

RCS business messaging has landed



Everything you need to know about the rich messaging standard

After years of hype, Rich Communication Services (RCS) business messaging is gaining real momentum. Early-adopter companies have been delivering rich, app-like experiences to customers – all via their messaging inboxes. And at OpenMarket, we’ve been lucky enough to be a part of this pioneering work.

Even more excitingly, these CX first-movers are [seeing engagement and sales metrics soar](#). Turns out the reach of mobile messaging combined with images, photos, video and interactive buttons kills SMS on the metrics front.

RCS is helping these businesses optimize customer interactions too. It’s all thanks to the wide range of interaction data they’re able to analyze – from read receipts to engagement tracking.

RCS, powered by indigo

OpenMarket’s multi-channel messaging platform, indigo, and its global mobile messaging network lets enterprises and other messaging vendors take advantage of RCS business messaging. No infrastructure required.

And there’s no need to wait until every mobile operator and handset accepts RCS. We ensure every RCS message sent to an incompatible phone reverts to an SMS format. If you already have an automated text messaging system in place, you’re ready to upgrade now.

We can also automatically transform a message from RCS Universal Profile 2 (the new version of RCS) to Universal Profile 1 (its predecessor). This means older RCS phones also get an enhanced experience over SMS. Simple.

The data is already in – 2 early case studies

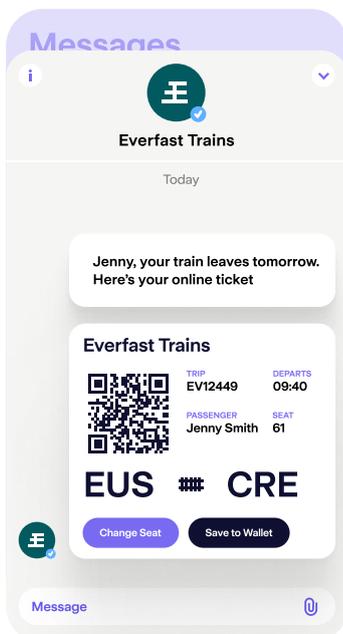
In 2018, Virgin Trains partnered with Vodafone and OpenMarket to become the world's first company to launch an RCS communications program on a commercial basis.

RCS messages were sent to customers' smartphones 10 minutes before their arrival into London's Euston Station. They contained updates for underground train services, complete with buttons for more detailed information. Customers loved them. At the time of writing, everyone who reviewed the service awarded it a five-star rating. Not a single customer chose to opt out.

Also in 2018, global sandwich giant Subway teamed up with mobile comms specialist Mobivity – an OpenMarket partner – to test RCS for customer promotions. The team sent one group of customers two offers via SMS, then sent another group the same two offers via RCS. The wording for the offers matched exactly, but the branded RCS version included interactive buttons and product images.

The conversion rate was an incredible 140% higher than SMS for a two-sandwich deal offer, and 51% higher for a \$20 meal deal.

Check out the case study [here](#).



RCS features

RCS business messaging includes a broad set of app-like features.

- **Verified sender**
ensuring the message is not spoofed
- **Custom branding and colors**
so everyone recognizes you
- **Rich media carousels**
send pictures, videos and GIFs in messages
- **Engagement 'buttons'**
so consumers can make a purchase, make a phone call, launch a map, navigate to a web site, vote in a poll, and much more

A treasure trove of insights

Expect delivery and read receipts by default, on-screen event tracking and the ability to define custom call-back data tied to each customer action. Also plug RCS directly into your third-party data sources for powerful insights about your customers. You can then continually test and optimize the experiences you offer.

RCS use cases

Why not kick off with sending simple branded messages? Then move on to design more interactive and valuable interactions, including:

- Calendars with bookable slots for appointments
- Maps for directions
- Tickets, vouchers and coupons
- Boarding passes, terminal maps and visual status updates for flights
- Instruction videos from your support or customer service team
- Buttons that mean customers can tap rather than text a reply

Disrupting apps

RCS is a clear evolution from the simple experience of text messaging. But it's revolutionary in how it will change the way consumers use their smartphones and the apps that live on them.

Apps simply don't suit many businesses and consumers. People don't want to create an account and download an app just to receive tickets for the odd flight, train journey or concert. RCS solves this problem because app-like interactions can be facilitated through the messaging inbox we know so well.

A worldwide rollout is underway

All the major carriers in the UK, US, Japan and Canada have rolled out their RCS offerings, and more are joining them around the globe. Mobile operators everywhere have united around the RCS Universal Profile 2. The profile also has support from Google, Microsoft, Samsung, LG, Huawei, and other major phone manufacturers.

Soon, every new Android phone will accept RCS in the default messages inbox. And every mobile operator globally will support it. Apple is yet to get on board. But in the meantime, any message sent to an Apple device can revert to SMS.



A speedy rollout

Android had an 85% share of shipped smartphones in 2018. Factor in the two-year renewal cycle of smartphones and the buy-in of phone manufacturers. It follows that RCS accessibility will grow fast.

Customers want it

Recent research by OpenMarket reveals that 72% of consumers widely use SMS to communicate with businesses. But they're eager to enjoy richer communication. Four out of five respondents (82%) said they would prefer RCS messaging interactions over SMS. And 79% said they'd feel safer interacting with a business that had verified company branding included within its texts.

Your next step

If you'd like to learn more about SMS and RCS, give us a call. We'd be happy to pass on what we know.

Or [click here](#) to download our RCS ebook.

We are OpenMarket

As an Infobip company, we help the biggest brands in the world use mobile messaging to connect with people in the moments that count. When they need to be helpful and responsive in real time. When customer experience isn't just a buzzword, it's an obsession. We'd love to do the same for you.

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