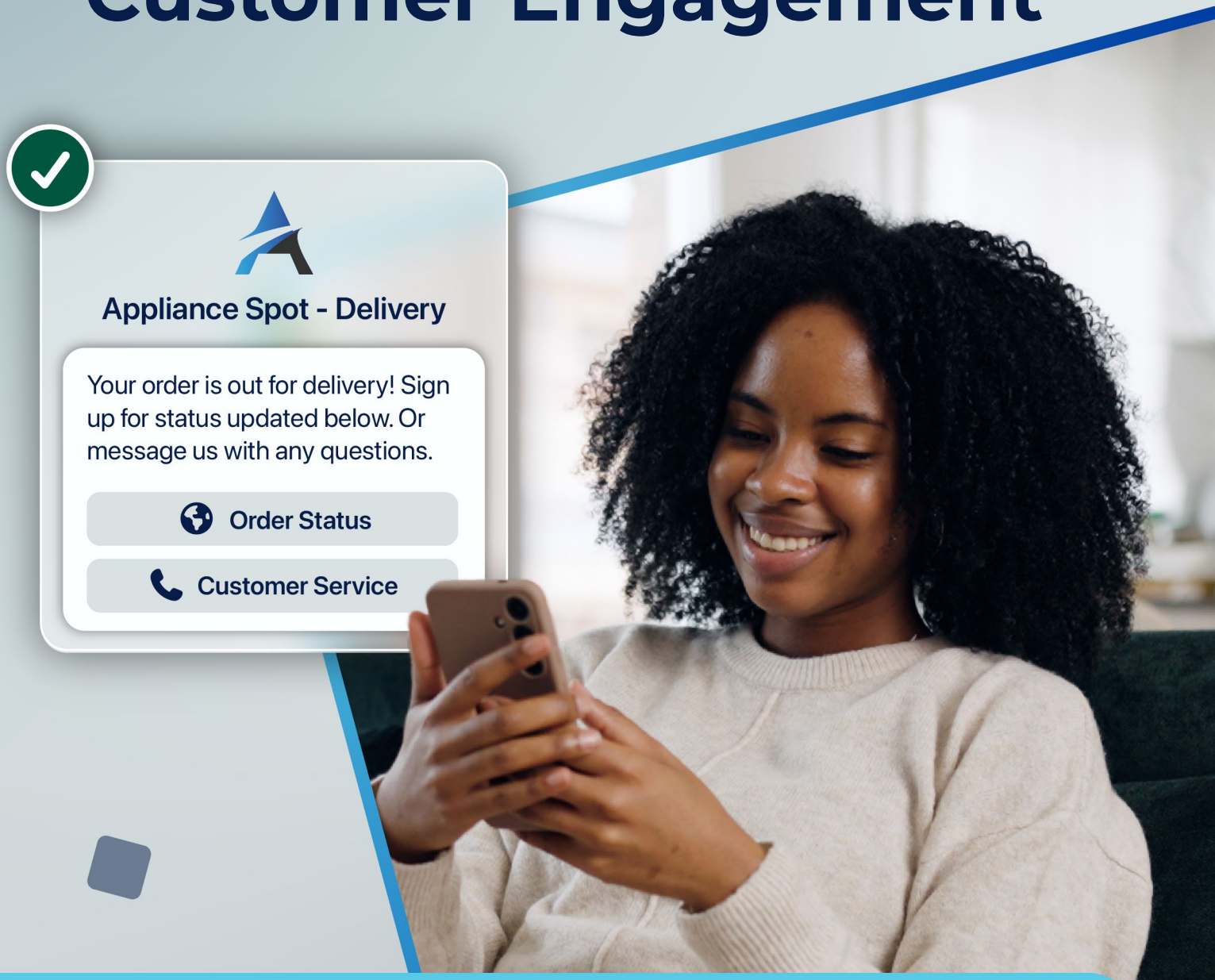
Guide to RCS Messaging for Customer Engagement



Stop Being Ignored: How Verified RCS Messaging Earns the Open, the Tap, and the Reply

FIRST ORION

Copyright © 2026 First Orion.
All Rights Reserved.

Guide to RCS Messaging for Customer Engagement

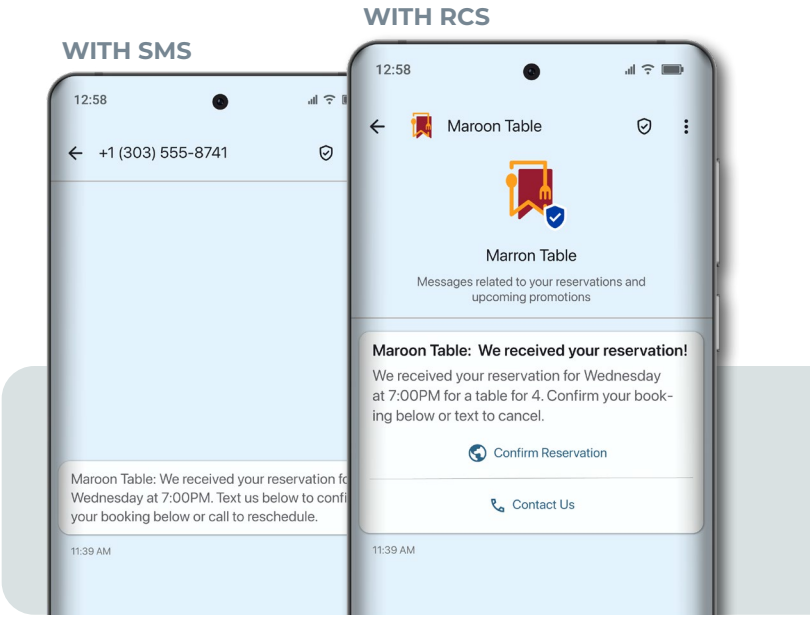
Your outbound messages face a trust problem. Recipients see an anonymous phone number, assume it's unwanted, and ignore it. RCS addresses that gap by displaying your verified business name, logo, and branded content directly in the recipient's native messaging app.

This article breaks down how RCS works, where it outperforms SMS for customer engagement, and what you need to deploy it effectively.

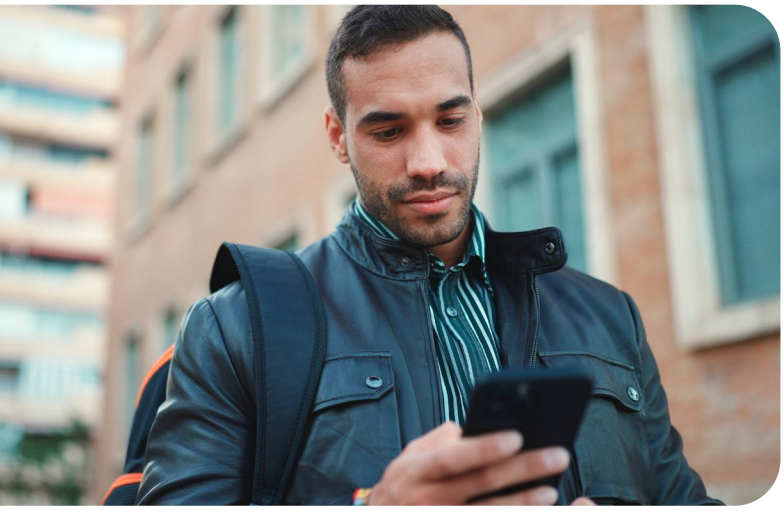
What Are Rich Communication Services (RCS)?

RCS is a mobile messaging protocol defined by the GSMA that replaces the technical limitations of SMS with carrier-grade rich media, verified sender identity, and real-time interactivity. Unlike SMS (which caps messages at 160 characters of plain text), RCS supports high-resolution images, video, carousels, suggested reply to buttons, and read receipts.

Because RCS operates at the carrier level, recipients don't need to download a separate app. Messages arrive in the same default messaging application they already use for texting. This removes the acquisition barrier that keeps many businesses stuck on SMS for critical customer communications.



How Does RCS Differ from SMS and MMS?



SMS delivers plain text with no built-in identity verification. MMS adds basic media support, but file sizes are limited, and presentation varies across devices. Neither protocol confirms whether the recipient opened the message.

RCS closes those gaps. It combines guaranteed delivery with delivery and read receipts, verified business identity, and rich interactive content in a single carrier-native channel. For customer-facing operations where brand recognition and engagement matter, that difference directly impacts response rates.

Guide to RCS Messaging for Customer Engagement

Why Does Verified Sender Identity Matter for Customer Engagement?



According to the FTC, consumers lost $470 million to text messaging scams in 2024 alone. That environment has trained recipients to distrust messages from unfamiliar senders.

RCS addresses this by requiring cryptographic sender verification before a business can message recipients. Your verified business name, logo, and brand colors appear on every message, giving recipients an immediate visual signal that the communication is legitimate.

First Orion's ENRICH® Branded Messaging applies this verification across all major U.S. carriers, ensuring your branded identity displays consistently on both Android and iOS devices.

What Are the Core RCS Features That Drive Engagement?

RCS brings several capabilities that directly affect customer interaction rates:

Rich Media
Send high-resolution product images, promotional videos, or PDF attachments directly in the conversation thread.

Suggested Replies and Actions
Embed pre-formatted response buttons that reduce the effort required to respond, schedule, or confirm.

Interactive Carousels
Let recipients browse multiple options (products, appointment slots, service packages) and act with a tap.

Read Receipts and Typing Indicators
Track delivery and open rates and customer response rates for messages sent to RCS-capable devices.

These features eliminate the back-and-forth of traditional SMS interactions. A single RCS message can contain the visual context, options, and action buttons that would otherwise require multiple SMS exchanges or a redirect to a mobile website.

©2026 FIRST ORION

Guide to RCS Messaging for Customer Engagement

Which Business Use Cases Benefit from RCS Messaging?

RCS delivers operational value in scenarios where brand trust, interactivity, or delivery confirmation directly affect business outcomes:

Appointment Reminders

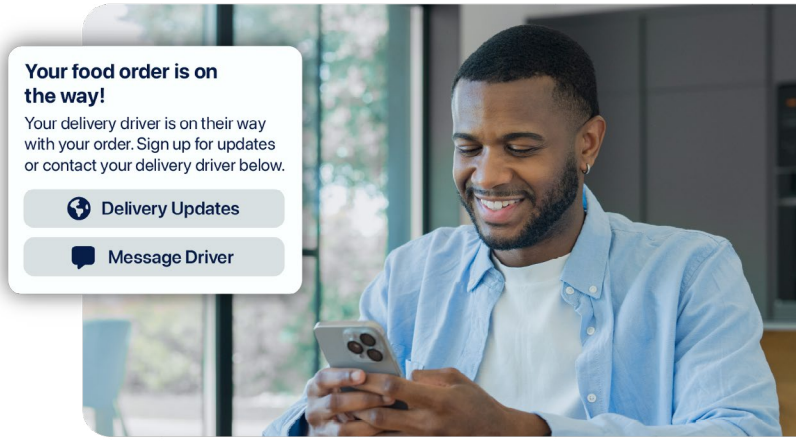
Include a branded identity, appointment details, and one-tap reschedule buttons. Healthcare organizations and service businesses reduce no-show rates when patients and clients confirm directly in the message thread.

Order and Delivery Updates

Attach product images, tracking maps, and delivery-window confirmations. Recipients see exactly what's arriving and when, reducing inbound support calls.

Authentication and Fraud Alerts

RCS offers carrier-level priority delivery and verified sender identity for time-sensitive security messages. Recipients can trust that a fraud alert displaying your verified brand actually came from your organization.



Promotional Campaigns

Retail and e-commerce brands use product carousels to show several offers in one message. Recipients can swipe through products and tap a button to reach the item or offer they want. Visual, interactive messages give recipients a reason to engage, and a clear call to action gives them a direct path to click through to your site.

How Does RCS Messaging Fit into a Broader Customer Engagement Strategy?

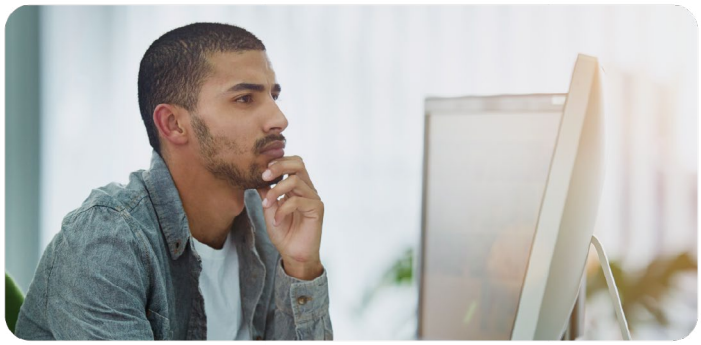


RCS works best as part of a unified communication approach that pairs messaging with voice. When your outbound calls display a verified business name through INFORM® Branded Calling and your messages arrive with the same branded identity through RCS, you create a consistent trust signal across every customer touchpoint.

First Orion's platform lets you manage both branded calling and branded messaging (from a single provider. That unified approach means your customer sees the same verified identity whether you're calling to confirm an appointment or sending an RCS reminder the day before.

©2026 FIRST ORION

Guide to RCS Messaging for Customer Engagement





RCS Messaging is Projected to Grow By

286%

in Four Years

What Does RCS Adoption Look Like in 2026?

Apple added RCS support to iOS in 2024, and adoption has accelerated rapidly since. According to Juniper Research (August 2026), business RCS message volume will exceed 485 billion globally by 2030, up from 125 billion in 2026. That represents 286% growth in four years.

Healthcare and banking are among the fastest-growing verticals for RCS adoption, with projected growth exceeding 1,000% and 600% respectively by 2030. Authentication use cases (one-time passwords, fraud alerts, account verifications) are driving much of that migration from SMS.

For enterprises evaluating their messaging infrastructure today, the trajectory is clear: RCS is becoming the default for business-to-customer messaging where trust and engagement matter.

What Should You Consider Before Deploying RCS?

RCS requires carrier support and device compatibility. As of 2026, ENRICH reaches all iOS devices (version 18.1 and above) across all major U.S. carriers. For recipients on older devices that lack RCS support, messages automatically fall back to SMS, so delivery is never interrupted.

You'll also need to manage opt-in compliance. RCS requires clear user consent before sending messages, with separate opt-in flows for marketing and transactional communications. Building a compliant opt-in process from the start protects your brand reputation and keeps your messaging program on solid regulatory ground.

Integration is straightforward. ENRICH connects through a REST API, and customer responses route back to your systems via webhook for real-time two-way communication. It can also integrate natively with CRM platforms. Most businesses complete the technical setup within two weeks.

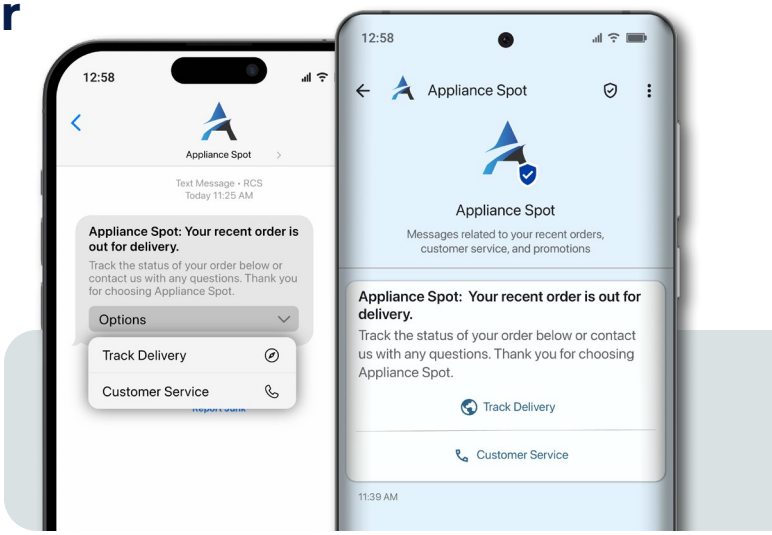


Guide to RCS Messaging for Customer Engagement

How Does RCS Strengthen Your Customer Communication?

RCS gives you a verified and interactive messaging channel that solves the core trust problem plaguing SMS. When recipients see your authenticated business identity and can interact with rich content directly in their messaging app, engagement rates reflect that confidence.

From small businesses to global enterprises, First Orion helps you deploy branded RCS messaging through ENRICH, manage call authentication, and build customer trust across every touchpoint.



ENRICH FAQs

How is ENRICH different from traditional SMS or MMS?

While both RCS and SMS are delivered in the recipient's native messaging application, SMS is limited to 160 characters of text and relies on MMS capabilities to support picture and video. ENRICH delivers rich, interactive experiences typically reserved for third-party messaging applications and enables rich media content like high-resolution images, media attachments, and carousels.

Can I use ENRICH for two-way conversations with customers?

ENRICH provisions two-way conversational application-to-person (A2P) messaging through the RCS channel. This allows the business to send branded messages via First Orion's API and receive customer replies via First Orion's webhook.

What devices or carriers support RCS and ENRICH?

ENRICH reaches all iOS devices (version 18.1 and above) across all major US carriers.

What happens if a recipient's phone does not support RCS?

RCS platforms can automatically fall back to SMS when the recipient's device lacks RCS support. This ensures your message reaches the customer regardless of device capabilities. First Orion handles this fallback routing automatically through the ENRICH platform.

What reporting is available with ENRICH?

ENRICH Branded Messaging provides high-level visibility into your RCS agents from one centralized dashboard. Businesses can see:

- Message sent and received
- Open rates
- Rich content activity
- Customer opt-out rate
- Agent status and use case
- Clicks to any action buttons

©2026 FIRST **ORION**