

# Conversational Communication in International Customer Messaging



By **GLEN KUNENE** - Editor-in-Chief

Messaging customers via SMS is very productive for use cases like user authentication and notifications, but enterprises can take their customer messaging to a higher level of engagement with two-way, conversational messaging. Nexmo Director of Strategic Carrier Relations David Vigar discusses the ways enterprises are using SMS messaging today and explains how having two-way conversations with customers opens the door to more interesting messaging use cases.



To read the full transcript, scroll below the video.

## Conversational Communication in International Customer ...



## Conversational Communication in International Customer Messaging (Full Transcript)

**David Vigar**, *Director of Strategic Carrier Relations at Nexmo*: Yeah, sure. I mean, you'll see a lot of these... we've seen a lot of the use cases popping up over the years at Nexmo. You know, I think some of the widest use cases are two-factor authentication. So, when you sign up to an app, you'll put your phone number in, they'll send you a text message with a pin code, you put that back in to verify that you're actually a person, not a robot trying to, you know, create a thousand fake accounts.

That a huge amount of that traffic on the SMS network across the world, and that's as you see a lot of the growth in the messaging industry. There is still a bit of marketing over at SMS, although I think the market's realizing that it's not quite as an effective channel as it used to be.

I think consumers like, one thing consumers like about SMS is it's not very spammy. You know, I know SMS has had its spam issues, more so in the past than today, and I think the industry and operators who have, to a good extent, got on top of that. And I think if you compare it to things like email, you know, it's in a different league of, you know, being a lot less spammy. And I think consumers really appreciate that.

So marketing, it does exist over SMS, but it's much more targeted. And because you'll see there's a higher cost in using something like email. And I think companies are less willing to adopt marketing as a channel, unless it, you know, unless it's really done in a really thoughtful way.

I think what we've seen, you know, it's something Dan mentioned earlier that's really driving some of the more interesting use cases is the growth of the ability to have a two-way conversation with your customer.

Now traditionally, you have a two-way conversation, you know, I can text Steve or Dan from my phone to their phone, and they can text me back. But for an enterprise, it's a bit more difficult because you can't employ a thousand people to start having a conversation with their customers, it's not scalable. And you can't really send a text message from a computer and get a reply because you don't have a number attached to that computer.



*"[Enterprises] can't employ a thousand people to start having a conversation with their customers, it's not scalable. And you can't really send a text message from a computer and get a reply because you don't have a number attached to that computer."*

One of the services that we've been really aggressively trying to get operators to offer is a two-way messaging service, where we can give a mobile phone number to a brand or an enterprise. And, actually, I see this all the time whenever I fly with dear old BA. I get a text message pretty much every time I've checked in, to say, "Hey, how was your checking experience?" Or, you know, "Did you use the lounge?" Or, "How was your flight with us today?"

And, you know, and I can actually reply to that number. It goes back into BA's system. It doesn't go into the handset for someone to read. It goes right into their CRM system or their customer feedback system, and it allows them to have that communication with their customer. Now obviously, they could do that over email, they could do it within their app, but to be honest, if it's on email, I'm just gonna delete it as probably spam. I mean, it's in the app. Well, I'm not gonna get it for a while because I'm probably airside and there's probably not much data signal on the tarmac.

Whereas in SMS, I'm gonna get, my pocket is gonna buzz and I'm gonna reply to it, there and then. I'm not gonna save it to later when I forget about it. So we're certainly seeing, I think, some of the more interesting and the new use cases coming out in terms of two-way messaging.

So, you know, customer feedback is an example I just described. A lot of growth in person-to-person communication, but running over applications and certainly in the sharing economy, we see this as a huge growth area where it might be you're driving your passenger or you're hosting your guest, communicating to each other.

But actually, they're not sending a text message to each other's personal phone numbers because they don't know each other, and they don't want to be handing out their personal number to someone they don't know. So, like, in application, you can stick one of these virtual numbers in the middle, have both parties texting that number so they can mask their privacy.

It has the additional feature of allowing the app to kind of monitor, I wouldn't say monitor, but to understand the information flow between their two sets of customers. And you know, do things, like click collection, understand, you know, when's the transaction occurring, that kind of thing. So that's certainly a huge growth area, and I think that's probably the most exciting area that enterprise can communicate with their customers.

It's really getting that real-time feedback from their consumers. And SMS and also voice are really great channels to do that. Because as I say, your phone, the only time your phone is gonna buzz in your pocket and you're really gonna pick it up is through, you know, those more traditional channels.

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First Name

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Are you a Developer?

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Product of Interest

Existing traffic to switch?

Traffic Volume Monthly (Optional)

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