



Marketing in a Rich Messaging World: The New Rules of Engagement

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Personalize Marketing Campaigns at Scale

Marketers face consumers with shorter attention spans and a habit of hopping from one platform to another. This requires the agility to adjust strategies swiftly and craft messages that engage consumers in dynamic digital landscapes. The moment is short, so every interaction must be easily identifiable impactful and resonate with the target audience.

Beyond the Simple Text

Some parts of the world prefer SMS ... others WhatsApp or Rich Communication Services (RCS), collectively known as "rich messaging." It's important to meet and engage customers on their favorite channels. It's also important to be noticed — and rich messaging allows for images, videos, interactivity, commerce, and more.

Vonage Messages API links SMS, MMS, RCS, and popular social chat apps within a single build. No matter what channels your customers use, you have the context to cultivate a top-notch customer experience.

***Bottom line:** Engaging with your customers through their preferred channels and adopting an omnichannel approach are business critical.*

Facts and Trends

Personalization and immediacy are mandatory for a great experience. Take note:

- **80% expect personalization:** Most consumers now expect companies to deliver personalized experiences to provide value, enjoyment, and convenience (**source: Boston Consulting Group**).
- **72% want real-time engagement:** Consumers are more likely to purchase online if they can ask questions in real-time (**source: Google for Developers**).

Why is the focus on experience important? Consider that after a bad customer experience:

- **75%** of customers are likely to take their business elsewhere.
- **48%** of customers only need one or two bad experiences before they leave.

But after a great customer experience:

- **57%** of customers will give positive feedback on a survey.
- **53%** of customers will tell friends and family.
- **52%** of customers will become more loyal to company or provider.
- **35%** of customers **WILL PURCHASE ADDITIONAL PRODUCTS**.

Source: Vonage Global Customer Engagement Report 2025

RCS and WhatsApp Stand Out

Both channels offer branded messages that facilitates interactive, two-way conversations between businesses and a global audience. Compared to SMS, **WhatsApp** allows for more sophisticated communication with customers, better protection from spoofing and fraud, and integration with your marketing, customer care, and e-commerce platforms.

But as businesses look to the future of customer engagement, **RCS** stands out as an especially promising channel. More than 1 billion people worldwide on Android devices already use RCS — with **2.1 billion active users** expected globally by the end of 2026. RCS is also available to **Apple customers** using iOS 18.1* or better on their devices.

RCS offers more robust features, enhanced security, and a better user experience over SMS. And RCS doesn't require downloading an extra app and can be more cost-effective for businesses. In fact, RCS delivers higher read and response rates than conventional channels, offering an attractive return on investment for your communications spend.

High reach

RCS and WhatsApp target customers based on their phone numbers. This offers a unique advantage and allows businesses to effectively retarget their customer base.

High open and conversion rates

As traditional marketing channels like SMS and email become less effective, rich messaging delivers an impressive 98% open rate with a 40-60% conversion rate — metrics that highlight superior engagement.

How to Use Rich Messages



Retarget abandoned cart customers to drive revenue



Send customers loyalty discount codes to drive up lifetime value



Promote sales, services, and events



Provide customer support with interactive communications, how-to videos, product information, and more

The Rich Messaging Secret

Brand recognition and trust

Your logo, brand colors, and all business information in your message

Enhanced interactions

Rich cards, buttons, quick replies, and carousels create an interactive experience

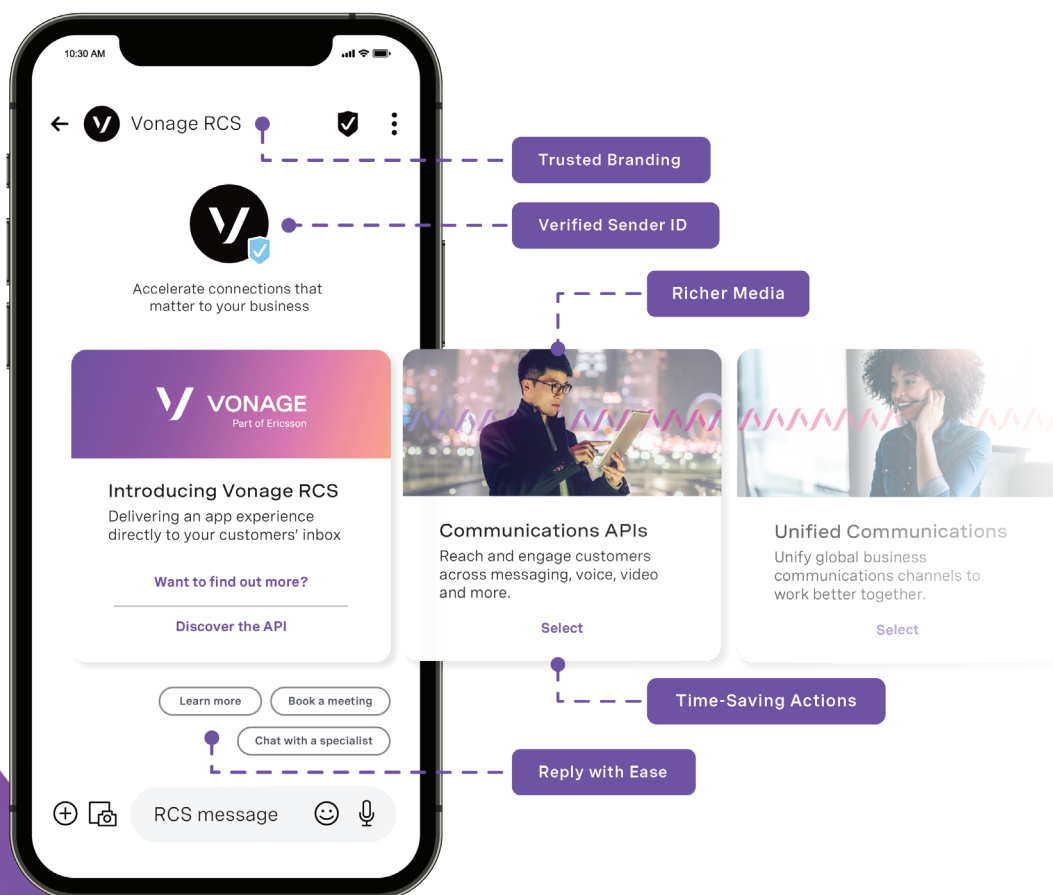
Upgraded aAnalytics

Integrated read receipts provide unprecedented insight into when messages were read

Personalization

RCS makes it easier to customize your messages with client names, tailored suggestions, quick responses, and more

Incorporating rich messaging into your strategy enriches customer interactions, seamlessly integrating with existing efforts to create a unified marketing ecosystem that deepens relationships at every touchpoint.



Create Your Campaign Checklist

Integrating rich message marketing into your strategy can enhance customer engagement and streamline your marketing efforts. But how do you ensure that this approach translates into measurable success? As with many strategies, it begins with a solid foundation. This involves:

Preparation



Business objective

Outline your goals and key performance indicators (KPIs). Have a clear understanding of the expected return for every dollar you invest in your platform, including varying costs per channel and country. Vonage can help with the calculations and planning.



Partnerships

Determine the partners you need for your campaign. These can include resources to help with the onboarding process, technical set-up, precampaign planning, optimization, and ongoing technical and consultative support.



Creative

Test various creatives to learn what resonates with your customers to drive a conversion. Often, businesses simply copy the creative from existing SMS or email marketing campaigns. RCS and WhatsApp are unique by offering higher engagement and a more conversational experience than other platforms.

This calls for creative that truly speaks to its specific nature to ensure that messages feel personal and resonate with users. WhatsApp offers many different rich media templates. So be sure to test different creative approaches to help understand which works best. Vonage can help you optimize and scale high-performing creative to maximize your evergreen or always-on campaigns and time-sensitive sales campaigns.



Measurement

Emphasize measurement as the cornerstone of your performance marketing campaign. After all, you must understand which creative strategies perform and which don't. This helps you optimize campaigns and maximize conversions and ROI. The tracking tags and measurement pixels you use for existing performance marketing campaigns should be consistent with what you use across your retargeting campaigns. This approach will show how rich messaging performs compared to other channels and offer guidance on where to focus your efforts to maximize profits.

- **Incremental sales:** When launching rich marketing messages, it's important to monitor for any increase in sales, especially as you continue your existing campaigns to better understand the unique impact and value it brings to your strategy.
- **Lifetime value:** As you measure the cost per conversion of each message sent, it's best to measure the lifetime value of each conversion. You can then gauge the value of WhatsApp and RCS as channels within your marketing strategy. This will help you fine tune your KPIs by channel over time. When setting up cohorts, it is worth looking at lifetime value over various day segments — such as spend value over one, three, 15, and 30 days.

Execution



Testing

Set up campaigns and start A/B testing creative options and real-time measurement. Remember, it takes time to effectively gather learnings before you start to meet or beat your ROI goals and KPIs.



Optimization

Work with Vonage to optimize the campaigns so that you can maximize ROI, sales, and profits for your business.



Scaling

Reevaluate budgets allocated to rich marketing messages and start scaling. You still need to learn what is the inflection point of efficient returns at a campaign level. Vonage can guide you through the process, to evaluate your budget and scale in a way to maximize returns.



Ongoing testing

Keep testing new high-performing creative in parallel to your existing evergreen or always-on campaigns. Vonage can help you create plans to ensure that rich messaging remains a high-performing channel for your business.



Post-campaign analysis and review

Assemble campaign data — messages sent, open rates, click-through rates, conversions, lifetime value of a customer, etc. — to track performance. Vonage can provide support on post-campaign performance and help with actionable insights and optimization.

Use Rich Messaging Across the Marketing Funnel



Awareness

Raise awareness of your brand by displaying your company's verified logo within the message to establish validity and trust.

- Target messages based on demographics or preferences
- Include links or QR code to your social media pages, products on your website, or an invitation to sign up for your email newsletter



Consideration

Engage your customers by answering their questions and bringing them down the funnel with interactive two-way conversations.

- Product consultation and recommendations
- New product launches
- Reminder of existing promotions



Conversion

Convert customers when they are ready to buy. Set up payments to reduce any friction during the purchasing process.

- Use cases: Commerce and lead generation
- Abandoned cart messages with payments and checkout
- Payment reminders for ad-hoc or regular bill payments
- Full shopping capabilities leveraging catalog and payments (either in-app or through links)



Reengagement

Leverage Rich Messages to reengage your existing customers

- Loyalty points expiration updates

Why Vonage?



Expert experience

We have a global support organization with comprehensive developer resources. Businesses can leverage **RCS agents** for testing features, and Vonage was one of the first companies in the world to partner with WhatsApp.



Proven success

Vonage cares about helping companies with their communications needs. We've worked closely with thousands of businesses globally and have a deep understanding of rich messaging and what is required for your business to be successful.



Customized consultation

Vonage appreciates the uniqueness of every business and is committed to providing a tailored, consultative approach to ensure your campaigns thrive. Our supportive team will assist you with everything from onboarding and technical setup to precampaign planning and optimization. And you'll enjoy technical and strategic support along the way.



Simple testing

The Vonage platform gives you the ability to run a proof of concept without heavy integrations. Our suite of APIs can seamlessly connect to your CRM and marketing stack for an efficient workflow.



Creative assets

Vonage leverages AI tools to build creative at scale for your marketing campaigns. This simplifies A/B testing to optimize and meet your business KPIs.



Case Study

HolidayPirates engages travelers with fast, relevant marketing messages powered by Vonage and WhatsApp.

vonage.com/resources/customers/holidaypirates