsoftware.org/>

VistaICO Toolbar Icons

The Drop-It icon is based on the free icons from VistaICO.com .

<http://www.vistaico.com>