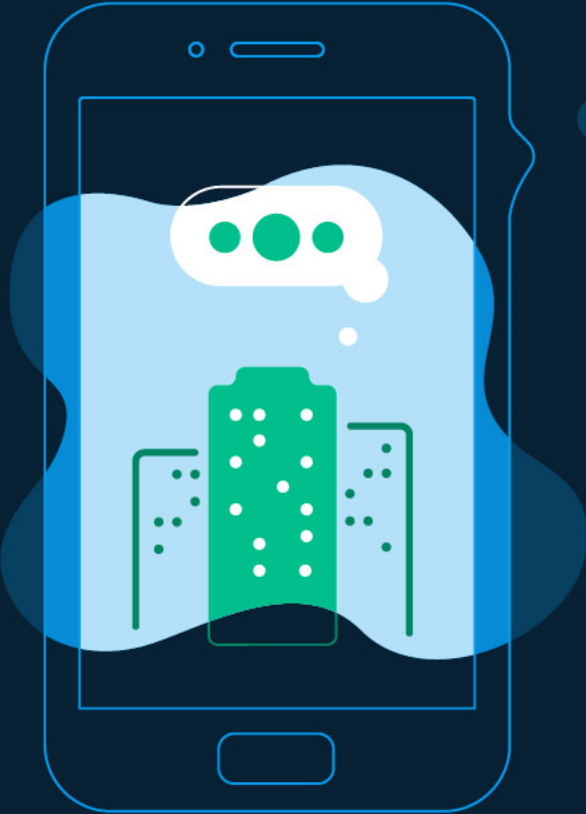


THE ULTIMATE
GUIDE TO

BUSINESS TEXT MESSAGING

IN 2022





The Restructure

In 2022 text messaging is looking at a restructure—like last year, the ground is somewhat shifting under our feet. There are some new fees, regulations to keep on top of, and many choices. So, where do we stand?

Business text messaging continues to evolve to deliver better customer experiences and drive new revenue growth, but the carrier landscape surrounding messaging is changing quickly. As a result, reaching consumers via text message in 2022 is a different ballgame, with added scrutiny and more costs.

So take a breath of fresh 2022-scented air and enjoy this updated edition of understanding business text messaging.

In this guide, we'll walk you through:

- The history of text messaging and where we are today
- Types of messaging and numbers
- What's changing with business text messaging in 2022, including new fees
- Best practices and getting consent
- International business text messaging and what to look out for
- What to consider when choosing a business text messaging provider





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SECTION 1

An overview of business text messaging

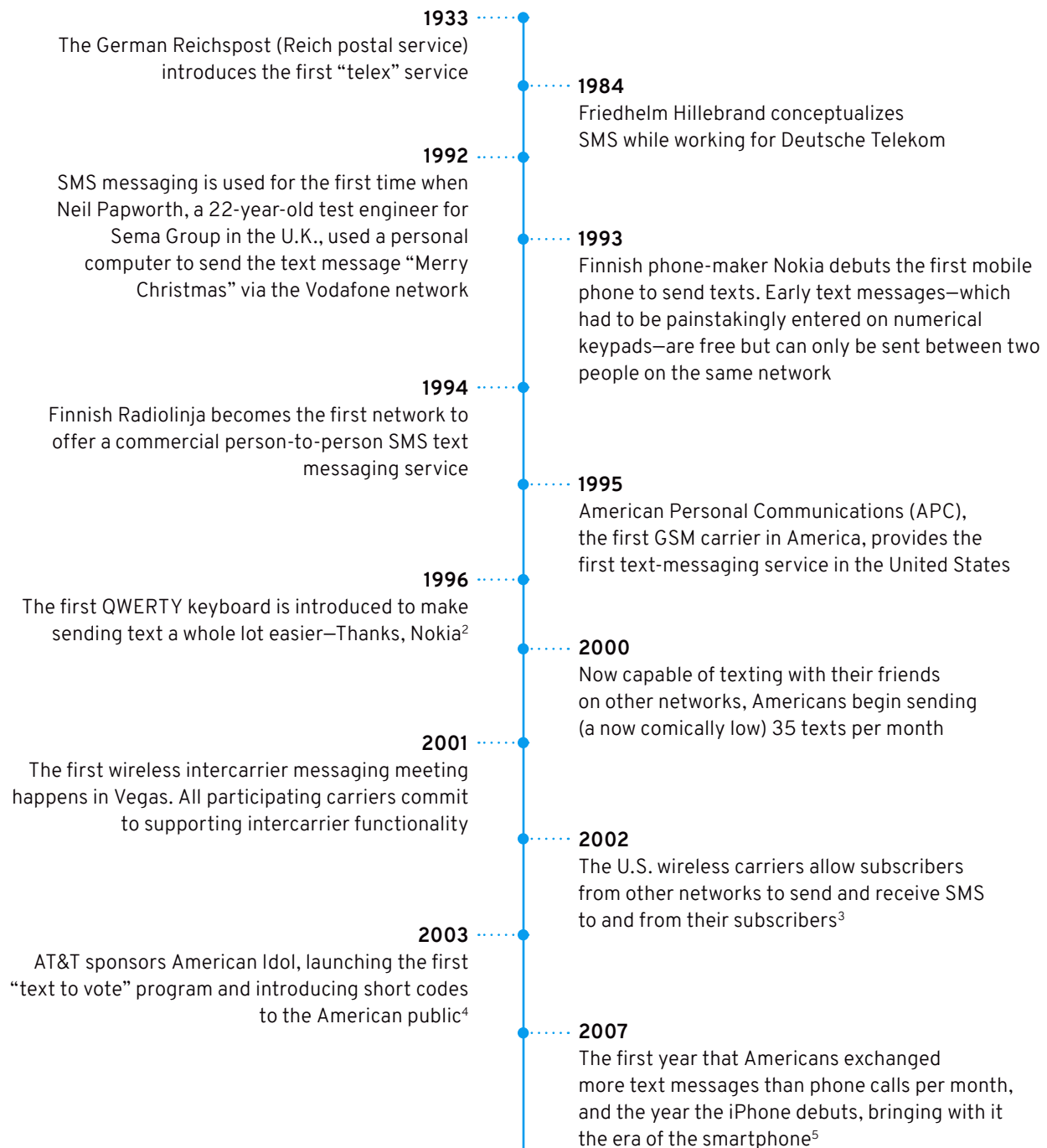
Fun fact: SMS text messaging became mainstream in the U.S. before the rest of the world (exploding in popularity around Q1 2006)¹, and it might surprise you to know that it differs from country to country. Because SMS was so popular in the U.S., sending business text messages happened almost organically.



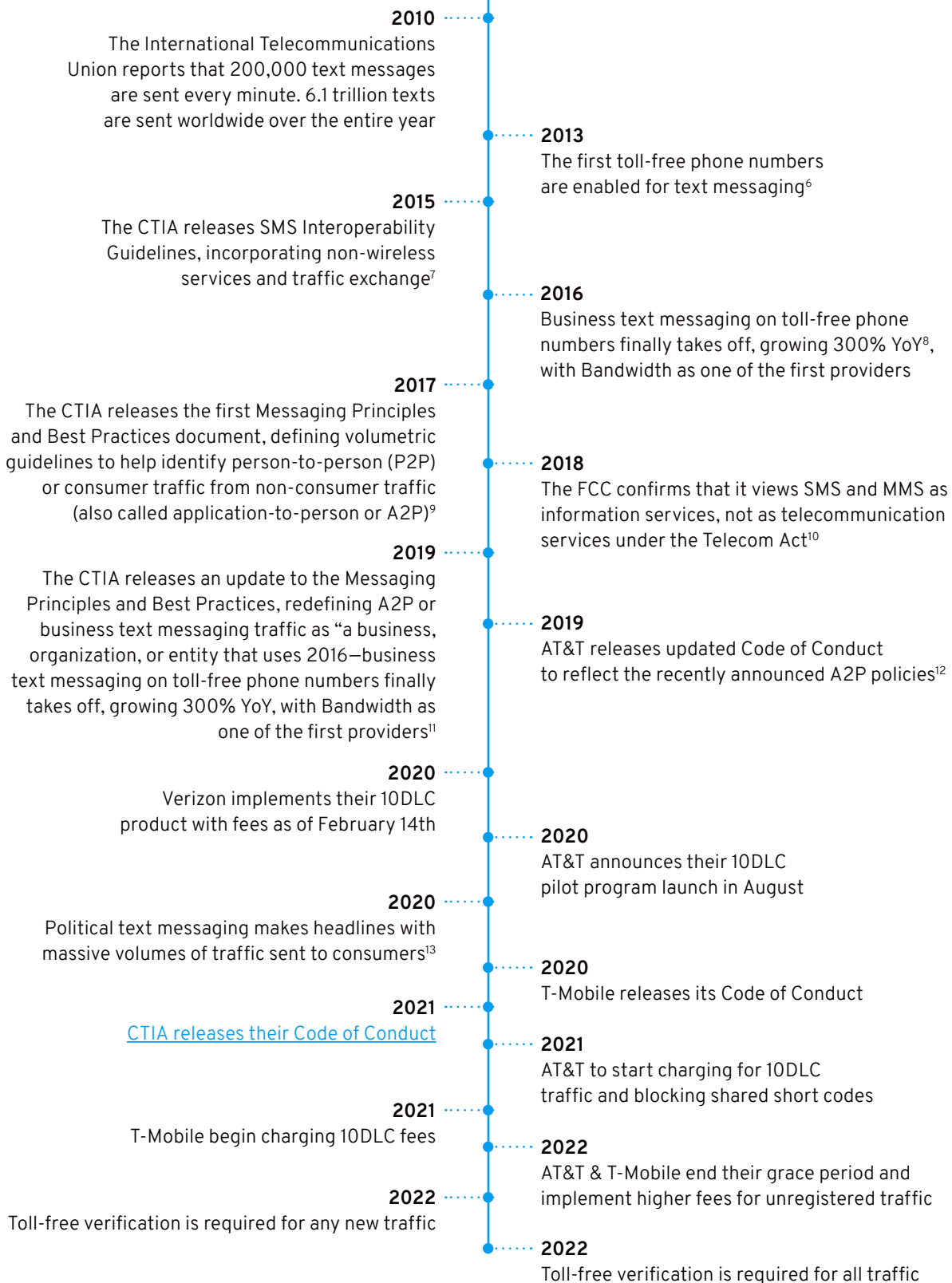
Text messaging history

Let's look at how business text messaging has transformed over the last few decades. This mix of interesting trivia and historical insights will ultimately come in handy for understanding the evolution of this communication channel.

A comprehensive history of text and business text messaging



2. <https://www.theverge.com/2013/9/3/4689034/nokia-iconic-mobile-phone-photo-essay>
3. <https://www.lighreading.com/ethernet-ip/real-sms-comes-to-the-us/d/d-id/578589>
4. <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20030604005186/en/ATT-Wireless-American-Idol-Set-Global-Records>
5. <https://mashable.com/2012/09/21/text-messaging-history/>



6. <https://ecfsapi.fcc.gov/file/1118133517699/The%20Truth%20About%20Texting%20on%20Toll%20Free%2011-18-16%20FINAL.pdf>

7. https://api.ctia.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/sms_interoperability_guidelines_v3-2-2_jan_2015-as-posted.pdf

8. <https://ecfsapi.fcc.gov/file/1118133517699/The%20Truth%20About%20Texting%20on%20Toll%20Free%2011-18-16%20FINAL.pdf>

9. <https://www.ctia.org/news/ctia-updates-messaging-principles-and-best-practices-to-further-protect-messaging-from-spam>

10. <https://www.nexttv.com/news/fcc-classifies-text-messaging-as-information-service#:~:text=The%20FCC%20has%20declared%20that,lightly%20regulated%20instant%20messaging%20services.>

11. <https://api.ctia.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/190719-CTIA-Messaging-Principles-and-Best-Practices-FINAL.pdf>

12. <https://www.thefastmode.com/expert-opinion/14818-it-s-a-messaging-revolution-the-short-code-rules-are-changing-are-you-ready>

13. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/dear-voter-heres-why-political-texts-are-blowing-up-your-phone-11582210800>



The four “R”s of recent SMS industry developments



REVOLUTION 2019

When the CTIA released its updated [Messaging Principles and Best Practices](#), and the carriers announced the intent for 10 digit long code (10DLC), it was clear that business text messaging over local numbers was having a revolution. A key part of this revolution was that businesses utilizing text messaging would need to adapt to new consent management, volumetric filtering, and spam filtering that can increasingly interfere with message delivery.



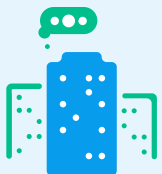
RENAISSANCE 2020

2020 sparked a renaissance for business text messaging. The pandemic brought a massive need for contactless experiences. Verizon’s implementation of 10DLC established new procedures to follow when sending messages on local numbers to Verizon users. This new process prompted other carriers to follow suit.



REFORMATION 2021

In 2021, business text messaging experienced a reformation. AT&T and T-Mobile introduced more procedural requirements and traffic monitoring with the rollouts of their 10DLC programs. Carriers also introduced new fees and surcharges for unregistered traffic.



RESTRUCTURE 2022

Business text messaging continues to restructure as people navigate new environments. That’s not to say new fees and regulations won’t turn up, but with 2021 behind us, let’s take a deep breath and make sure we’re ready for what’s next.

As we go through 2022, changes will likely continue to happen. For instance, business text messaging providers may continue to see increased surcharges with 10DLC, making it trickier to consider it the low-cost option. And some speculate that toll-free could be a haven from campaign registration requirements, but is this true?



Types of messaging

All mobile messages are not the same. From what they are, what they are suitable for, to the specific considerations, several factors make one kind of text message different from another.

Here are a few common types of messages you should know about:



SMS

What it is: Short Message Service (SMS) has been around for decades and is the most globally accepted form of text messaging worldwide.

What it's good for: Regardless of the device you use (iOS, Android, etc.), SMS works with no extra app download. It also doesn't require a smartphone, making it the most friendly option across economic statuses.



MMS

What it is: MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service) is used to send messages that contain multimedia content like pictures and videos to and from mobile devices. The MMS extends messaging capabilities, allowing messages to be greater than 160 characters in length.

What it's good for: It's built using the same technology as SMS to allow SMS users to send multimedia content. While it's most popular to send pictures, you can also send audio, phone contacts, and video files. Like SMS, MMS works well in the U.S. and doesn't require a smartphone.



Verified SMS

What it is: An enhancement to SMS on Google devices that provides an added level of validation to messages sent by businesses. In other words, better spam and phishing protection for mobile subscribers with added brand recognition and trust for corporations.

What it's good for: Mobile subscribers can lack trust when they receive a text message from a random number. Verified SMS allows businesses to offer a method of validating the message's authenticity and provides the ability to display the company's logo in each SMS message.

What you should consider: Verified SMS only works on Android handsets running Google Messages. Even though Verified SMS does not cover 100% of the mobile market, the benefits are compelling. Each Verified SMS offers companies a chance to promote their brand directly in the mobile subscriber's Messages App while providing consumers the peace of mind that the actual business sent the message.



OTT Application Messaging

What it is: iMessage, Whatsapp, WeChat, Facebook Messenger, and other messaging applications are often referred to as "Over The Top" (OTT) applications. They're called this because they do not require a cellular network connection and instead use IP (internet protocols). To send and receive texts using these apps, your device needs to be connected to the internet, either over WiFi or via a mobile internet connection.

What it's good for: OTT apps are preferred over MMS for sharing multimedia files since they don't have the same file size limitations. They also have more features like group messaging, message broadcasting, and audio and video calling. Finally, and most importantly, OTT apps are—unlike SMS—often free to use without the need for a phone plan.

What you should consider: While SMS is supported by all modern mobile phones, OTT apps need to be downloaded from iOS or Android app stores, creating problems from a logistical standpoint.



Types of phone numbers for business text messaging

The options can be hard to navigate when figuring out what number type to use for your business text messaging program. Which one is right for your use case between toll-free, local (10DLC), and short code? Which one gets you the best return on your investment in 2022? Let's take a look.



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Short codes—The ol' reliable

Short codes are the well-known original number type for business text messaging and have been in play for almost two decades. They're called "short codes" because they are 5 or 6 digit numbers instead of the ten-digit long codes (10DLC) we use for voice-enabled phone numbers. Short codes were built with a campaign application process to allow the carriers to review the purpose of the short code, the message content, and the opt-in/out mechanisms before approving them to pass traffic. This process refers to a campaign review and it can take quite a long time compared to our other options, between 8-12 weeks when applying for a new code and 4-6 weeks when migrating an existing code to a new provider.

Short codes were meant for messaging only and cannot be voice-enabled, making them ideal for high-throughput, high-volume notifications with little or no expectations for personalized conversations. However, more businesses engage with users via text messaging than ever before. While short codes can be used for limited two-way conversational chats (such as confirming an appointment with 'YES'), the most common implementation for short codes is still primarily one-way communication. Keyword autoresponders provide automated responses, like "Reply HELP to get more information."

Due to short codes being, short, they are a limited resource. To acquire a short code, an applicant must first lease a code, either random or premium (you choose the sequence, depending on availability), for three months and paid in advance as long as a year. As a result, they are the most expensive number types in the industry, costing a minimum of \$500 and as much as \$1000 per month, on top of carrier fees and per-message send fees. If you stop paying the rent, the short code is returned and someone else is free to pick up that vanity short code that spells your business name.

The advantage of spending the extra costs to utilize a short code is that you are using a "sanctioned" channel for sending business text messaging if your campaign is approved. Therefore, there is very little reason your messages would be blocked, provided the messages you send are in line with your approved campaign—if not, you'd be fined, and your code would be blocked. Another benefit of short codes is that handset delivery receipts are available. You get confirmation if your messages were received by their intended handsets or if something went wrong. Finally, short codes were designed for high-throughput message delivery, giving businesses massive message-per-second (MPS) send rates for campaigns reaching millions of subscribers.



Toll-free—The convenient campaigner

Although it's been around for several years now, toll-free messaging is sometimes mistaken for being less reliable than short codes, and it's even still unknown to many businesses that their toll-free numbers can be text-enabled. In reality, the industry's dark horse is toll-free messaging, bringing high-throughput message delivery and handset delivery receipts in a sanctioned business text messaging channel. And take note! Toll-free verification will be required for all traffic on September 30,

2022 (and is currently required for any new traffic—that requirement became official on May 15, 2022). Verification offers improved deliverability rates and quicker resolutions to blocked traffic for those businesses with qualifying use cases.

Businesses have utilized toll-free numbers for decades to allow users to avoid high fees when making a call to a business, and now they are practically synonymous with the "corporate



phone line.” As a result, they’re ideal for conversational messaging because they give the impression that a business representative is on the other end. In addition, they can be voice-enabled (if they aren’t already), allowing users to escalate to a phone call directly from their message inbox. They can, of course, be used primarily for one-way messaging and not be voice-enabled. Still, with today’s people-centric customer service focus, it’s good to make sure the phone line goes to a recording or forwards to your main business phone line, so users aren’t confused if they call.

Since toll-free numbers are assigned to a business, usually at least \$1 per line, toll-free numbers are an extremely cost-effective alternative to short codes, especially if you already have a number that’s been in use by

your business for years. Also, more toll-free numbers are available because they rely on more digits than short codes. Until recently, toll-free messages were also absent wireless carrier fees, but that has since changed and will likely continue to evolve.

However, the extra fees are worth it as the benefits of toll-free messaging outweigh the costs. Toll-free messaging is also enabled for handset delivery receipts (“DLRs”), providing the same delivery intelligence and insights as short codes. With handset DLRs, high throughput availability, and a near-real-time launch, toll-free is a worthy competitor to short codes and an excellent choice for business text messaging.



Local 10DLC—A local presence

As text messaging became more and more attractive for B2C interactions, messaging providers found a way to enable messaging on local phone numbers and landlines. Still, the wireless carriers didn’t fully sanction the use of local numbers for business purposes.

Carriers wanted a way to distinguish between person-to-person messaging traffic, like texting with your friends, and business text messaging traffic using local numbers. So, among other things, volumetric filters were put in place to identify the sending patterns of companies versus humans. Still, some messaging providers found ways to circumvent those filters by using bad practices like phone number cycling and snowshoeing, where a large pool of numbers is used to spread out traffic. Enter: sanctioned business text messaging using local phone numbers called 10DLC.

10DLC is used by businesses that need to show their locality, such as a realtor with the same area code as the clients they serve. The use case for 10DLC is generally two-way conversational messaging, even when promoting your business or answering questions to complete a sale. Users will expect a person to respond to them and often reply to messages sent on 10DLC with questions or comments, making it ideal for more personalized messaging interactions.

Local numbers are inexpensive, but the carrier fees associated with 10DLC vary. Some carriers charge a flat fee to send on 10DLC, whereas others implement a fee scale based on whether or not a campaign has been registered. While the campaign management process is not as involved as what you experience with short codes, campaign vetting is generally required to qualify for better rates and message throughput from mobile carriers and is expected to become required. Campaign registration may include additional fees, making 10DLC second to short code in the breadth of campaign registration fees and requirements.



[Find out more about carrier fees here](#)

10DLC has some critical drawbacks to note. Handset DLRs are not enabled on local numbers, meaning businesses may only know that their messaging provider sent their message but not whether it was blocked or failed on the recipient end. . Businesses only find out they are experiencing deliverability issues when a problem is identified via customer complaints—not ideal for a positive customer experience.

What makes 10DLC unique is there is no way to measure performance and proactively correct issues. In contrast, short codes and toll-free messaging provide visibility that allows businesses to take corrective action almost immediately.



Let's compare!



SHORT CODE
750-93



TOLL-FREE NUMBER
1-800-848-7566



LOCAL 10DLC
252-903-1375

Volume limits	Virtually unlimited messages per second (mps)	Virtually unlimited messages per second (mps)	A max. of 60 mps depending on campaign approvals
Registration type	Direct carrier campaign registration	Toll-free verification *will be required as of September 30, 2022*	Registration via The Campaign Registry (TCR)
Voice-enabled?	No	Yes	Yes
MMS	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time to market	Minimum 4-6 week approval process involving all carriers	2-4 day approval process	1-week approval process
Carrier surcharges?	Yes	Yes	Yes (A2P) No (P2P)
Cost	\$\$\$	\$\$	\$\$



Do all of these messaging rules and fees have you concerned about reaching your customers? (Don't forget about voice!) Check out our [consumer preferences survey](#) to learn how they like to be contacted (spoiler: they still want to be called).



Price increases continue

With new carrier rulings and fees, the industry is changing as we speak. And with all that comes added costs for comms suppliers and their customers. But where does that leave us? Well, we must get some context here.

In 2015, that changed with a petition to the FCC, which argued wireless messaging should be classified as a ‘telecommunications service.’ That petition forced a decision on the classification of messages.

The FCC rejected the petition, putting SMS and MMS firmly in the information services box. The rationale was that SMS and MMS are more akin to the instant messaging you get on Instagram, Snapchat, etc, than a telephone call, so you don’t have to adhere to the stricter regulations of a telecommunications product.

P2P—A system not fit for purpose

In the past, carrier surcharges haven’t had much of an impact in the broader industry, but costs have steadily increased, and new ones have been introduced in the last few years.

Even since 2020, the average cost of a 10DLC SMS message has doubled, and toll-free messages now come with a \$.003 surcharge. So why the added expenses? It comes down to new mobile carrier systems, cleanliness, and a change in the way messages get sent.

In the past, P2P messaging was simple—one person sending messages to another. But with A2P technologies like 10DLC, Short-code, and toll-free, that wasn’t the case. So now businesses were using one or several numbers to send thousands and sometimes millions of messages in minutes.

The problem is that this A2P traffic was (till recently) using the identical network setups as P2P. Like trying to send too many cars down a single lane—with such high volumes, something needed to change.

This rejection might not seem like a big deal, but what happened, as a result, rocked the entire telco space. Why did the FCC decide this? There are a lot of unknowns. But, this decision has given the wireless carriers more control over the ecosystem. This is why we continue to get new and increasing “access fees.”

All providers want to keep messaging a practical option for businesses and consumers. Consumers need to retain trust in the SMS channel as being relatively free of unwanted or spam messages. Unwanted business calls have been a challenge for communications providers to combat, and as a result, there has been increasing regulation intended to stem the problem. This regulation is something mobile carriers have looked to avoid with messaging. Instead, they have created their own systems, requirements, and fees for businesses to send messages to their mobile subscribers.

Campaign registration, volumetric filtering, and spam filtering make up the ever-lengthening list of strategies wireless carriers and others use to control and monitor business text messaging. And with those strategies, plus a change in network management, there are some added costs.




Data-driven messaging

In 2017, the world’s most valuable resource changed from oil to data. Understanding consumer experience, much more than price, is what more and more businesses find makes a big difference to their bottom line.

So with SMS being the [#1 channel for time-bound informational and wanted promotional communications](#), the need for messaging data has skyrocketed in the past few years and is only increasing.

troubleshooting efforts. Knowing message status in real-time, troubleshooting those with errors quickly, and understanding historical trends are no longer nice to have but a need to have.

Understanding message deliverability is now critical to a successful customer engagement strategy. Lack of transparency and control can lead to undelivered messages, frustrated consumers, and time-consuming

 [Maximize your ROI using real-time insights with Bandwidth](#)

Business text messaging best practices

The CTIA

The CTIA is an association representing the wireless industry and other communications providers based in Washington, D.C. Bandwidth is a member of the CTIA. The CTIA’s controlling members are primarily representatives from the major wireless telecom companies. Part of the CTIA’s stated mission is to ‘Convene the industry to tackle our most difficult challenges and coordinate voluntary best practices and initiatives.’ The CTIA aims to gain consensus on best practices that set the tone and expected behavior throughout the communications industry.

The most recent iteration of the [CTIA’s Messaging Principles & Best Practices](#), released in July 2019, can be found here. In addition, the CTIA has 12 major guidelines that the wireless industry uses to deliver a consistent experience for consumers, which you can read [here](#).

The big 3: important reminders about messaging

Are you a business sending messages to consumers for any use case? If yes, you are sending application-to-person (A2P) messages, and the CTIA guidelines should be followed to ensure the best possible chance of delivery. The most important ones to follow are:



Consent management (Opt-in/Opt-out) best practices

Arguably the most important one to adhere to as the TCPA law protects consumers from unwanted communications. Make sure to keep track of user consent in your CRM or another method if there is ever a dispute.



Avoid number cycling and snowshoeing

Using techniques like these to avoid carrier fees and filters when attempting to reach users is a surefire way to end up fined, blocked, or even blacklisted.



Identify yourself and regularly include program reminders

One of the best ways to avoid being misidentified as spam is always to have your business or program name at the top of the message content and provide recurring reminders for STOP and HELP keywords.



Below is an extract from the CTIA Guidelines of the Types of Messaging Content and Associated Consent Principles

Conversational messaging	Informational messaging	Promotional messaging
<p>Conversational messaging is a back-and-forth conversation that takes place via text. For example, if a Consumer texts a business first and responds quickly with a single message, it is likely conversational. On the other hand, no additional permission is expected if the Consumer initiates the conversation and the business simply responds.</p>	<p>Informational messaging is when a Consumer gives their phone number to a business and asks to be contacted in the future. Appointment reminders, welcome texts, and alerts fall into this category because the first text sent by the business fulfills the Consumer's request. A Consumer needs to agree to receive texts for a specific informational purpose when they give the business their mobile number.</p>	<p>Promotional messaging is a message sent that contains a sales or marketing promotion. Adding a call-to-action (e.g., a coupon code to an informational text) may place the message in the promotional category. Before a business sends promotional messages, the Consumer should agree in writing to receive promotional texts. Businesses that already ask Consumers to sign forms or submit contact information can add a field to capture the Consumer's consent.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first message is only sent by a Consumer• Two-way conversation• Message responds to a specific request	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First message is sent by the Consumer or business• One-way alert or two-way conversation• Message contains information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First message is sent by the business• One-way alert• Message promotes a brand, product, or service• Prompts Consumer to buy something, go somewhere, or otherwise take action
<p>Implied consent If the Consumer initiates the text message exchange and the business only responds to each Consumer with relevant information, no verbal or written permission is expected.</p>	<p>Expressed consent The Consumer should give express permission before a business sends them a text message. Consumers may permit text, on a form, on a website, or verbally. Consumers may also give written permission.</p>	<p>Express written consent The Consumer should give express written permission before a business sends them a text message. Consumers may sign a form, check a box online, or otherwise provide consent to receive promotional text messages. (Consent for text promotions should never be required to obtain a product or service.)</p>



Business text message examples & templates

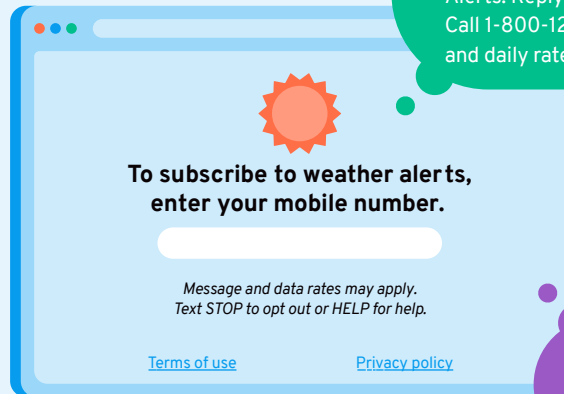
Getting business messages delivered isn't as simple as pressing send. There are best practices to follow and user consent requirements that should be present for every messaging program. This section looks at a few examples of business text messaging in action, done right.

Recurring message programs

Web advertisement and service messages

Opt-out message

"You have opted out of Weather Alerts and will receive no further messages."



Opt-in confirmation message

"You're now subscribed to daily Weather Alerts. Reply STOP to cancel at any time. Call 1-800-123-456 for support. Message and daily rates may apply."

Help message

"Contact us at 1-800-123-4567 with questions about Weather Alerts."

Advertisement

Although opt-out instructions are not required on the advertisement itself, they must appear in the terms and conditions.

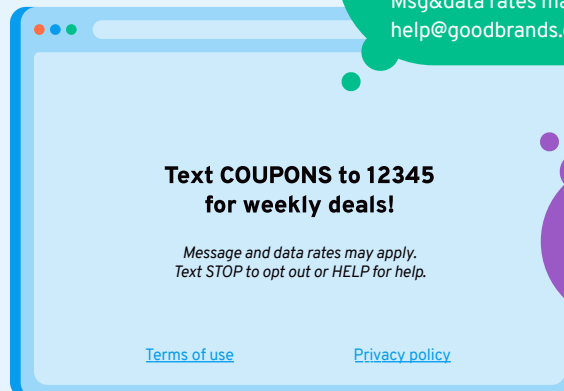
Terms & Conditions

Complete terms and conditions should include customer care contact information; complete opt-out instructions; a recurring message disclosure, a product description and a program (brand) name. Some program types (e.g., sweepstakes) have additional requirements carrier by carrier.

Web keyword advertisement and service messages

Opt-out message

"You're opted out and will no longer receive Good Brands deal alerts."



Opt-in confirmation message

"You're now subscribed to weekly deal alerts from Good Brands! Reply STOP to cancel. Msg&data rates may appl. Contact help@goodbrands.com for customer support."

Help message

"For Good Brands weekly deal alerts support, email help@goodbrands.com or call 1-888-123-4557."



T.V. advertisement and service messages

Opt-in confirmation message

"You're now receive special offers from Good Brands! Reply STOP to opt-out. Email help@goodbrands.com with questions. Msg&Data rates may apply."

Opt-out message

"Good Brands. You will receive no further messages from short code 12345."

Sign up for Good Brands special offers!

Text OFFERS to 12345 for ongoing offer alerts.

*Message and data rates may apply.
Text STOP to opt out or HELP for help.
Go to offers.com/terms for privacy and terms.*

Help message

"Good Brands Special Offers. Email help@goodbrands.com or call 1-888-123-4567 for support."

Advertisement

Although opt-out instructions are not required on the advertisement itself, they must appear in the terms and conditions.

Terms & Conditions

Complete terms and conditions should include customer care contact information; complete opt-out instructions; a recurring message disclosure, a product description and a program (brand) name. Some program types (e.g., sweepstakes) have additional requirements carrier by carrier.

Non-marketing opt-in and service messages

Opt-in confirmation message

"Doctor Message thanks you for enrolling! You'll now receive appointment reminders. Text HELP for help. Reply STOP to cancel. Msg&Data Rates May Apply."

Out-out message

"You are now opted out of Doctor Message appointment reminders. You will receive no further messages."

Want to sign up for appointment reminder texts? We'll send you an opt-in message. Message and data rates may apply.

Help message

"Email help@doctormessage.com for support with appointment reminders service. Reply STOP to cancel."

Recurring-Messages Appointment Reminder

Service representative records customer's request for messages and customer's phone number. Program terms and conditions, including complete opt-out information, and privacy policy are available from the representative.



Point of sale advertisement and service messages

Opt-in confirmation message

"You're subscribed to Good Brand sale alerts! Msg&data rates may apply. Reply STOP to opt out. Contact help@goodbrands.com with questions."

Opt-out message

"You're opted out and will no longer receive Good Brand sale alerts."

To receive periodic Good Brand sale alert messages, enter your mobile number:

SIGN UP

Message and data rates may apply.

Text STOP to opt out or HELP for help. Visit website.com/sms for privacy and terms info.

Help message

"For Good Brands sale alerts support, email help@goodbrands.com or call 1-888-123-4567."

Hard copy advertisement and service messages

Opt-in confirmation message

"You're now subscribed to receive Best Realty weekly open house alerts. Msg&data rates may apply. Text STOP to opt out. Text HELP for more info."

Opt-out message

"You're opted out of open house alerts and will no longer receive messages from Best Realty."



Best Realty Sign-In Form

Please enter your name and mobile number to receive weekly open house alerts.

Name

Mobile number

Message and data rates may apply.

Go to website.com/sms for privacy and terms info. Text STOP to opt out and HELP for help.

Help message

"For Best Realty open house alerts help, email help@bestrealty.com or call 1-888-123-4567."

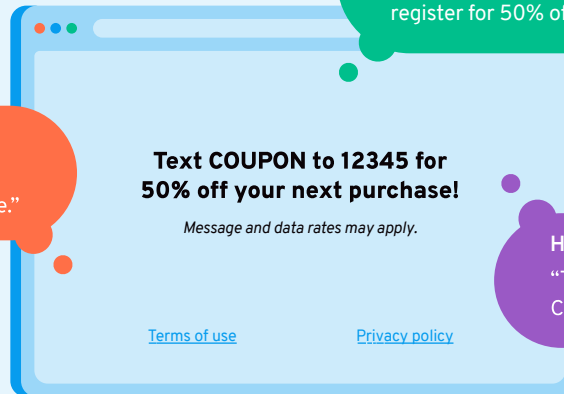


Single message programs

Web advertisement and service messages

Opt-out message

"Coupon King: You will receive no further message."



Opt-in confirmation message

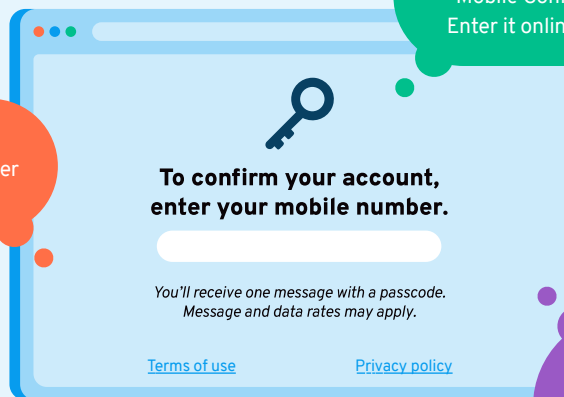
"Coupon King: Show this text at the register for 50% off your next purchase."

Help message

"Thanks for texting Coupon King! Call 1-800-123-4567 for support."

Opt-out message

"Mobile Confirm. You will receive no further messages from short code 12345."



Opt-in confirmation message

"Mobile Confirm: Your passcode is 9876. Enter it online to confirm your account."

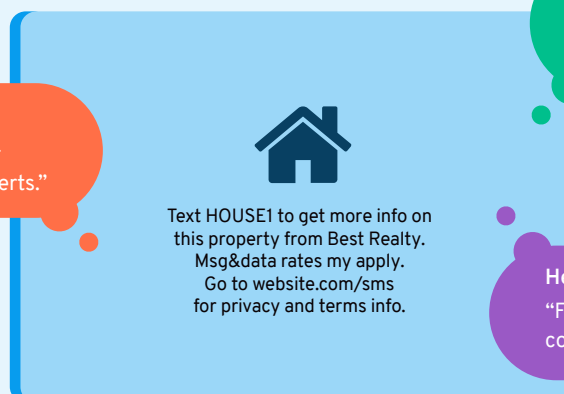
Help message

"You recently created or modified an account online. Enter your passcode to confirm. Call 1-800-123-4567 for Mobile Confirm support."

Print advertisement and service messages

Opt-out message

"You're opted out and will no longer receive Best Realty property info alerts."



Opt-in confirmation message

"Best Realty: Go to bestrealty.com/house1 for more info on this property."

Help message

"For Best Realty property info help, contact smshelp@bestrealty.com."



Verbal opt-in and service messages

Opt-in confirmation message

"Reminder: Your flight leaves tomorrow at 4:05 PM from Gate 1."

Would you like a one-time reminder of your upcoming flight? We'll text the mobile number you provide with the flight status 24 hours before your scheduled departure. Message and data rates may apply. You can visit our website at flights.com/sms for privacy and terms information.

Opt-out message

You are now opted out and will receive no further Flight Reminder messages."

Help message

"For assistance with Flight Reminder messages, call 1-888-4567."

Verbal opt-in and service messages

Opt-in confirmation message

"A spot just opened up on the Lifetime Trip waiting list. Contact your travel agent to sign up today!"

Opt-out message

"You're now opted out and will no longer receive Lifetime Trip wait list alerts."

Lifetime Trip Enrollment Form

Enter your name and mobile number to receive a one-time alert when a spot opens up on our waiting list.

Name

Mobile number

*Message and data rates may apply.
Go to website.com/sms for privacy and terms info.*

Help message

"For Lifetime Trip waiting list help, call 1-888-123-4567."

Hardcopy opt-in and service messages

Opt-in confirmation message

"For a copy of your receipt, click here: shorturl.com/eu38re8w."

Opt-out message

"For opted out and won't receive any more Store Receipt messages."

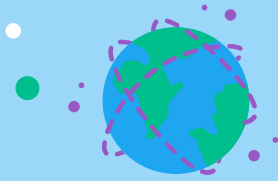
To receive a message with a link to your receipt, enter your mobile number:

SIGN UP

*Message and data rates may apply.
Visit website.com/sms for privacy and terms info.*

Help message

"For Store Receipt help, call 1-888-123- 4567."



SECTION 2

International texting for businesses

While sending and receiving SMS messages in the U.S. can almost be taken for granted thanks to its prevalence, international texting presents some unique challenges. For example, fees, regulations, and even technical limitations on number types vary by country and by the carrier within the country, and there are over 1,400 carriers to consider.

Think about how complex business text messaging in the U.S. is. Now apply that to every country, big or small, globally. So instead of detailing every nuance in this guide, here are some things you should know about what goes on behind the scenes of international business text messaging.





One-way messaging

The most significant discrepancy for international business text messaging is when considering one-way communication instead of two-way. The global texting landscape is ideal for one-way communication such as notifications or promotions. However, the design of one-way messaging internationally is counterintuitively simple compared to what we're used to. Unlike the U.S., which requires phone numbers or short codes, certain countries allow the use of different types of sender identification altogether: Alphanumeric Sender IDs.

Alphanumeric Sender ID—In reality, this can be broken down into both Numeric and Alpha Sender IDs, as some countries have restrictions on one or the other. An entirely Alpha Sender ID registration, i.e., "SENDER NAME," might be required, but a Numeric Sender ID is allowed in some cases. Depending on the carrier (yes carrier, not country), the technical support for Alpha vs. Numeric Sender IDs will vary. It's common to see that A2P messaging use cases, like notifications or promotions, must be sent from a registered Sender ID and do not support two-way messaging. If your business requires two-way messaging, you'll need a virtual mobile phone number or a registered short code, even more complex.

Two-way messaging

For use cases that require two-way messaging, like an outbound text message that requires a reply, local mobile virtual numbers are needed. However, these numbers can be challenging to obtain and require wireless number authority where messages are exchanged. For example, suppose you want to enable patient appointment notifications in France, where patients reply to confirm their appointment. In that case, you'll need a French long virtual number that is mobile—and for that, you'll need a messaging partner who can provide that number for you.

Local Virtual Mobile Number—When sending international SMS from businesses, we almost always hear, "I need two-way messaging internationally." However, numbering authority and A2P messaging rules differ from country to country. Unlike the U.S., sending from a local number is not always an option. In many countries, virtual mobile numbers are restricted to person-to-person interactions only, with strict throughput limits (like ½ mps). They are also not even available in every country (only 20 countries allow virtual mobile numbers).

Regulations

Similar to the CTIA, the GSM Association (GSMA) is the international industry organization representing the interests of mobile network operators (carriers). The GSMA performs a similar role to the CTIA in the U.S. They help provide generally accepted guidelines and standards for carriers to follow, but they have no governing power to enforce those standards.

International regulations can get very complicated, as each country has a different outlook on what should and should not be regulated. On top of this, political and economic unions can affect which countries are regulated under laws applicable to that territory. For example, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), applies to all member states of the European Union (EU) and has inspired similar data protection laws worldwide.

Alternatives to A2P

International messaging is complicated even between residents. With the complex nature of international A2P messaging, businesses have begun to look to the same alternatives that people use to communicate within and outside country lines.

As SMS can be cost-prohibitive in some countries, over-the-top (OTT) messaging applications that rely on data to exchange messages have grown to be the primary messaging platform of choice in some countries outside the U.S.

So if you're looking for a better customer experience with 2-way communication internationally, these platforms can offer a low-cost solution with low friction when it comes to adoption.

On the other hand, while these applications offer the media-rich experiences of SMS and MMS, they don't come pre-programmed on mobile devices and can't send messages to anyone outside the app; this can limit their usage to smartphone users with no data access. But depending on your use case and market, this could be a minor issue.



SECTION 3

How to choose a business texting service provider

Here are some considerations and questions to answer when making your decision and red flags you might be experiencing that signal it's time to reconsider your current provider. In an industry that's changing as rapidly as business text messaging, it's critical to have a partner that can inform you and advocate for you.



WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A PROVIDER	WHAT TO AVOID IN A PROVIDER
The provider offers transparent industry update information with in-depth explanations of changes	Withholds or only provides industry information via support documentation without any explanation
The dedicated human point of contact to ask questions and consult on messaging/business strategy	No dedicated point of contact and no planning for strategies that align with your business needs
Interested in co-creation and a true partnership that benefits both of you, integrating your feedback into their product roadmap	Product direction and development indicate they may be competing against you or have conflicts with your business
Practices what they preach, following stated best industry guidelines	Does not follow stated best industry guidelines
Proactively works to identify and resolve issues before they become problems/before they impact your business	Requires you to put in support tickets for issues that are affecting your business
Advocates across the Messaging ecosystem on your behalf	Forces a one-size-fits-all support model without recognizing your unique business challenges

In summary, you want someone with expertise, relationships with carriers, and experience in the messaging space.

And, with 20+ years as a carrier and a seat at the industry table—providing guidance on the CTIA Messaging Best Practices and approached by Google to be one of the first to market with Verified SMS—that’s Bandwidth.

We have earned respect and trust of some of the largest technology companies in the world. We are ready to earn yours.

To learn more, visit bandwidth.com/talk-to-an-expert

