



EBOOK

Get more from your mobile messaging





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INTRODUCTION

Why now is the time to upgrade to RCS.

Your SMS program works. Messages get delivered, you're reaching customers at scale, and the infrastructure is already in place.

So why change anything?

Rich Communication Services (RCS) gives you the opportunity to get a greater return from your investment by making messages more trusted, interactive, and measurable. The result is a stronger customer experience and increased potential to drive responses, conversions, and retention.

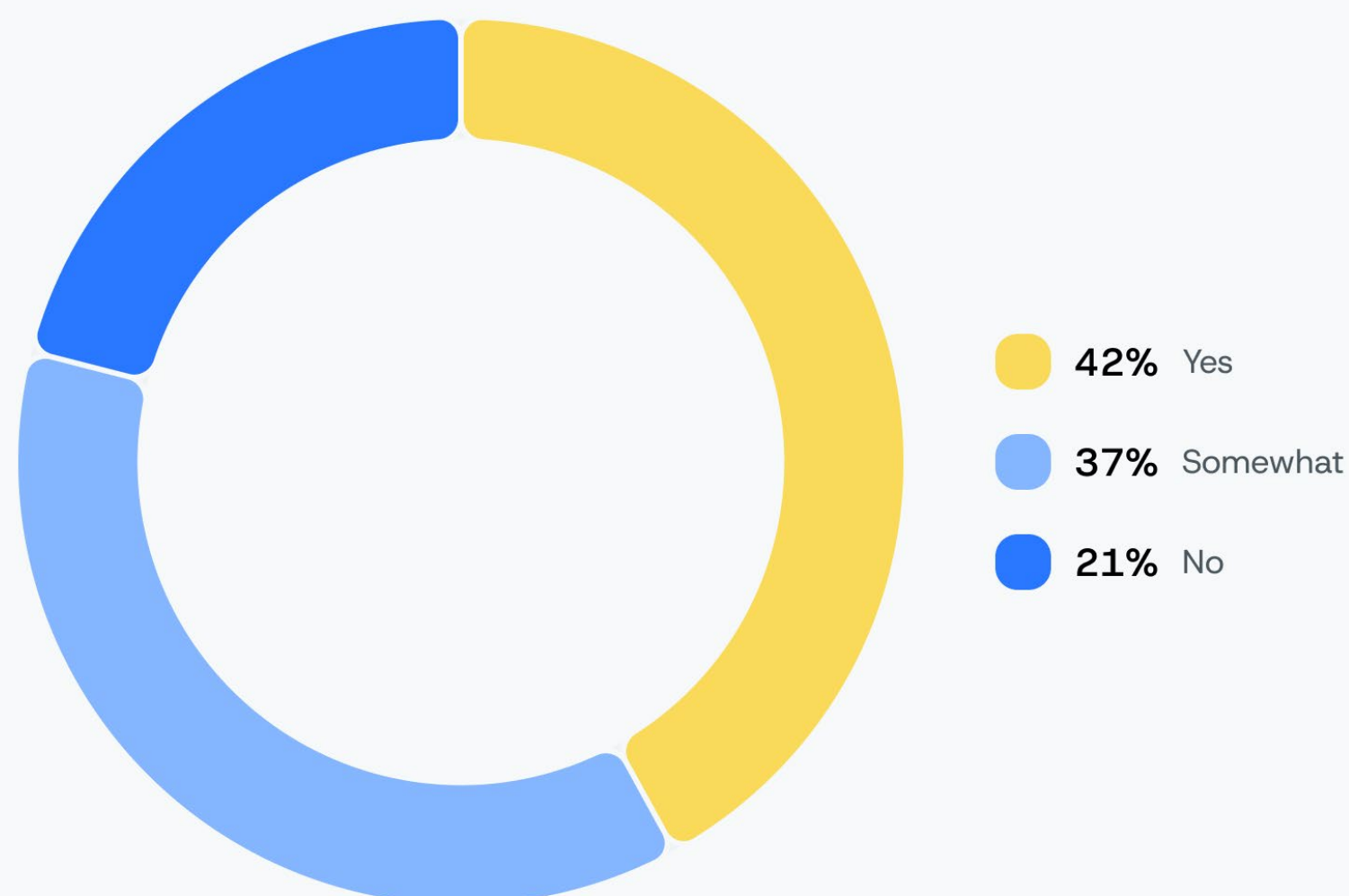
Since you already send SMS with Sinch, the path to RCS may be easier than you think and the benefits of updating are significant.

RCS opens up a brand new world that builds trust with customers while improving the communication experience, making it more memorable and effective.

The trust factor alone is enough to consider making RCS part of your multichannel mix. Every basic business text arrives from a random number or short code – no logo, no brand name, and no way for the recipient to know it's really you.

That matters because trust signals from brands are increasingly important. In Sinch's [The state of customer communications](#) survey, **79% of consumers said logos and verification checkmarks make messages more trustworthy.**

Does a verified message with an official logo and/or checkmark make you more likely to trust it is safe?





That’s credibility your current SMS setup can’t deliver.

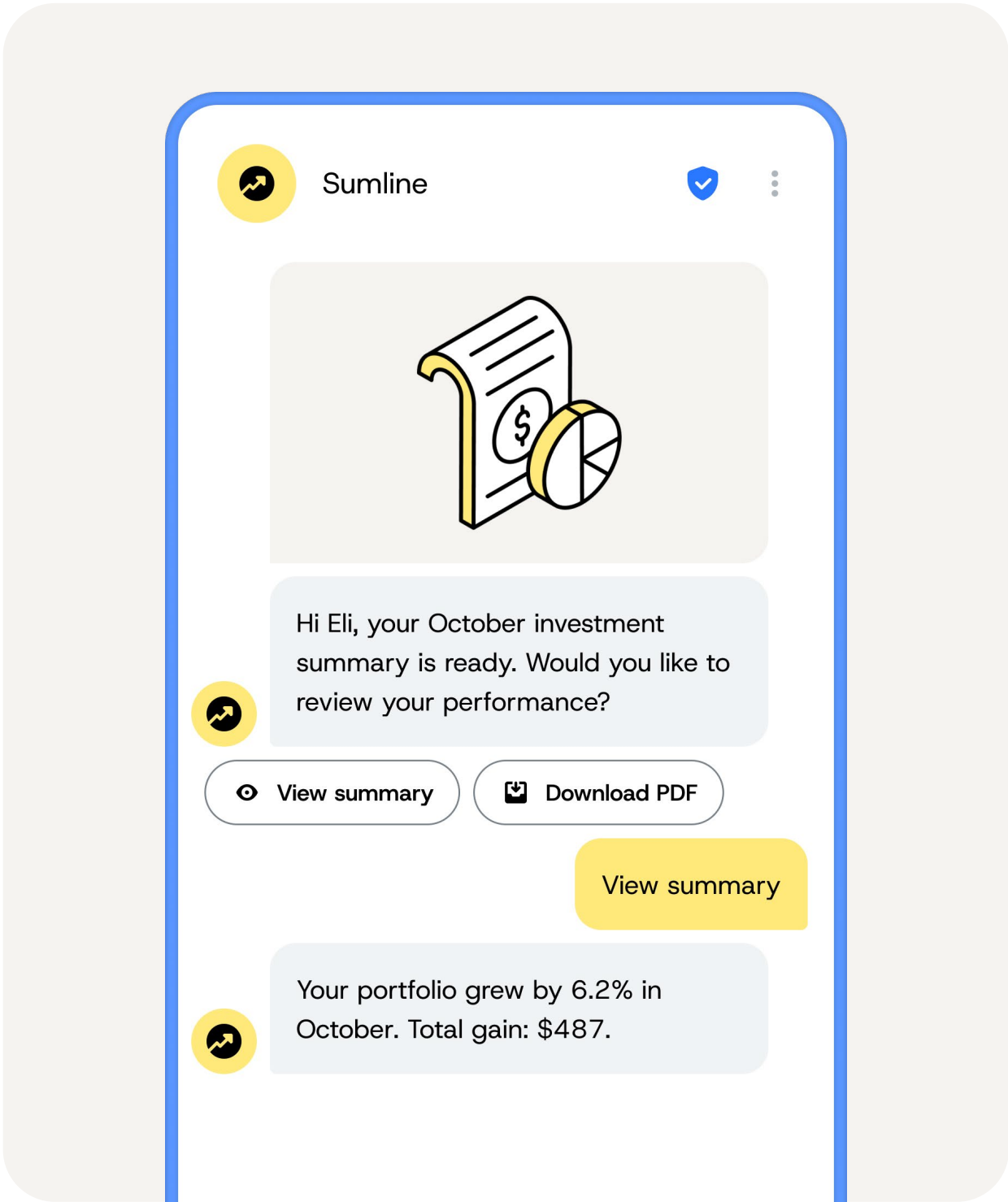
RCS can close that gap without forcing you to start over. Because you already partner with Sinch, you can use the same API and messaging flows, with consistent delivery across supported smartphones. The difference is what your customer sees: a branded, verified sender profile in their native messaging app.

That’s just the beginning. RCS transforms mobile messaging from brands into an interactive app-like experience. Take advantage of features like suggested replies, product carousels, maps, and even the ability to complete a purchase without leaving the native messaging app.

Plus, with RCS, you also get something SMS has never offered. Read receipts, open rates, and proof that recipients actually saw your message.

This guide walks through the straightforward steps and practical benefits of upgrading your SMS messages to RCS. From verified sender trust and stronger security to richer customer experiences and the performance data to back it all up.

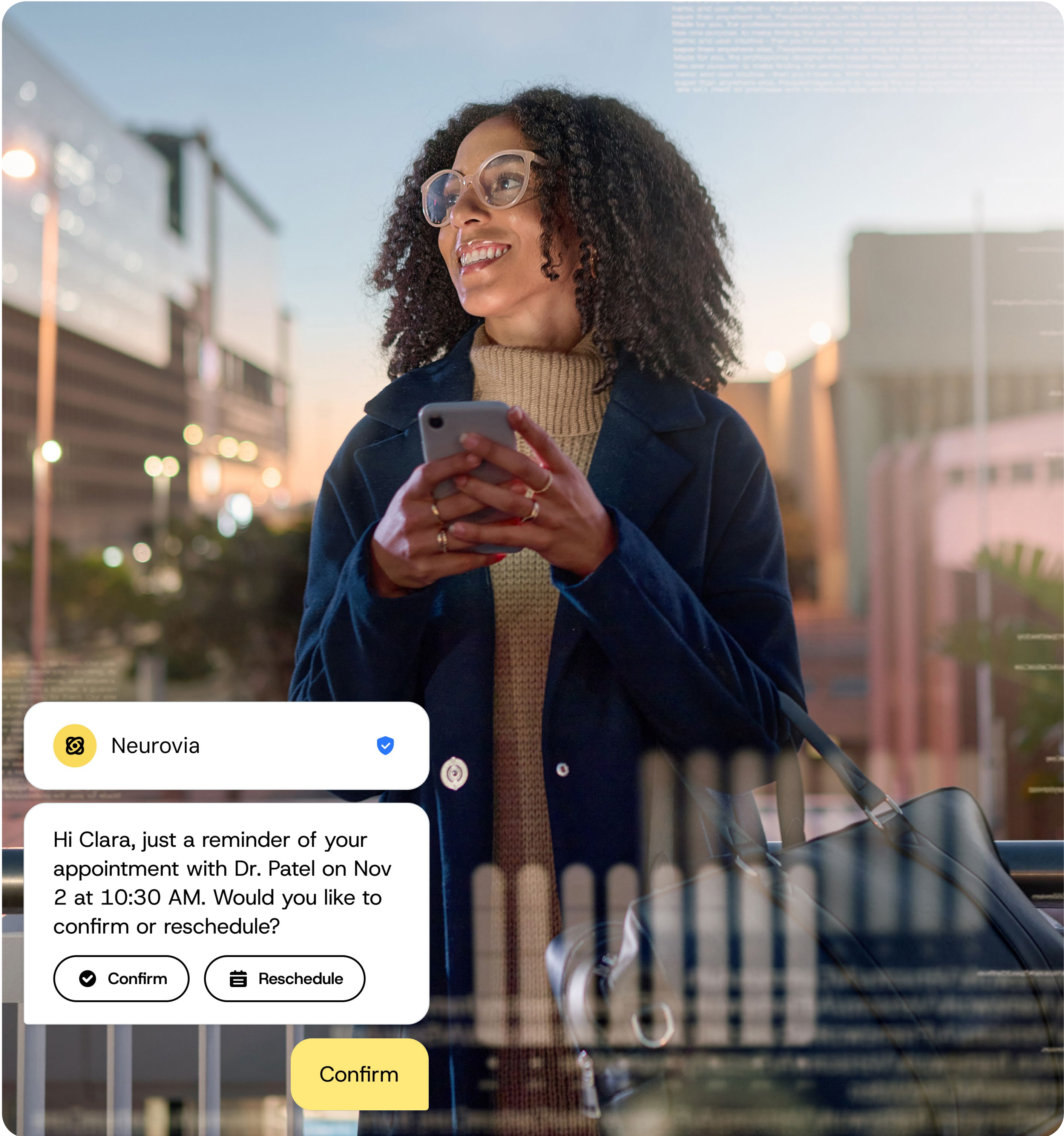
No overhaul required. Start with what you already send.



CHAPTER 1

Branded, verified messaging your customers trust

The trust gap in your messaging inbox





What **your customers see** when you send SMS

Think about a typical SMS message your company sends – a transaction alert, appointment reminder, or maybe a one-time password.

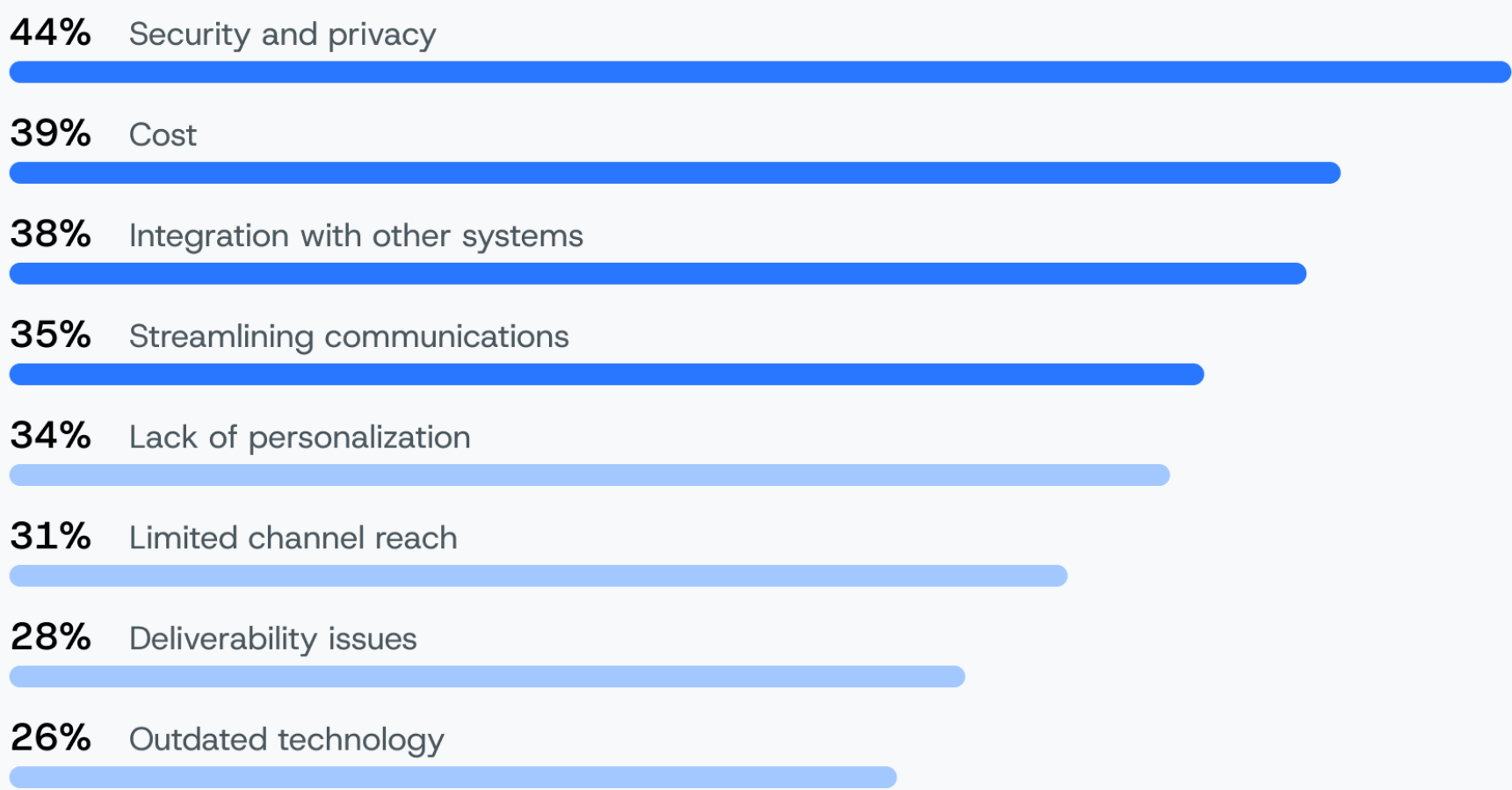
Now think about what your customers actually saw. A string of digits as the sender. No name. No logo. No indication the message came from your brand.

Your customer had to trust the content on faith alone, and that faith is eroding thanks to bad actors.

Phishing incidents via text – sometimes called “smishing” – are a genuine concern. Scammers spoof sender numbers to impersonate brands, including banks, retailers, and logistics companies. The messages look almost identical to yours because it’s difficult to tell the difference in a basic text from a business.

This has brands worried. **44% of business leaders in Sinch’s state of customer communications survey cited security and privacy as a [top communication challenge](#).** The problem shows up in fraud reports, customer complaints, and eroded response rates.

Top customer communication challenges



Source: *The state of customer communications 2025*
sinch.com/state-of-customer-communications/

The brand verification features of RCS make it much harder to spoof. That makes for a safer, more trustworthy mobile messaging environment where customers won’t hesitate to engage.



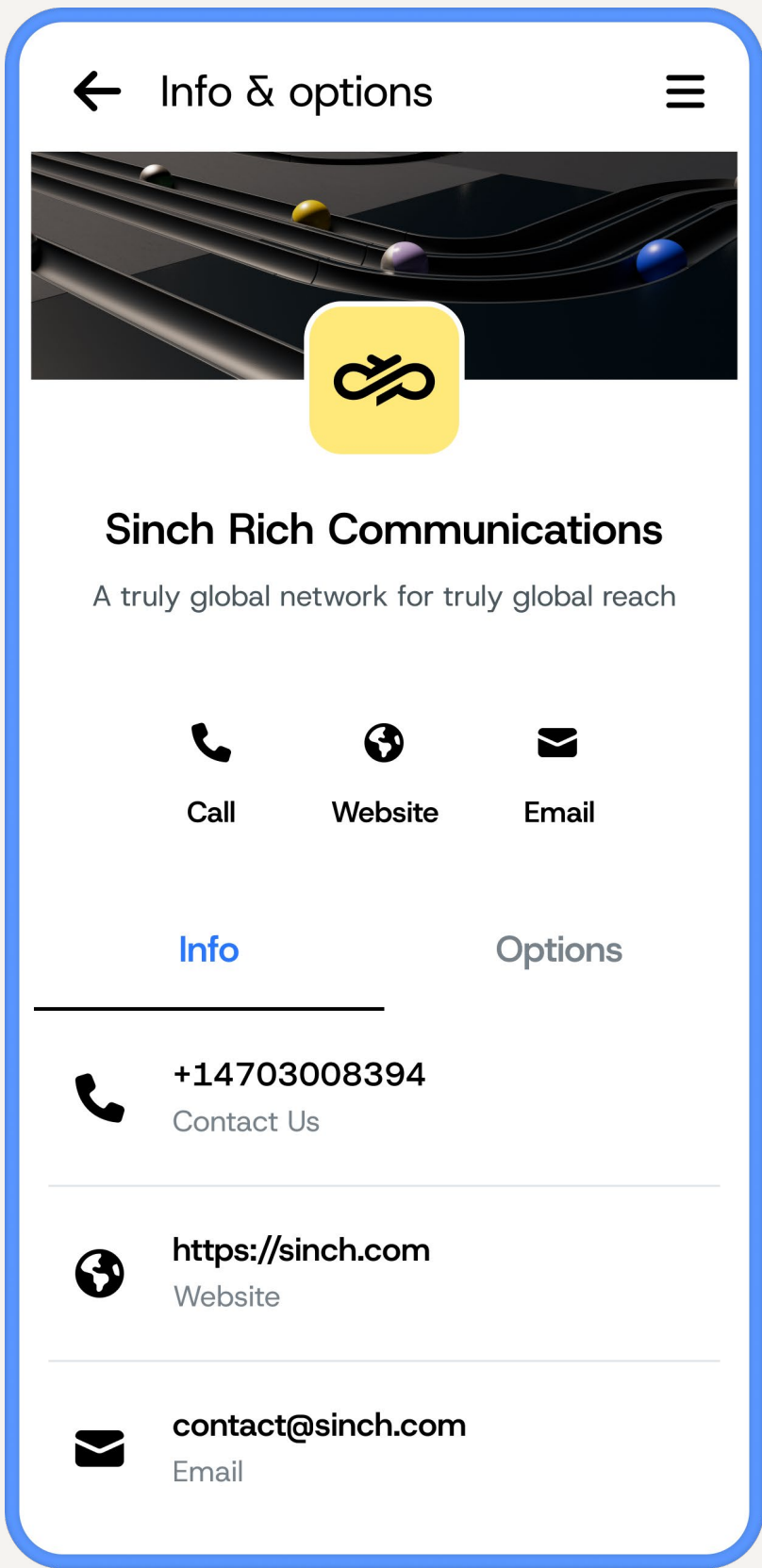
What **your customers see** when you send RCS

RCS changes the first thing your customer notices: who the message comes from.

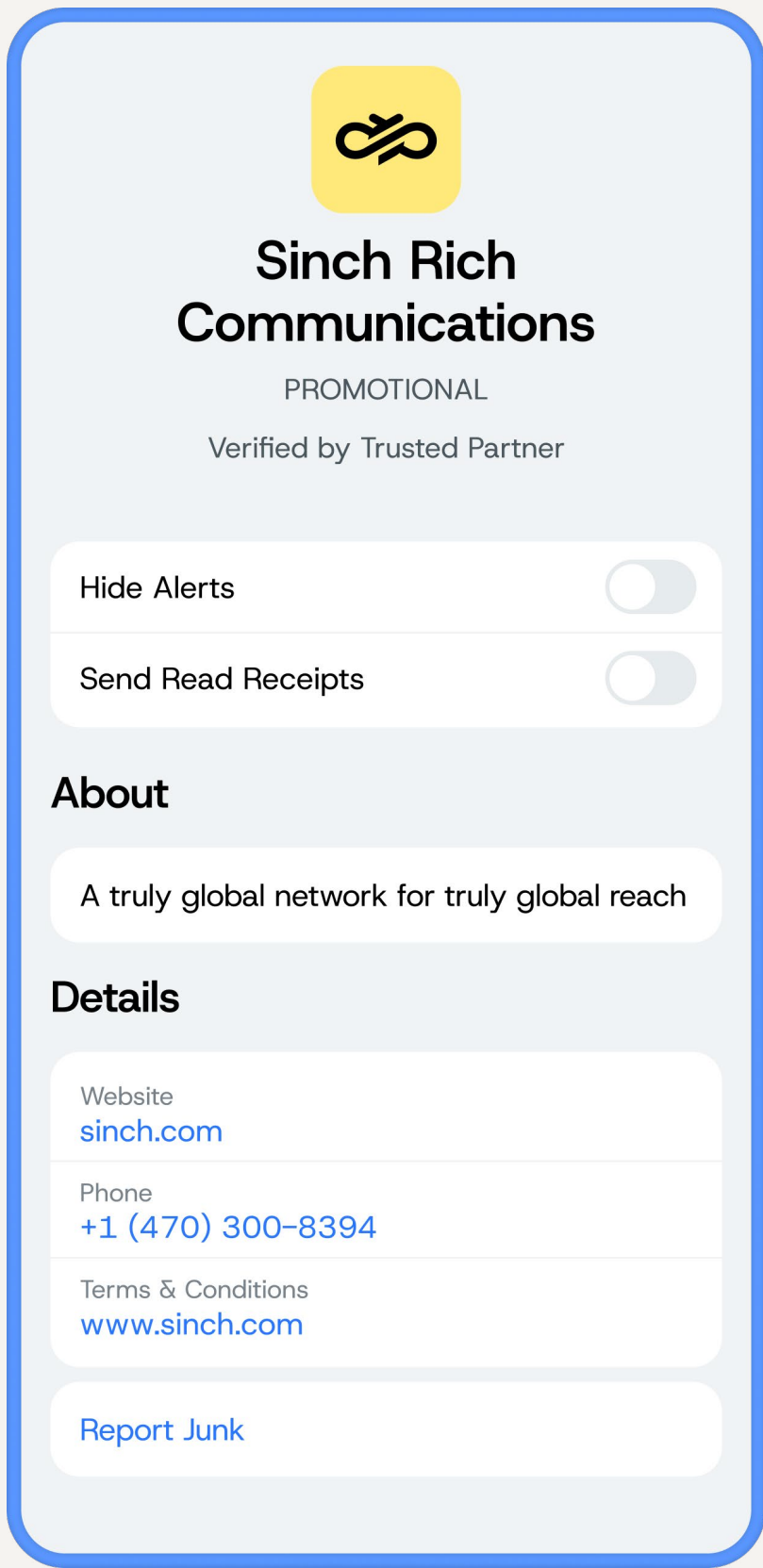
Before they read a single word, they see your brand name, your logo, and a verified checkmark. A short business description sits underneath. Contact details – phone number and website – are one tap away.

That’s possible because every RCS message comes from a verified sender profile called an RCS Agent. It’s what displays brand information in the messaging app. Google, carriers, or both review each agent, ensuring messages always come from a trusted source.

Here’s how that branded experience looks on smartphones. On Android, the brand logo appears in the conversation header alongside the Agent name. On iPhone, the profile displays the Agent name, use case label (such as “Promotional” or “Transactional”), and a “Verified by Trusted Partner” badge.



Android



iPhone

Both versions accomplish the same thing. Your customer knows who they’re hearing from instantly and without question.

That changes how they respond. When a message carries clear branding and verification, recipients open it, read it, and act on it more often. Recipients can see the proof when they open the message.



The numbers behind trust

The potentially positive impacts of RCS with verified sender profiles show up clearly in the opinions of leaders who plan to use it in customer communications.

Among 1,600 business leaders surveyed across healthcare, retail, technology, and financial services, 87% knew about RCS. **Of those, 59% called it game-changing for customer communication in their industry.**



55%

financial services

53%

retail and ecommerce

56%

healthcare

71%

technology and SaaS

48% of business leaders also ranked improved security as one of the three biggest benefits of RCS adoption, making it the top choice. Increased customer engagement (40%) and increased customer trust (37%) weren't far behind.

Meanwhile, 35% of consumers mistakenly believe email is the channel least likely to carry phishing attempts. That misperception highlights a broader gap: customers need more trustworthy communication channels. RCS fills that gap where SMS cannot.

The pattern across the data holds. Customers want to know who messages them and have greater trust in messages that prove their origin.

Businesses that deliver this proof see the difference in engagement and response rates. [Case studies from Sinch](#) and Google show higher click-through rates and stronger customer engagement.

How RCS sender verification works

What is an RCS Agent?

If you send SMS, you're familiar with Sender IDs – short codes or long numbers that identify the source of a message. An RCS Agent serves the same purpose but carries more information.

An Agent functions as your business identity for RCS messaging. It includes:

- ✓ Your brand name
- ✓ Logo
- ✓ Short business description
- ✓ Contact details like phone number and website URL

Once Google and carriers approve the Agent, it becomes the verified profile that customers see in their messaging inbox.

Sinch submits the Agent to Google and/or carriers on your behalf. The approval process confirms your business identity and checks alignment with platform guidelines.

One important distinction: unlike SMS, an RCS Agent has no direct tie to a phone number. You still need a long number or short code for SMS fallback, but the Agent itself operates as a separate, richer identity layer.

You can register and test an Agent in any country, even where RCS hasn't fully launched. Getting set up early means you're ready to go live as coverage expands in your markets.





Choosing the right use case for your Agent

Every RCS Agent must carry a predefined use case at registration, which determines what message types you can and cannot send. Four use case categories exist, each with specific rules that Google enforces. In some markets, individual carriers add their own.

Use case	What you can send	What you can't send	Key consideration
OTP	Authentication, logins, password resets, 2FA codes	Promotions, product notifications, upsells	Single-purpose identity verification only
Transactional	Alerts, reminders, updates, receipts, and OTPs	Offers, discounts, promotional content	Broadest non-marketing option
Promotional	Sales, campaigns, loyalty offers, discount codes	OTPs, time-sensitive transactional messages	Quiet hours apply in some countries
Multi-use	Transactional and promotional combined	OTPs, password resets, 2FA	Opt-out covers all message types on the Agent

One note on multi-use: you can register as multi-use even if you only have one active use case today. But Google requires you to confirm you'll implement the second use case within six months.



One Agent or multiple – how to decide

The answer depends on how your SMS setup works today.

Start by mapping your existing SMS numbers to your planned RCS Agents. Sinch recommends a 1:1 relationship: your OTP short code maps to an OTP Agent, your promotional short code maps to a promotional Agent, and so on.

This keeps fallback logic clean. When an RCS message can't reach the recipient, the system falls back to the SMS number mapped to that Agent. Messy mapping creates messy fallback.

Choose one multi-use Agent if:	Choose separate Agents if:
• Multiple use cases share the same SMS number today • You want all business messages in one customer conversation thread • You can accept the risk that one opt-out covers all message types	• Your use cases already run on different SMS numbers • You want independent opt-out control per message type • You need a dedicated OTP channel with no promotional exposure

You can't delete or remove an RCS Agent after creating it. You can make changes or create/launch additional agents, but the initial structure matters. Take the time to align it with your current messaging architecture before you submit for approval.

The big benefit

RCS helps brands earn trust at first glance because it shows clear brand identity and verification in the inbox. This means a better first impression, more confidence in the channel, and stronger potential for engagement than standard SMS.

CHAPTER 2

Richer experiences without a new app

What SMS and MMS can't do



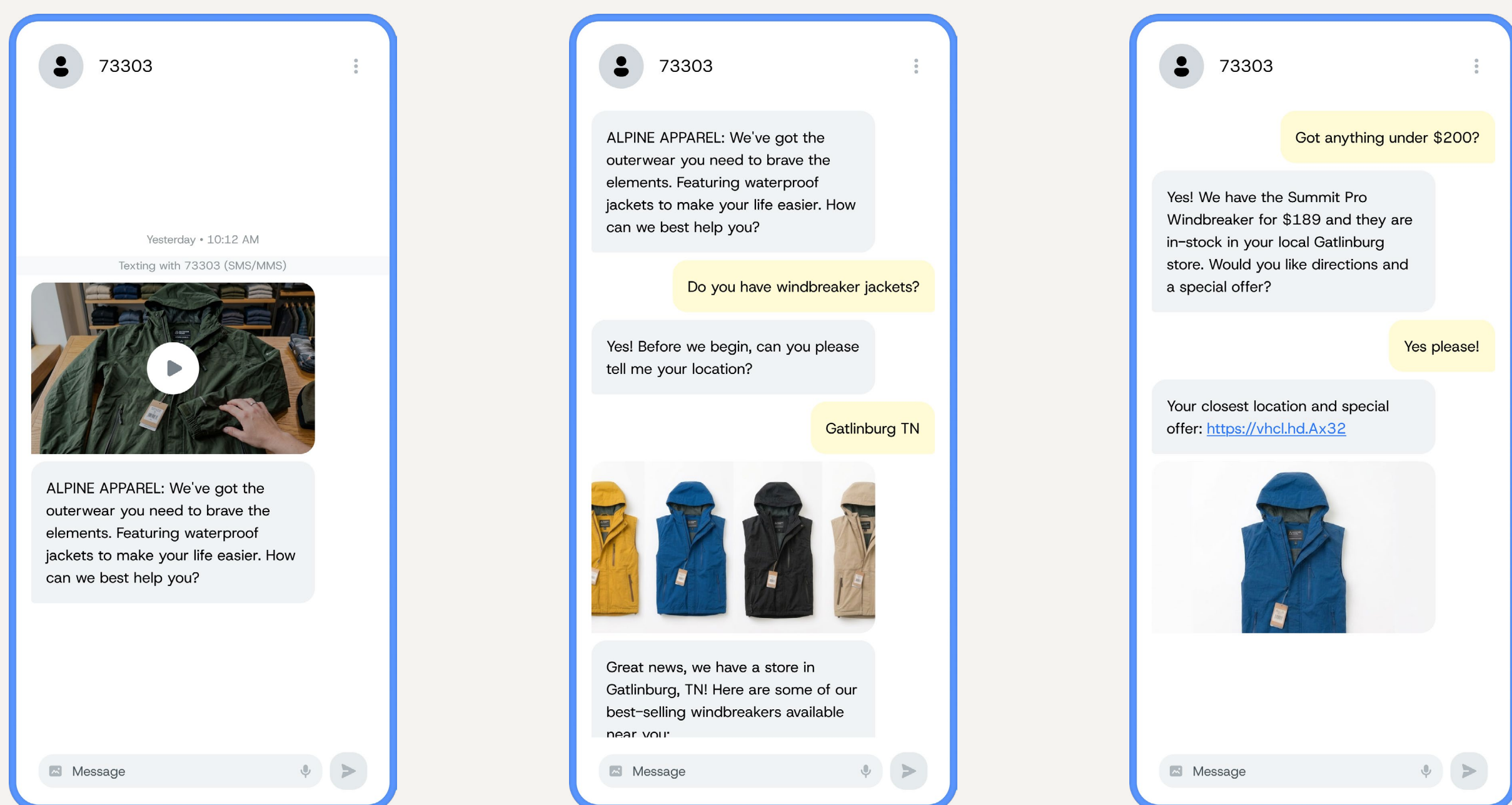
The limits of 160 characters

SMS does what it was designed to do well – deliver short, reliable text to any phone on any network. But customer expectations now extend beyond what text-only messaging can support. 160 characters, no visuals, and no way for the customer to act without leaving the conversation can feel underwhelming.

If your customer gets an appointment reminder via SMS, they can read it. But taking the next step often requires replying with a keyword or opening a link to another page. Using suggested replies and buttons with RCS, they can confirm, reschedule, or tap through from the message itself.

RCS removes friction, making it easier for recipients to act in the moment.

MMS adds images, short video clips, and longer text that help with visual storytelling. But MMS still lacks interactivity. No buttons, no carousels, no suggested replies. The customer sees the image and then has to figure out what to do next on their own.



MMS also has geographic limits. Business MMS messaging works primarily in the United States, Canada, and Australia. If you serve customers outside those markets, MMS offers little reach.

Both MMS and SMS do their jobs, but customer expectations have moved past what either can deliver. Upscaling to RCS upgrades the mobile messaging experience. For Sinch SMS customers, that upgrade builds on the messaging program already in place.

Why an **app-like experience** in the inbox matters

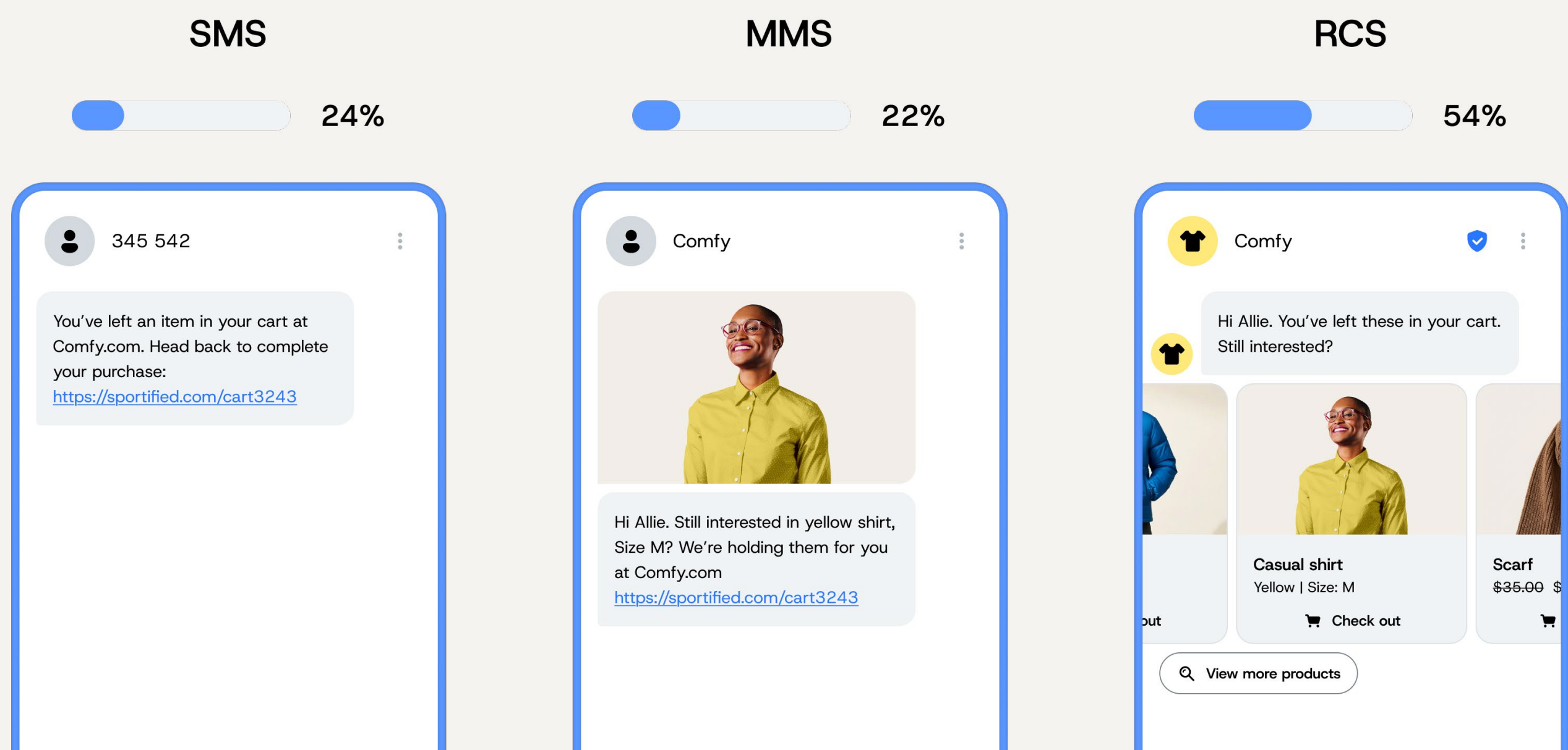
Your customers may already interact with rich, visual, tap-to-act messaging. WhatsApp, iMessage, and other over-the-top apps set that expectation years ago.

RCS delivers a similar experience inside the native messaging app. The recipient doesn't need to download anything, create an account, or adopt a separate platform.

The distinction matters for reach. Over-the-top messaging requires the customer to install and use a specific application. RCS works in Google Messages on Android and in the native messaging app on supported iPhones. Most smartphone owners already use one or the other for text messaging.

In Sinch's recent consumer research, 54% of respondents found RCS messages with branding and buttons [more engaging than SMS or MMS](#) for abandoned cart reminders.

Which messaging experience do consumers prefer?



That preference carried across use cases. When asked to choose their preferred appointment reminder format, consumers again selected the RCS experience over SMS.

The report also showed that 42% of consumers expect personalized messages from brands, and 29% want product recommendations based on past behavior. RCS supports both with carousels, rich cards, and suggested replies that can tailor the experience per recipient.

People prefer messages they can act on without leaving the conversation. RCS gives you that capability.

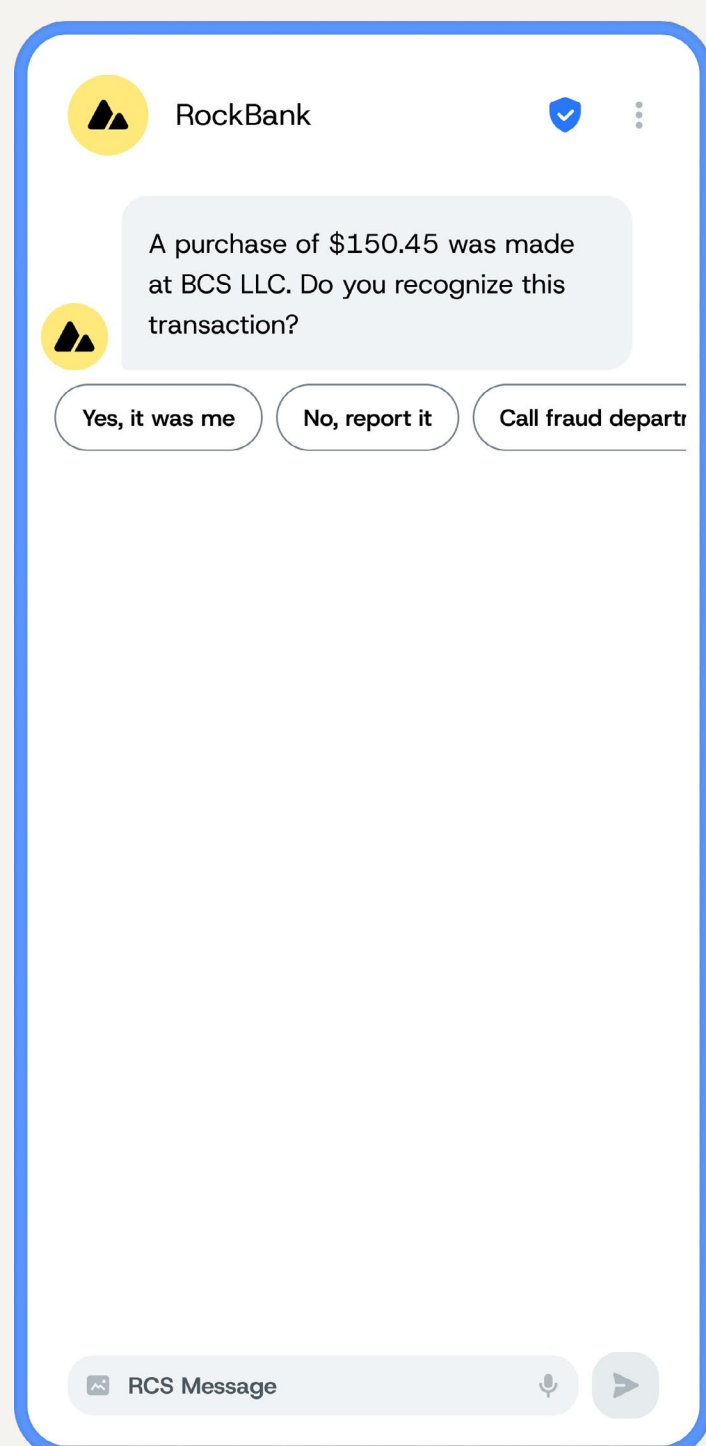
RCS message types and what they support

Basic and Rich messages: simple but branded

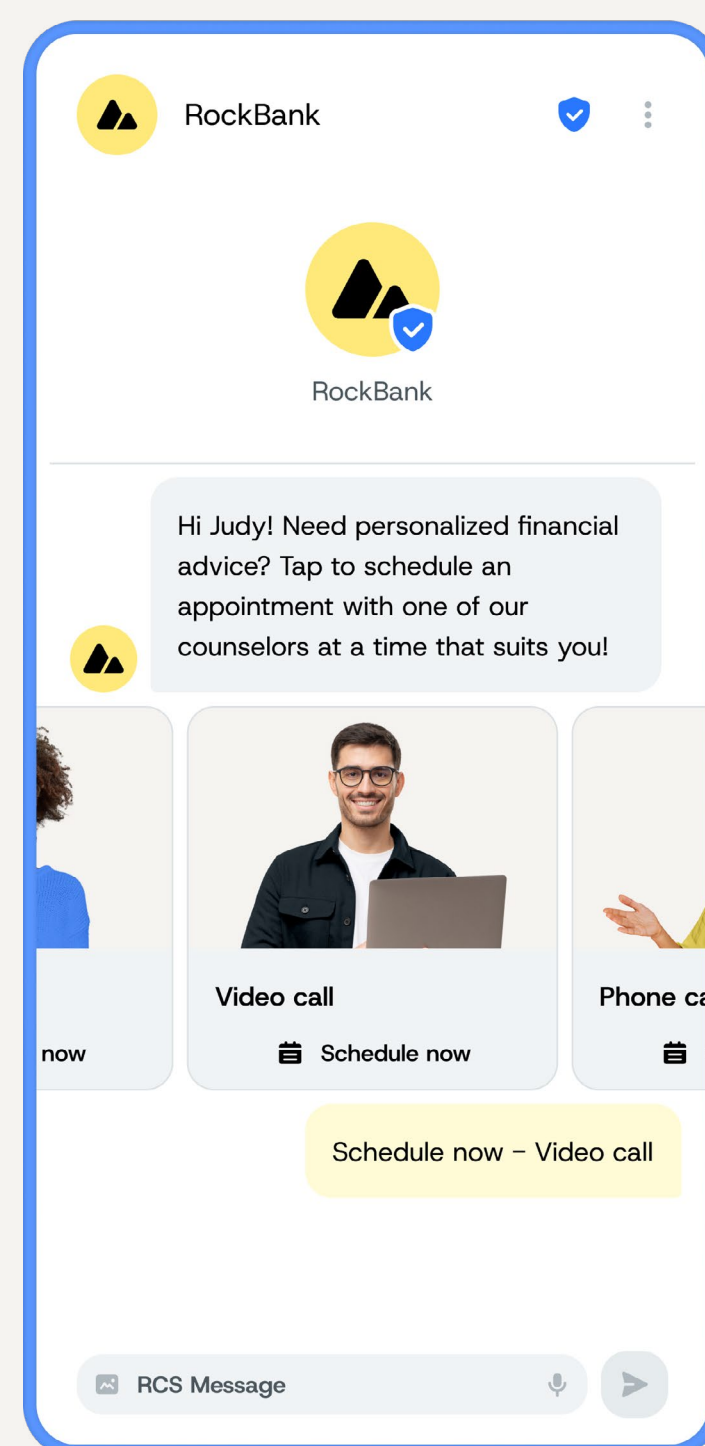
The simplest RCS message looks a lot like SMS, but with your brand name, logo, and a verified checkmark.

Rich and Rich Media RCS for Business messages at a glance

Rich message



Rich Media message



These messages types are applicable for the U.S.

Outside the U.S., carriers classify these as Basic messages. In the U.S., along with text, Rich Messages can include suggested replies, and click to url and click to call actions.

These messages work well for OTPs, short alerts, and one-off updates where you don't need media or extended copy. You get the trust benefit of verified branding without any rich media cost.

For many businesses, this message type alone represents a meaningful upgrade over SMS.

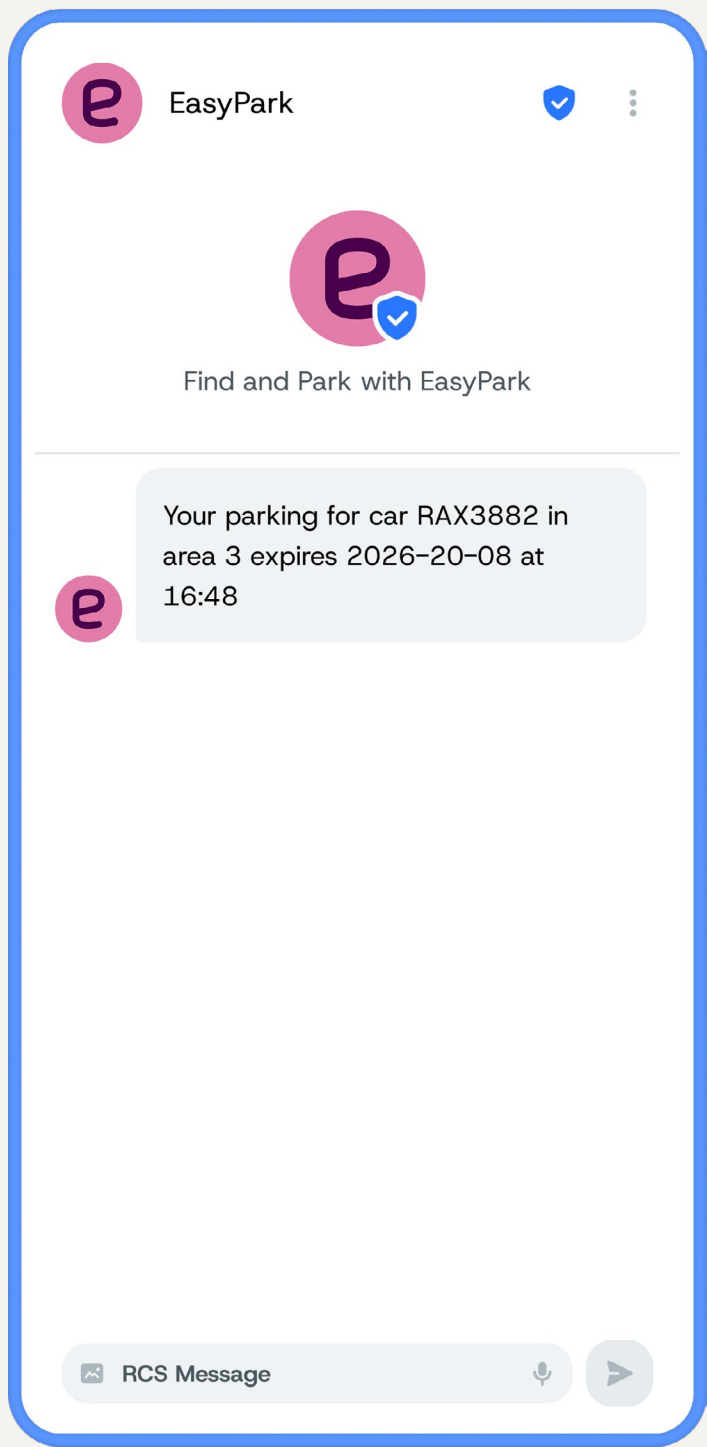
Single and Rich Media messages: visual and interactive

When your message needs more than 160 characters or includes visual content, you move into a richer tier.

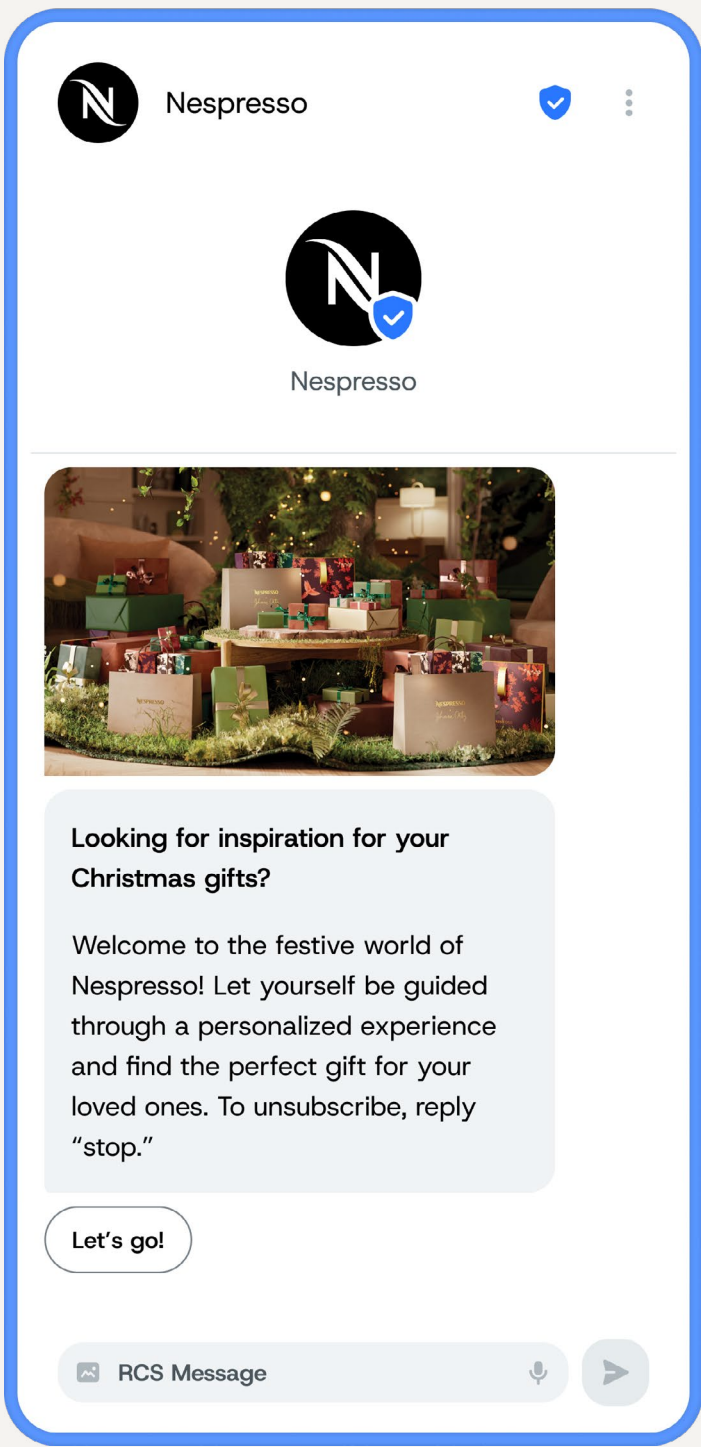
Outside the U.S., carriers call these Single messages. In the U.S., they fall under Rich Media. Both support images, video, GIFs, carousels, interactive buttons, and all types of suggested replies and actions.

Basic and Single RCS for Business messages at a glance

Basic



Single



These messages types are applicable for all countries except the U.S.

This message type opens up use cases that SMS and MMS can't touch. Product showcases with swipeable carousels. Promotional campaigns with tap-to-buy buttons. Delivery updates with real-time tracking links. The customer sees, decides, and acts – all inside the same message thread.

Rich Media messages cost more than Basic or Rich messages. But they also drive higher engagement, which often makes the per-message economics work in their favor.

Rich cards and carousels

Rich cards combine media, text, and action buttons in a single message unit. A product image at the top, a short description underneath, and a “Buy now” or “Learn more” button at the bottom. One message, one complete interaction.

Carousels string multiple rich cards together in a horizontal scroll. The customer swipes through options – products, menu items, plan tiers – and taps the one they want. No separate landing page required.

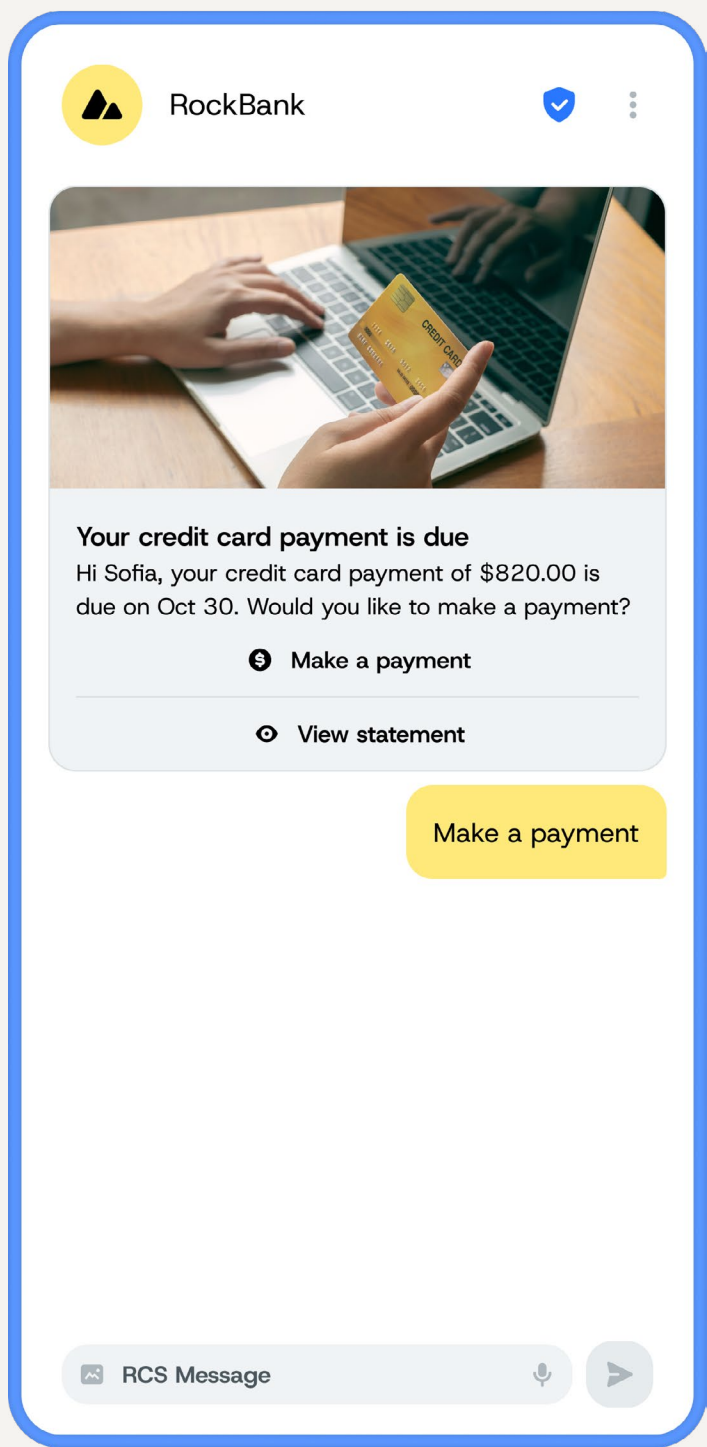
Key design specs to keep in mind:

- Rich cards: 3:2 media with a minimum 5% safe zone
- Horizontal rich cards: 9:16 media with a minimum 5% safe zone and centered 1:1 critical media content area
- Vertical rich cards: 9:16 media with a minimum 5% safe zone and centered 1:1 critical media content ares
- Carousels: 16:9 media with a 5% safe zone

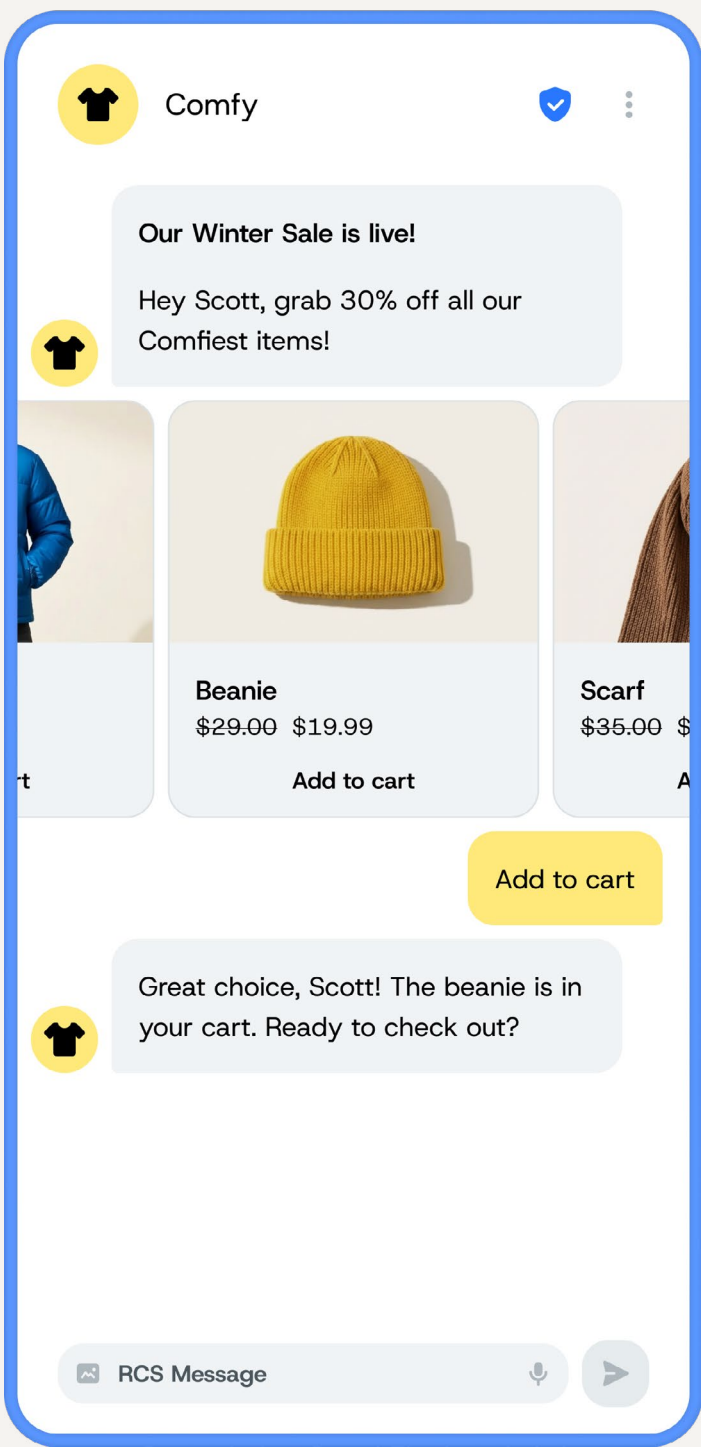
Keep in mind these are best practices to minimize rendering differences between iOS and Android devices.

Each card can include up to four suggestions. If more than one is included they will appear as a drop-down menu on iOS.

Rich card



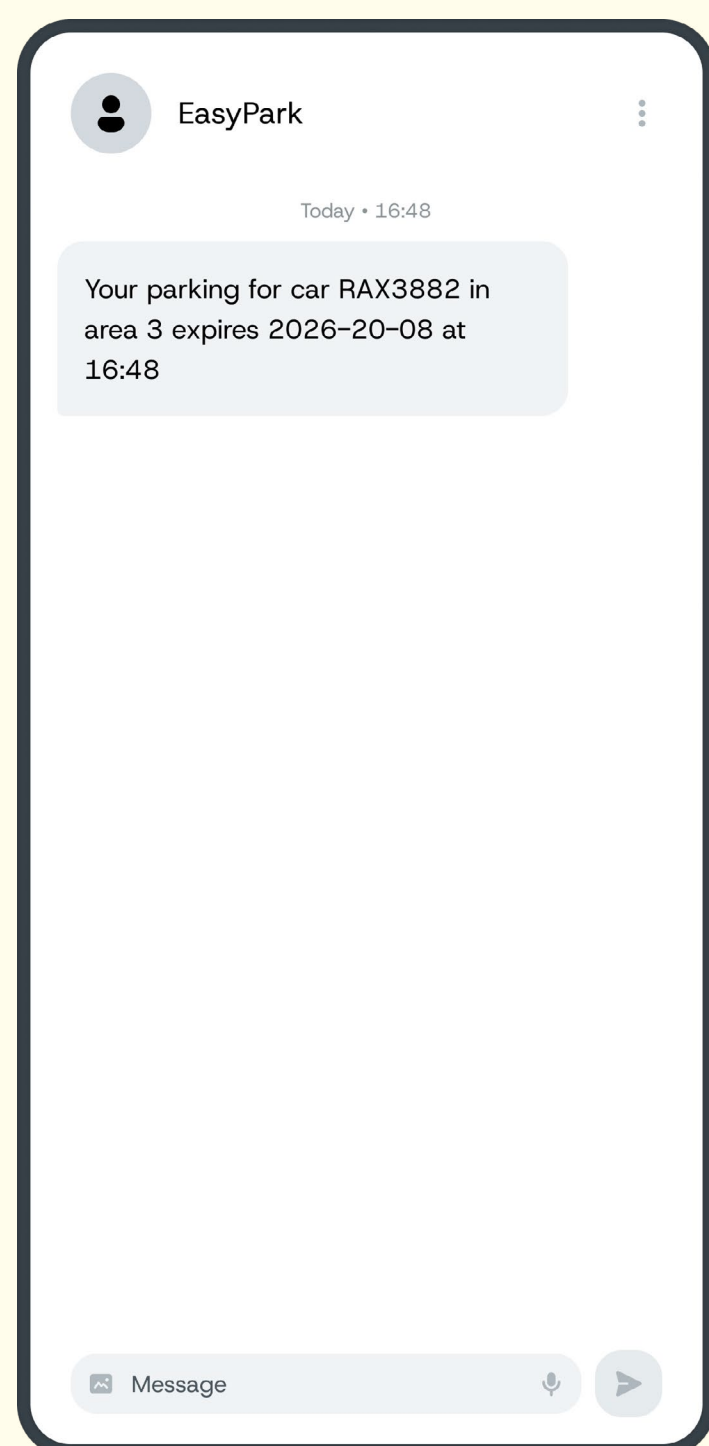
Carousel



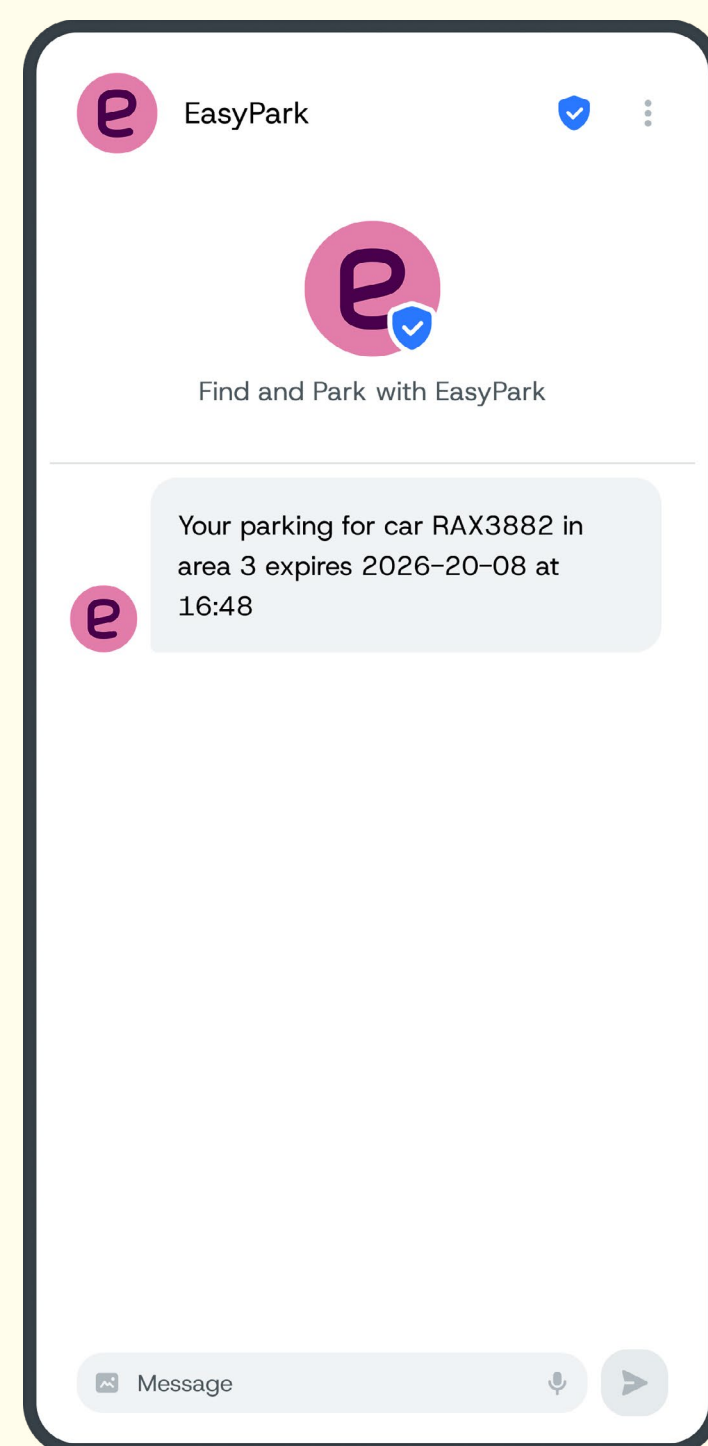
What this looks like in practice

EasyPark: branded transactional messages

[EasyPark Group](#), a digital parking app operating across multiple European markets, relied on several SMS vendors to deliver parking reminders. They consolidated to Sinch as their sole SMS provider and then upgraded those same messages to RCS.



SMS



RCS

The change required minimal effort from EasyPark's team. Drivers with RCS-enabled devices now see the verified EasyPark brand as the sender. Drivers without RCS still receive the SMS version. No disruption for either group.

The RCS messages achieved a 97.4% delivery rate. Alex Keynes, EasyPark's Head of Product for Driver's Experience, noted the transition created no friction for the business or its users.

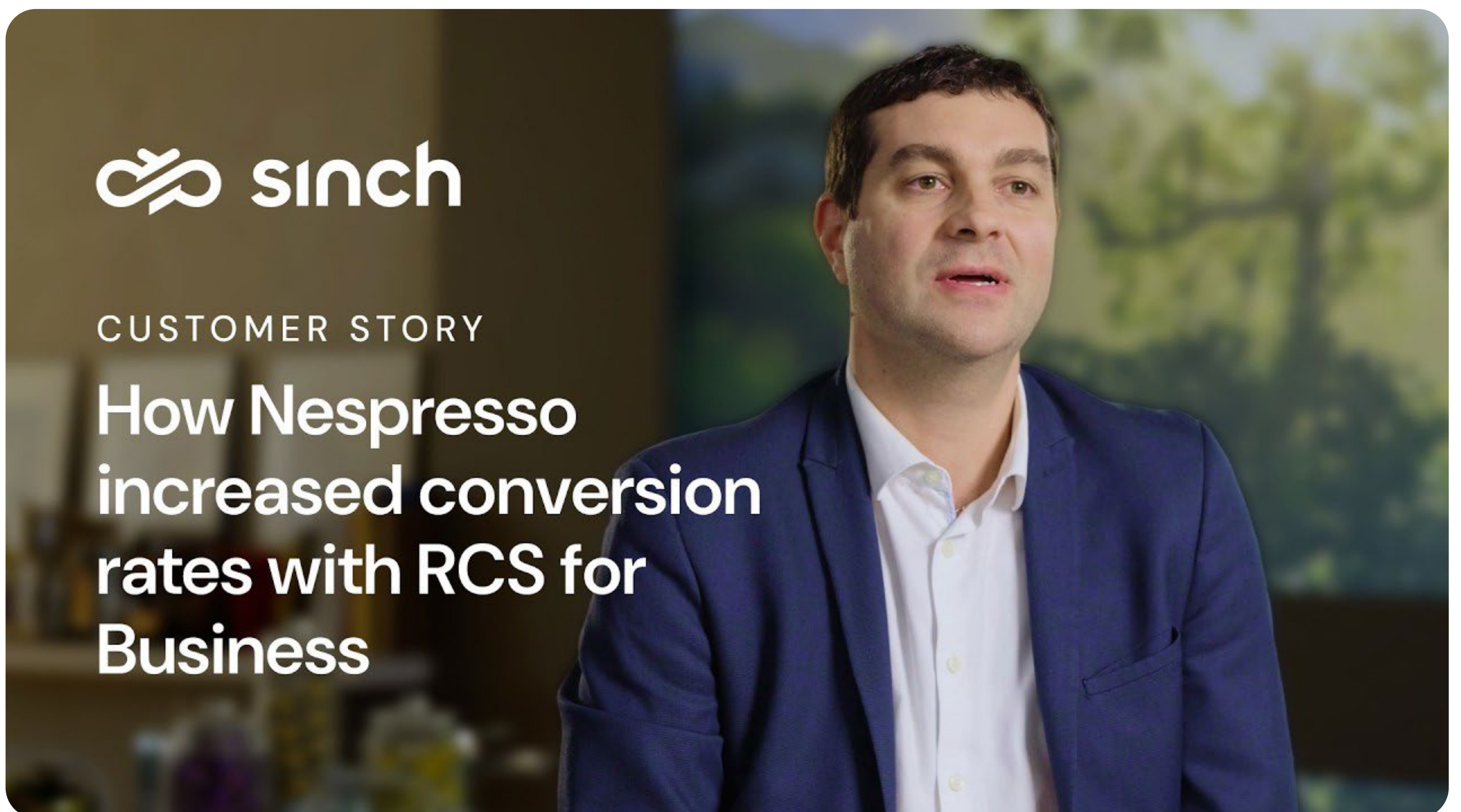
EasyPark didn't redesign their messaging strategy. They upgraded the delivery format and gained branded trust and delivery data in return.

Nespresso: conversational RCS for subscription marketing

[Nespresso France](#) needed to explain a complex subscription program — discounted machines, product credits, automated deliveries — in a way that SMS’s 160-character limit just couldn’t support.

So, they turned to Sinch and used RCS for Business to build an interactive chatbot experience around a branded “coffee detective” mystery theme, guiding users through their preferences to find the right machine and subscription offer.

The conversational format did the heavy lifting. An interactive, multi-step flow replaced what would have been a boring wall of text.



The campaign delivered a 15% click-through rate, 2.3x more completions than the Rich SMS fallback, and 11% higher conversions than SMS.

Picard: conversational holiday menus

[Picard](#), a French frozen food retailer, took RCS further. They built a conversational experience using Sinch's Conversation API and a chatbot integration.

During the holiday season, the chatbot asked customers about their dietary preferences, budget, and cooking plans. Based on the responses, each customer received a tailored holiday menu recommendation – all within the messaging thread.

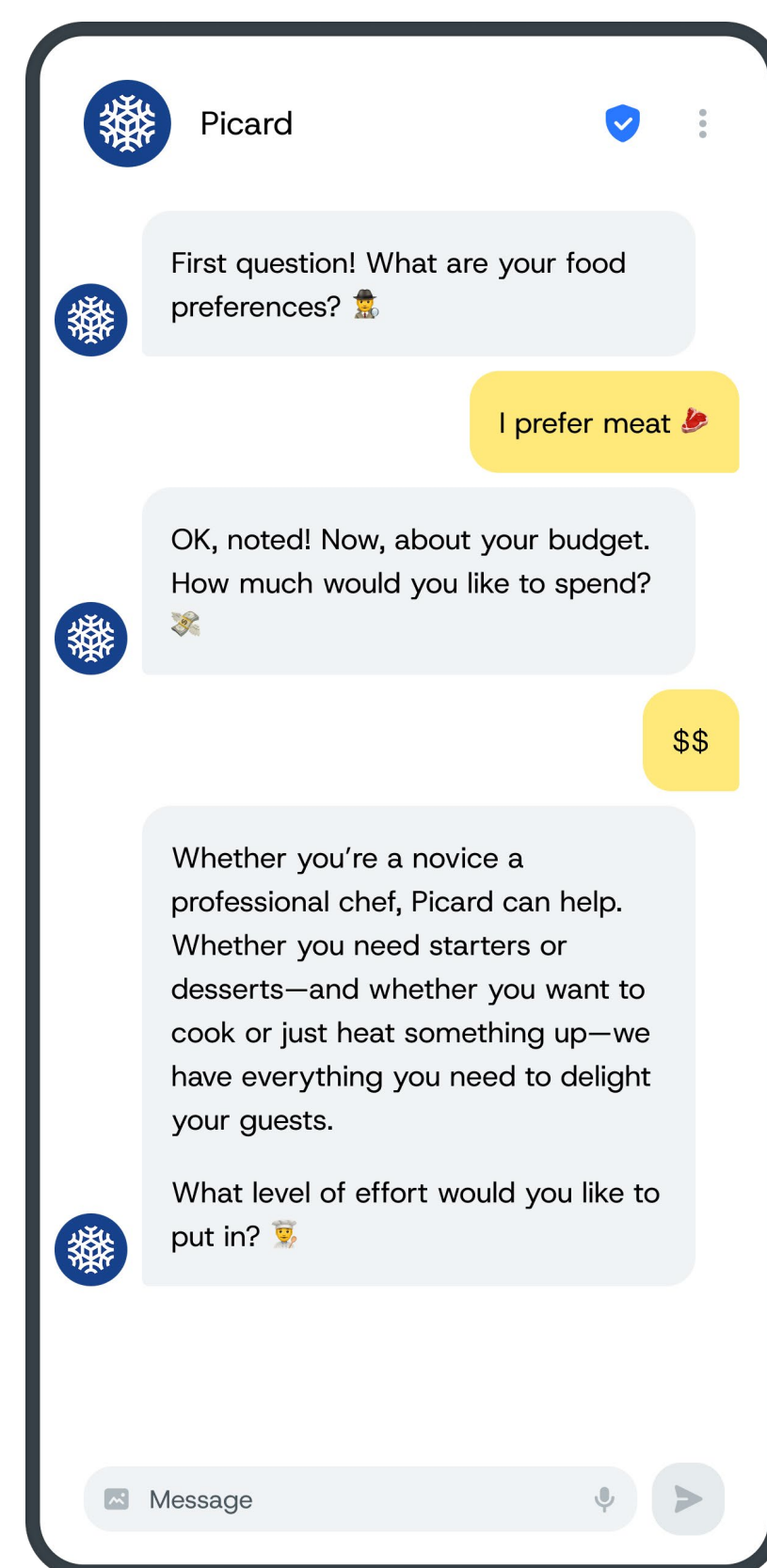
The campaign delivered a 42% increase in customer engagement over previous efforts. Click-through rates ran three times higher than [Rich SMS](#) campaigns. Picard also used RCS capability checks to identify compatible devices. Customers without RCS received a Rich SMS linking to a web-based version of the chatbot experience.

No customer missed out, but the ones on RCS got a faster, richer, and more personal interaction.

The **big benefit**

RCS gives brands a more interactive, app-like messaging experience without asking customers to download anything new. For your business, that means more engaging mobile experiences, fewer steps to action, and more potential to improve response and conversion rates than SMS or MMS alone.

Picard's menu-planning experience built with RCS and Sinch's chatbot builder

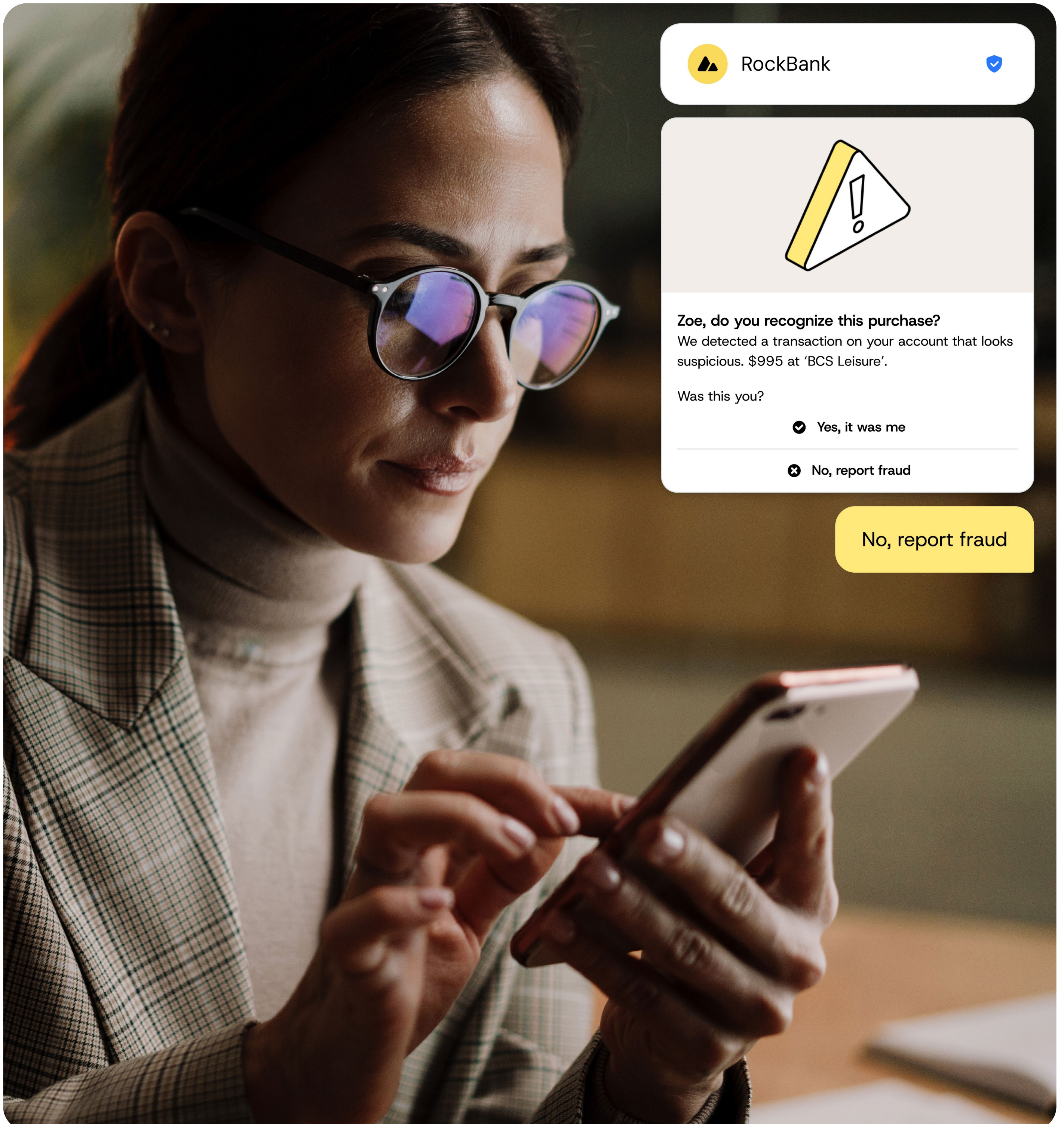


Translated to english

CHAPTER 3

Stronger security for sensitive messages

Where SMS security meets its limits



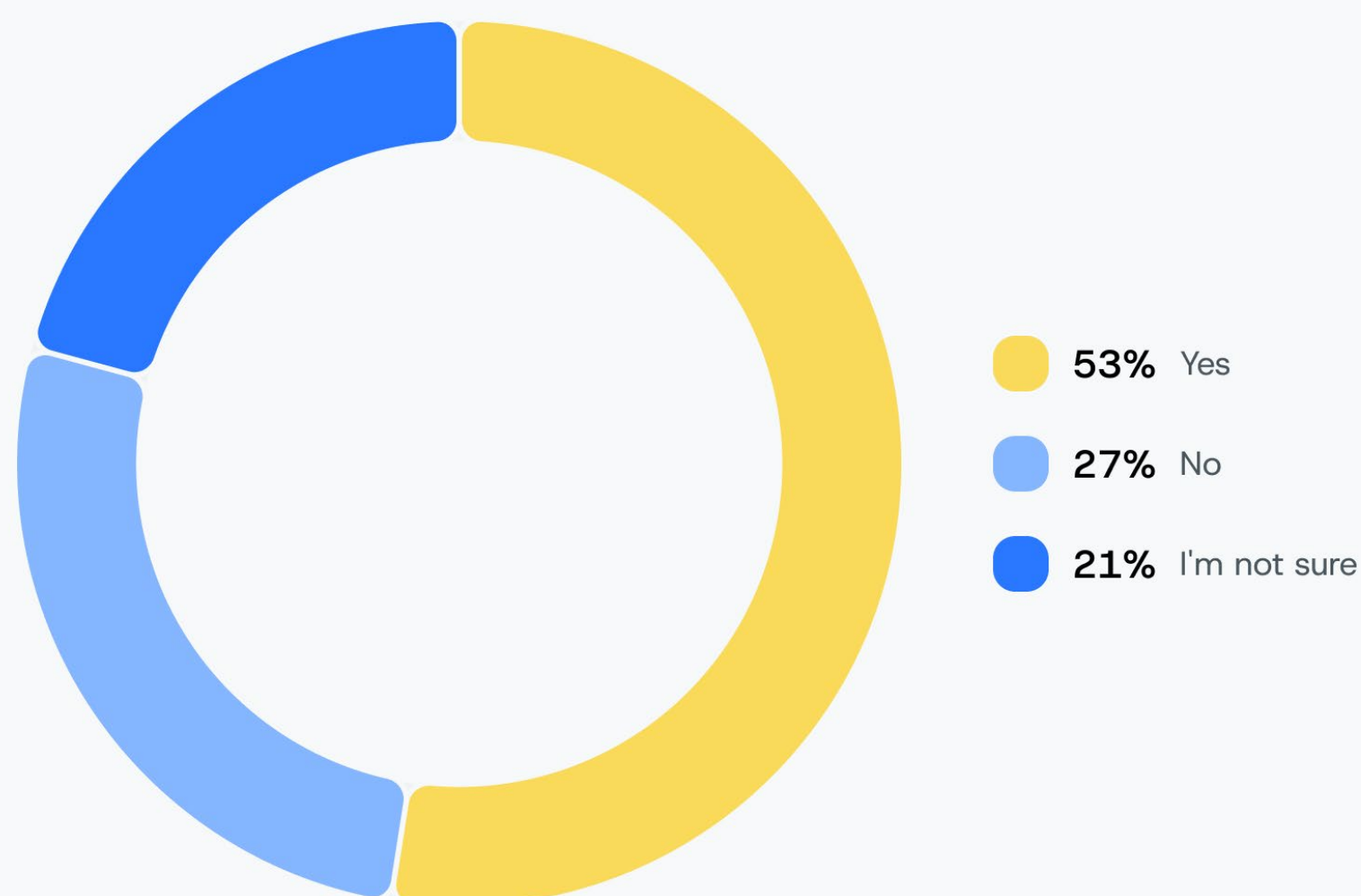
The **phishing problem** your customers don't see coming

SMS has a specific vulnerability that makes it attractive to bad actors. Any number can claim to be any brand. A spoofed message from “your bank” may look very similar to a legitimate one. The recipient has no way to verify the sender before acting on the content.

Smishing exploits this gap directly. Attackers impersonate retailers, financial institutions, and delivery services using numbers that look no different from yours. When every message arrives from an unbranded short code, the real and the fake sit side by side in the same inbox. As customer communications become more conversational, the risk increases.

And the damage goes both directions. Sinch found 53% of consumers said they'd received a legitimate brand message in the past year that they found suspicious. Another 21% weren't sure.

In the last year, have you received a message from a business that seemed suspicious even though it was legitimate?



Those in the financial services industry are particularly concerned. J.D. Power and Associates found [45% of banking consumers](#) reported experiencing multiple incidents of fraud in a single year. And Sinch found 54% of financial services leaders rank security factors like fraud prevention as a major benefit of RCS for their industry.

Your real messages are getting caught in the crossfire of distrust that phishing creates.

When your customers can't tell **real from fake**

The trust problem compounds from both sides. Bad actors take advantage of generic-looking messages. And your business suffers when legitimate communications get ignored or deleted out of caution.

Every successful attack that mimics your brand damages your reputation. And every legitimate message your customer hesitates to open represents a missed interaction you paid to send.

When trust, security, and privacy are on the line, RCS delivers a reliable mobile messaging experience.



The reality is that many financial services organizations are still dealing with fragmented channels, slow response times, and one-size-fits-all messaging. People notice, and they tend to choose the brands that get it right. **Consistency, personalization, and trust** are no longer 'nice-to-haves' in FinServ customer communication. They're the baseline.

Alejandro Murcia

Director of Financial Services at Sinch

How RCS raises the security bar



Encryption in transit

SMS and MMS messages travel without encryption. RCS messages carry encryption in transit – between the user’s device and Google, and between Google and the messaging partner.

Messages on Google’s servers also sit encrypted at rest. This represents a meaningful upgrade over SMS, where message content moves through carrier infrastructure with no encryption layer at all.

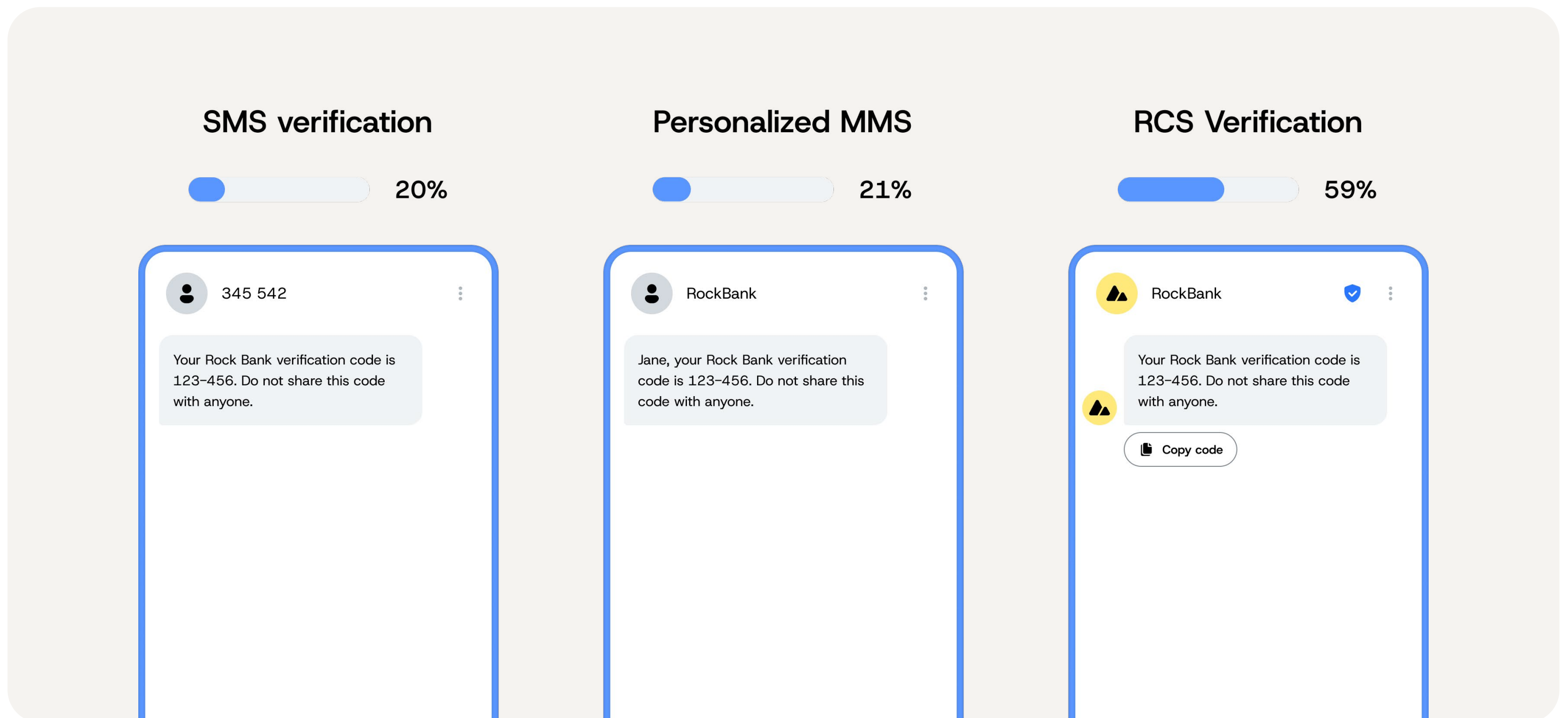
One clarification worth noting: RCS for Business does not use end-to-end encryption. Messaging partners like Sinch decrypt messages for processing and delivery. This mirrors how other business messaging channels work and presents no elevated security risk. But any vendor claiming end-to-end encryption for RCS business messages is stating something inaccurate.

Intercepting an RCS message in transit requires significantly more effort than intercepting an SMS. For OTPs and transaction alerts, that added layer of protection reduces the risk of credential theft.

RCS Agents create a cleaner experience for important messages

User verification messages, such as OTPs and MFA, protect access to customer accounts. While a simple text may be enough to deliver a verification code to a customer’s smartphone, RCS adds a layer of trust and convenience.

When Sinch asked consumers to compare the trustworthiness of a basic SMS verification, a personalized SMS verification, and an RCS message with trust marks and buttons, **59% preferred the RCS option**. Only about 20% chose either SMS format.



For OTPs and identity verification, verified sender profiles shift consumer preference decisively towards RCS.

Dedicated OTP and transactional Agents

RCS requires you to declare the purpose of your Agent at registration. That structural requirement adds another security layer.

An OTP Agent can only send authentication messages – password resets, login codes, and transaction confirmations. Promotions, product updates, and marketing content of any kind stay off this Agent.

A transactional Agent handles alerts, reminders, and updates and can also carry OTPs, but promotional content stays off this channel entirely.

This separation keeps important messages distinct from marketing traffic. Your OTP messages do not have to appear alongside promotions, and customers can more easily recognize what kind of message they are receiving.

Compare that to SMS, where a single short code may carry OTPs, shipping updates, and flash sale promotions in the same thread. RCS gives businesses a more structured way to separate those experiences.

Consent and compliance



Your existing SMS opt-ins carry over

If customers have already opted into an SMS program, that consent generally covers the same program on RCS. You do not need to collect opt-in again as long as the program itself stays the same. You are upgrading the delivery channel, not changing the content or frequency.

Moving from SMS to RCS does not reset the customer relationship. It upgrades the experience they already agreed to receive.



Opt-out rules and what to watch for

Google requires every RCS Agent to honor opt-out requests. If a customer opts out of an RCS program, that preference should apply to the corresponding SMS program as well.

The main concern with consent involves multi-use Agents. Because they combine transactional and promotional messaging, one opt-out can stop every message type on that Agent, including important updates the customer may still want.

If preserving transactional delivery matters, separate Agents give you more control. One opt-out affects one channel instead of all message types at once.

The big benefit

RCS gives businesses a safer, more structured way to deliver important customer messages. For your business, that means stronger protection than SMS, clearer separation between message types, and more confidence in high-stakes communications. Plus, consent carries over from SMS to RCS.

CHAPTER 4

Performance data SMS can't give you

The measurement problem with SMS





What **SMS** reporting gives you

You send an SMS. Your system confirms it left. A carrier receipt might tell you the message reached the network.

That's where visibility ends.

You don't know if the customer opened the message. You don't know if they read it. You don't know if they tapped the link, glanced at it and moved on, or never saw it at all.

For any team accustomed to email analytics – open rates, click rates, engagement timing – SMS reporting feels like flying without instruments. You can measure what you sent. It's much harder to measure what happened next.

What that lack of visibility costs you

Without read or engagement data, you have no way to know which messages drove action and which went unread.

You can't compare two message variations with any confidence. You can't identify which flows lose attention and where. You can't tie a specific message



to a downstream conversion unless the customer clicks a tracked URL – and even then, you're measuring website behavior.

Email teams iterate weekly based on open and click metrics. In-app teams run continuous A/B tests. Unfortunately, SMS operates with limited visibility into what happens after delivery. The channel that touches customers most directly gives you the least information about how those customers respond.

What **RCS reporting** gives you

Delivery receipts, open rates, and read rates

RCS closes the reporting gap with three layers of data that SMS can't provide:

- ✓ Handset delivery receipts confirm the message reached the customer's device
- ✓ Open rates tell you the customer viewed the message
- ✓ Read rates confirm they engaged with the content

This brings messaging analytics in line with what you expect from email and in-app channels. You see the full path from send to read.

For transactional messages like OTPs and shipping updates, delivery receipts give your operations team confirmation that time-sensitive information reached the right person. For promotional messages, open and read rates reveal whether your content earned attention or disappeared into the scroll.



A/B testing and flow optimization

Read and engagement data turn messaging into a testable channel. You can measure Basic messages against Rich Media for read rates, test single rich cards against carousels for taps, or shift send timing and watch how read rates respond.

None of this works with SMS. You can test subject lines in email because you have open rate data. RCS gives you the same capability for mobile messaging.

Over time, each campaign tells you exactly which formats, content, and timing your audience responds to. And each test narrows the gap between what you send and what your customers respond to.

The **big benefit**

RCS gives marketing teams visibility SMS can't. With delivery, open, and read data, teams can optimize messaging performance more effectively, while marketing leaders gain clearer insight into what the channel is contributing.

CHAPTER 5

Getting started without starting over





Two paths to sending RCS

For Sinch SMS customers, there's no need to overhaul everything when you upscale to RCS. Start with a simple path that updates the messages you already send via SMS.



SMS API with RCS upscale

If you already send SMS through Sinch's mobile messaging API, this path gets you to RCS with the least amount of change. Your existing integration stays the same. Messages auto-upgrade to RCS when the recipient's device supports it and fall back to SMS when it doesn't.

This approach includes basic RCS messages – branded, verified, text-only, up to 160 characters. No rich media, no carousels, no interactive buttons. But you gain verified sender branding and delivery receipts on every RCS-eligible message without touching your current infrastructure.

EasyPark took this exact path. They kept sending the same parking reminders through the same SMS API. Drivers on RCS-enabled devices started seeing the verified EasyPark brand as the sender. Everyone else kept getting SMS. The transition required minimal effort from EasyPark's team and zero effort from their customers.

This path works well for OTPs, transactional alerts, and any team that wants to test RCS before committing to a deeper integration. You must register your RCS Agent as Non-Conversational (Basic or Single billing category) to use RCS upscale.



Conversation API

When your messaging needs go beyond branded text, the Conversation API opens the full RCS feature set. Images, video, carousels, buttons, suggested replies, and two-way conversational flows all become available.

The Conversation API also manages more than RCS. It handles WhatsApp, Apple Messages for Business, and other channels through a single integration. You build one message, and the API auto-transcodes it to the right format for whatever channel the recipient supports. If RCS fails, the system falls back to MMS, SMS, or another preferred channel automatically.

Picard used this path for their holiday campaign. They connected the Conversation API to a chatbot that guided customers through personalized menu recommendations – all within the messaging thread. The API handled RCS delivery for compatible devices and Rich SMS for everyone else.

This path fits marketing campaigns, customer support conversations, and teams ready to build interactive messaging experiences across multiple channels. You can register your RCS Agent as either Conversational or Non-Conversational depending on your use case and market.

Walk, Run, Fly – a phased approach

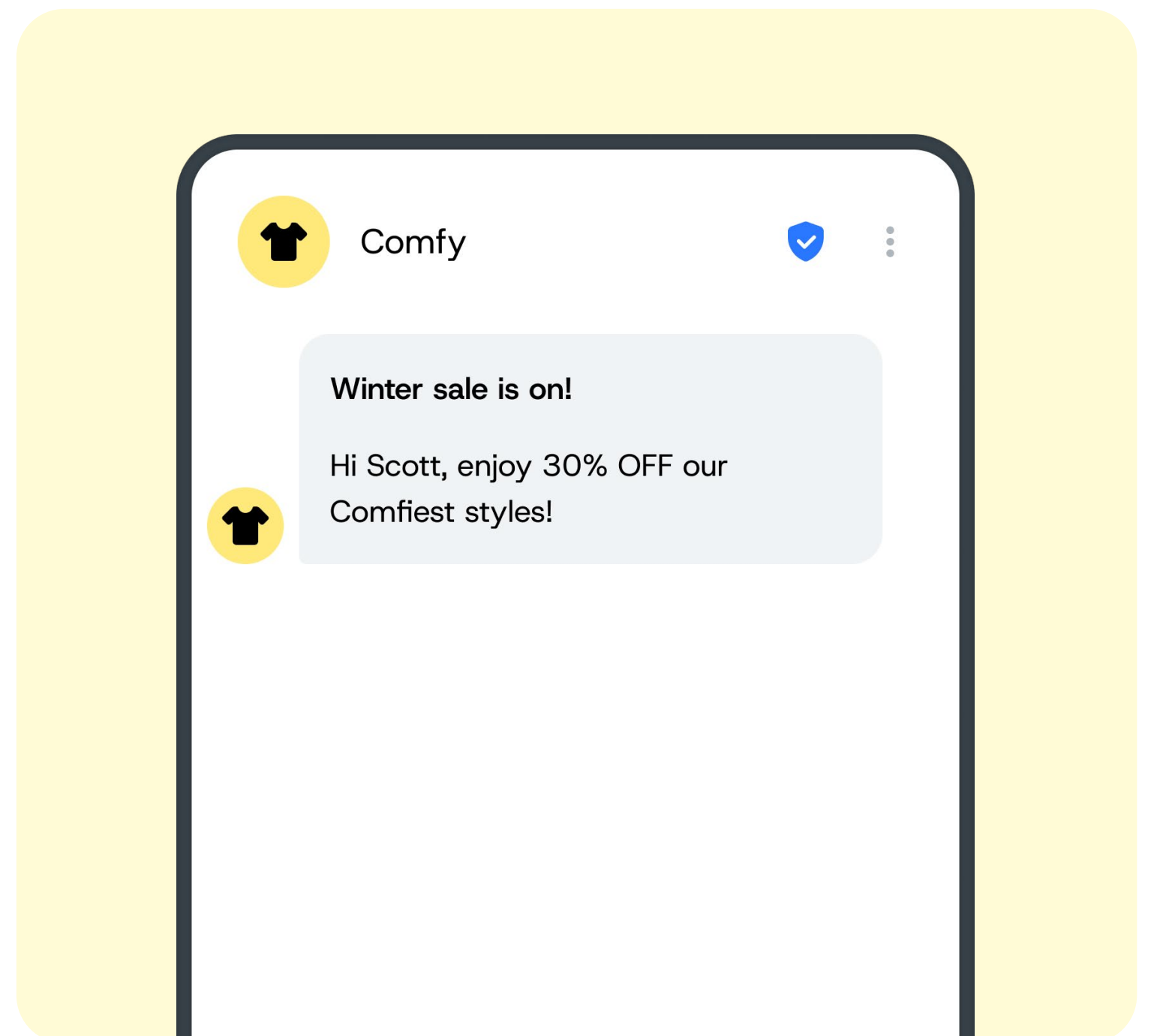
You don't have to incorporate every RCS capability on day one. Sinch recommends a phased approach that lets you build confidence and data before scaling.

Walk: upgrade what you already send

Pick one or two high-impact SMS campaigns and upgrade them to RCS. Keep the same message content. Customers on RCS-enabled devices get a branded, verified experience. Everyone else gets SMS as usual.

In this phase, you're gathering baseline data. Delivery receipts, open rates, and read rates give you performance visibility you've never had on SMS. Use that data to identify which campaigns benefit most from the upgrade.

You can also convert MMS campaigns to RCS during this phase for an even faster expansion of your branded messaging footprint.



A lot of businesses start with fairly simple messages, by converting their existing SMS over. That works well for improving security with the sender verifications, the branding, and the delivery receipts. And **once you start seeing it working**, you start to move on to more advanced use cases.

Miriam Liszewski
RCS Commercial Product Manager at Sinch

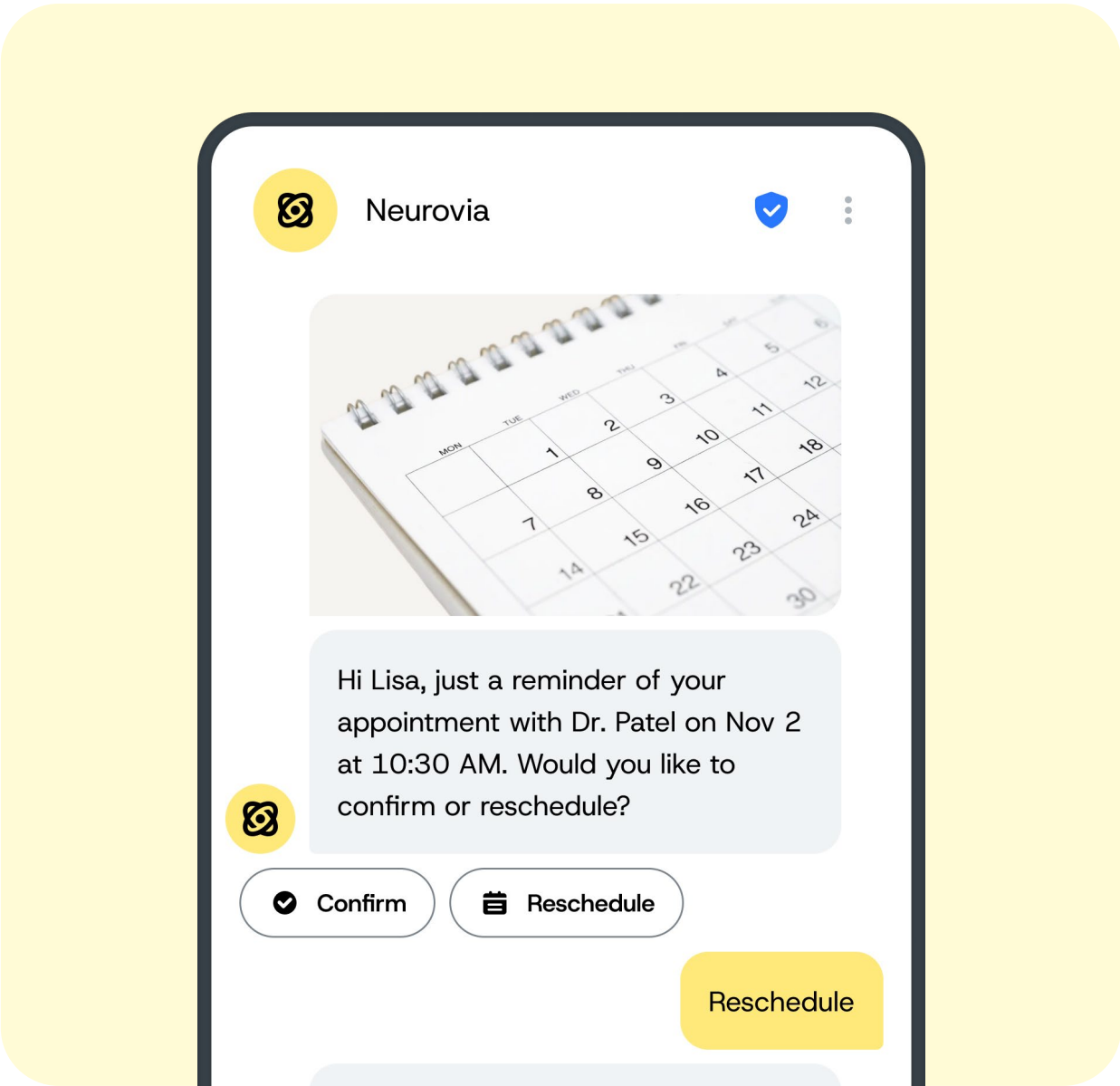
This stage is additive. You keep SMS for universal delivery and layer RCS on top for customers whose devices support it. Customers without RCS still receive your SMS messages as usual.



Run: add rich features and interactivity

Once your baseline data confirms the channel works, start layering in rich elements. Replace plain URLs with tap-to-act buttons. Add product images to order confirmations. Include suggested replies on appointment reminders so customers can confirm or reschedule with a single tap.

This phase also opens the door to additional use cases. If you started with transactional messages in the Walk phase, consider adding promotional campaigns with rich cards or carousels. Each new use case builds on the reporting data from the last one.

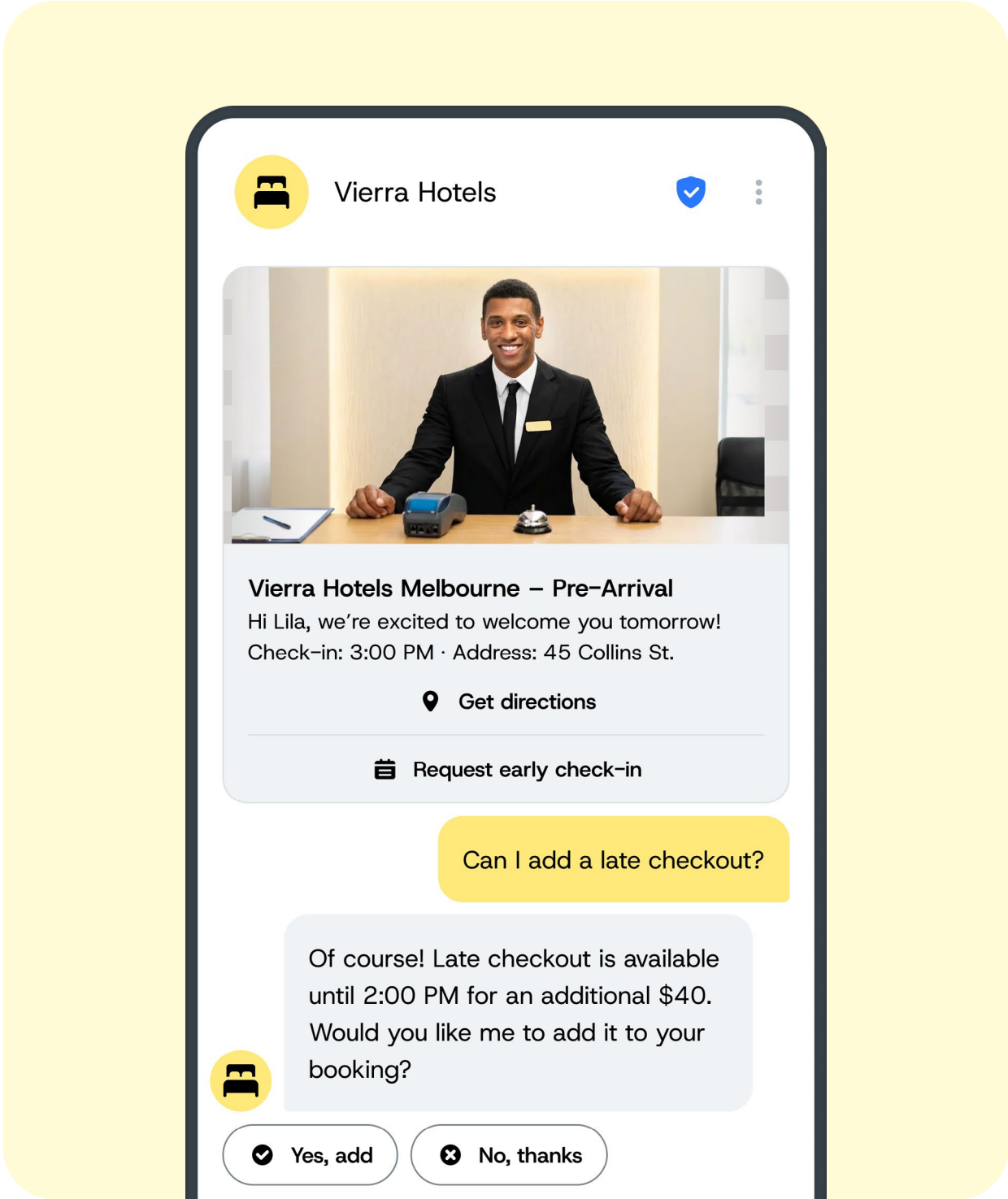


Fly: move to conversational messaging

Build two-way conversational flows powered by chatbots, AI-assisted interactions, and multi-step customer journeys. Product browsing, customer support triage, personalized recommendations, and guided purchasing – all inside the messaging thread.

The best conversational experiences feel natural, not technical. They guide customers with clear choices, short prompts, and visual content rather than relying on the customer to type free-form responses. Suggested replies and action buttons do the heavy lifting.

This phase requires more backend integration but delivers the highest engagement and conversion potential. The data you gathered in Walk and Run phases informs every design decision here.



Practical steps to go live



Register your RCS Agent

Provide your brand name, logo, contact information, business description, and intended use case. Sinch submits the Agent to Google and/or carriers for approval on your behalf.

You can register and begin testing on enabled devices in any country, even where RCS hasn't fully launched yet. Early registration means you're ready to go live as soon as coverage expands in your markets.



Map your Agent to your SMS numbers

Align each RCS Agent with the corresponding SMS short code or long number for proper fallback. Sinch recommends 1:1 mapping where your OTP short code maps to your OTP Agent and your promotional short code maps to your promotional Agent.

If multiple use cases share the same SMS number today, a multi-use Agent may be the cleanest fit. If they're already separated, keep that separation in RCS.



Check your content against RCS policies

RCS has tighter content rules than SMS. Google's Acceptable Use Policy prohibits political messaging, tobacco promotion, and several other categories that SMS permits. Some carriers add their own restrictions on top of Google's baseline.

Review your planned message content against these policies before you submit your Agent for approval. The more clearly you define your use case up front, the smoother the approval process runs.



Launch and measure

Start sending. Monitor delivery receipts, open rates, and read rates from day one. Compare RCS performance against your SMS baseline across the same campaigns and use cases.

That data tells you when to move from Walk to Run and gives you the evidence to build internal support for expanding your RCS program.

Where to go from here

The case for RCS comes down to what becomes possible when you build on top of what you already have.

SMS reaches every device on the planet, works without an internet connection, and delivers time-sensitive messages reliably. RCS adds brand identity, interactivity, and engagement data on top of that reach. Together, they cover your full audience with SMS handling universal delivery and RCS upgrading the experience for every compatible device.

Everything covered in this guide – the trust gap, the richer experience, the security upgrade, the performance data – becomes available without replacing your current messaging infrastructure. Your API stays the same, your opt-ins carry over, your SMS fallback keeps every customer covered.

RCS coverage continues to expand across Android and iOS, across carriers and markets. The businesses that register their Agents now and start gathering performance data will have a meaningful head start when coverage reaches critical mass in their audiences.

Sinch can help you get there. Whether you start with RCS upscale on your existing SMS API or build a full multichannel strategy through the Conversation API, our team handles Agent registration, carrier approvals, and market-specific requirements on your behalf.



Tech companies are built to innovate, but when it comes to communication, even the most advanced teams realize the need for simplicity, integration, and trust. The opportunity now is to use the right tools to **connect and create more meaningful conversations.**

Petter Bengtsson

SVP Global Programs & Enterprise Growth at Sinch

Your next step: reach out to Sinch to register your RCS Agent and start testing. The transition starts with the messages you already send.



Sinch's vision is to connect every business with every customer, everywhere in the world. With the industry's most trusted foundation for intelligent customer communications, Sinch powers over 900 million customer interactions annually for more than 190,000 customers across the globe.

Leading global companies, including AI innovators, rely on Sinch to strengthen customer relationships and deliver seamless experiences across messaging, email, and voice. Profitable since its founding in 2008, Sinch generated net sales of USD 3 billion (SEK 28.7 billion) in 2024 and has over 4,000 employees in more than 60 countries, with headquarters in Stockholm.

Sinch is listed on Nasdaq Stockholm (XSTO: SINCH). Visit us at sinch.com.

