

SETUP GUIDE

The Twilio account that can actually *text a customer.*

Four registrations sit between a trial account and a US phone number the carriers will deliver from. Every tutorial skips them, because **on a trial everything appears to work** — right up until the recipient is somebody other than you.

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EDITION

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SCOPE

US A2P 10DLC on Twilio. Voice calling needs none of it

STATUS

Working reference — fees read off the Twilio console, not a blog

WHY THIS EXISTS

A trial account can only text the person who built it.

This is the single reason working demos stop working in production, and it is almost never mentioned on camera.

A Twilio **trial** account can send SMS only to numbers you have explicitly verified — in practice, your own phone. It also prefixes every message with `Sent from a Twilio trial account`. So the standard tutorial — build an agent, book an appointment, watch the confirmation text arrive — is a closed loop in which the builder is also the customer. Nothing about it proves the system can reach a stranger.

Upgrading removes the verified-numbers restriction. **It does not make your messages arrive.** Sending automated messages to US mobiles from an ordinary local number requires a separate registration with the carriers, and that is what the rest of this document is.

THE FAILURE MODE THAT COSTS PEOPLE WEEKS

Unregistered traffic is **filtered, not rejected**. The API returns a success response, your automation records a delivered message, your logs are green — and the customer's phone never buzzes. There is no error to notice. People discover this when a client asks why nobody got their reminders.

What needs registration, and what does not

WHAT YOU ARE DOING	REGISTRATION	NOTES
Inbound and outbound voice calls	None	A voice-only AI receptionist needs nothing in this document
SMS to your own verified number	None	Works on a trial. This is what demos use
SMS to anyone else, from a local number	A2P 10DLC	The four stages that follow
SMS from a toll-free number	Toll-free verification	A different process with different forms

If your agent only answers the phone, you can stop reading here. The registration burden lands entirely on the messaging half — the reminders, the missed-call text-back, the follow-ups.

THE WORDS NOBODY DEFINES

Six terms that make the rest of the process readable.

Every form you are about to fill in uses these as though you already know them.

10DLC — ten-digit long code

An **ordinary local phone number**. Ten digits, like a number any person would have. “Long code” exists only to distinguish it from a **short code** — the five- or six-digit numbers banks and national retailers text from, which cost around **\$1,000 a month** and take months to provision. Short codes were the original sanctioned way to message at volume; long codes were for humans talking to humans.

Spammers noticed that local numbers were cheap, instant and disposable, and moved their traffic there.

A2P 10DLC is the carriers' answer: if a business wants to send automated messages from an ordinary number, it must be registered and traceable first.

A2P and P2P

Application-to-person is software messaging a human — a reminder, a confirmation, a verification code. **Person-to-person** is you texting a friend. The carriers police the first and not the second, and an automation platform sending on your behalf is unambiguously the first.

Segment

Limits and pricing are quoted in **segments**, not messages. A plain-text SMS holds 160 characters per segment; a longer message, or one containing emoji or certain punctuation, silently becomes several. **A “2,000 per day” limit is not 2,000 messages.**

Who the parties actually are

PARTY	ROLE
You	The business the message is sent on behalf of. In the US your <i>number</i> is what shows as the sender — your name only appears if you write it into the text
Twilio	Your provider. It submits your paperwork upstream on your behalf
TCR The Campaign Registry	The independent registry every US carrier reads. It holds the brand and campaign records
The carriers	AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon. They set the throughput limits and do the filtering

Twilio is not the one approving you. It is a courier to TCR, which is why Twilio support cannot simply override a rejection — and why the fee is charged whether or not you pass.

FOUR STAGES

What the whole process is, before you start clicking.

Each stage gates the next. The order is not optional, and the console does not make the shape obvious.

#	STAGE	COST	TIME
1	Upgrade off trial Add a payment method and fund the account	~\$20 minimum funding	Minutes
2	Customer profile Your business identity, verified once	Free	Minutes to days
3	Brand registration Your identity, filed with TCR	\$4.50 low-volume \$46 standard	Minutes, or up to 7 days if vetted manually
4	Campaign registration What you send, and how people opted in	\$15 one-time \$1.50–10/month	Hours to weeks ours: <2h · page 10

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SEPARATE REGISTRATIONS,
EACH GATING THE NEXT

1–4

WEEKS, END TO END,
IN THE NORMAL CASE

\$0

OF THIS APPLIES TO
A VOICE-ONLY AGENT

Stage 4 is the one that breaks promises

Stages 1 to 3 are largely mechanical and can be done in an afternoon. **The campaign is a queue you cannot shorten**, and it is the stage people forget when quoting a client a timeline. If a build is two weeks and messaging is part of it, the honest answer is not “two weeks” — it is two weeks plus a carrier queue that is outside anybody's control.

START THE PAPERWORK ON DAY ONE

Registration runs in parallel with the build and depends on nothing technical — only on the client's legal details. Filing it in week one and building in weeks one and two is the difference between a project that lands on time and one that sits finished and undeliverable for a fortnight.

UPGRADE

A trial account cannot register a brand at all.

This is a hard block rather than a soft one, so it is not optional housekeeping.

Upgrading means adding a payment method and funding the account — typically a **\$20 minimum**. The brand and campaign fees are then drawn from that balance.

What the upgrade wizard actually collects

It is not only billing. The wizard walks through **business information, tax address, starting balance and payment details**, and the business-information step is where your **customer profile is created** — stage 2, started without announcing itself. Fill it as carefully as a formal application, because that is what it is.

FIELD	WHAT TO PUT
Legal business name	Exactly as your tax authority holds it. See stage 2
Business website	A live site. Not a placeholder, not a parked domain
Industry	What you sell, not what you build with. A services business is professional services, not technology
Registration authority	For a US entity, the EIN
Registration number	The EIN itself, formatted 00-0000000
Tax address	The business's registered address. See stage 2, overleaf

Who can actually do this — the question clients ask

Upgrading needs a card, not a company. Anyone can upgrade and fund an account. The company paperwork is only needed one stage later, at the *brand*, and that is where a client can get stuck.

WHO THE CLIENT IS	WHAT THEY CAN REGISTER
A registered business with a tax ID	Low-Volume Standard (\$4.50) or Standard. The normal case — any incorporated business has one
A sole trader in the US or Canada with no tax ID	Sole Proprietor brand. Limited to one campaign and one phone number , at low throughput, and a mobile number can validate at most three brands
Anyone holding a tax ID	Not the sole proprietor tier — the registry rules it out, whatever the business size
A business outside the US or Canada, with no US entity	No US brand. They need a local sender in their own country instead — a different regime entirely

CUSTOMER PROFILE

One business identity, reused by everything after it.

Twilio calls this Trust Hub. It is your business, verified once, and every trust product hangs off it.

A **customer profile** is a verified record of who you are: legal name, tax ID, registered address, website, and a named human who is authorised to speak for the business. It is free, and it is the prerequisite for A2P messaging, for caller-ID branding, for SHAKEN/STIR attestation — all of it.

Approval is often **immediate**, because the details were already collected during the upgrade. Once approved, **the business data locks**: the edit control greys out, and changes require resubmission or support. That is expected behaviour, not a fault. The profile's *friendly name* stays editable, because it is only a label.

The rule that governs every field

Your legal name, tax ID and address are checked against **the record your tax authority holds** — in the US, the letter issued when the EIN was assigned. Not a close match: the same string. Do not retype it from memory, do not tidy the capitalisation, do not expand an abbreviation the record does not expand.

THE SINGLE MOST CONSEQUENTIAL MIS-CLICK

You will be asked whether you are a **direct customer** or an **ISV, reseller or partner**. The tempting reading — *"I build for clients, so I must be a partner"* — is wrong. The question is whether you **resell the platform**: onboarding clients as subaccounts beneath your own account and registering brands on their behalf. If your clients hold their own accounts, you are a **direct customer**. Choosing ISV routes you into a subaccount workflow that will never have any subaccounts.

THE TAX ADDRESS IS THE ENTITY'S, NOT YOURS

Twilio words it as "the physical address you'll be using Twilio services", which reads oddly if you operate from another country. For a registered business it means **the address on the business's tax record**. It sets your US telecom tax treatment, and — more importantly — the brand check in stage 3 matches name, tax ID *and* address against that record. A personal or foreign address here guarantees a mismatch later.

The same question reappears in at least three other disguises — a "tech provider programme" banner, a "share your brand with your subaccounts" promotion, and a radio button during brand registration. The console assumes you are a platform. Most people reading this are not.

THE BRAND

Your identity, filed with the registry the carriers read.

The brand tells carriers **who** is sending. The campaign, next, tells them **what** you send, **to whom**, and **how they agreed**.

Which tier

TIER	FEE	WHEN IT IS RIGHT
Low-Volume Standard	\$4.50	Under roughly 6,000 segments a day. Covers essentially every small and medium business
Standard	\$46	Messaging at scale, and only then. Adds third-party vetting and higher throughput ceilings
Sole proprietor	—	Not available to any entity holding a tax ID , which includes every registered company

The tenfold price gap tempts people upward. It should not: **the failure modes are identical on both tiers**. What Standard buys is throughput, not a smoother review.

Three answers to get right on the form

FIELD	ANSWER
Company type	Private for an ordinary privately held company. Public means publicly traded
Brand type	Low-volume standard, per above
Share brand with subaccounts	No , unless you genuinely resell

WHY BRAND SHARING IS WORSE THAN MERELY UNNECESSARY

Sharing lets subaccount campaigns register **under your brand**, so the sender identity the carriers see is *yours* rather than the business actually sending. If you build for clients, that is backwards: each client should register their own brand under their own entity and tax ID, so their messages are attributed to them. Carriers also check that message content matches the registered brand — a text signed by one company but sent under another's registration is exactly the shape that gets flagged.

Registration usually completes in minutes. If any detail conflicts with the tax record, it drops into manual vetting — up to seven days. That is a review, not a rejection.

THE CAMPAIGN

What you send, and how people agreed to receive it.

The slow stage, the expensive stage, and the one that gets rejected.

A campaign is a described messaging programme: a use case, a description, real sample messages, and an account of how recipients consented. It is linked to a **Messaging Service**, and your phone numbers are attached to that service afterwards.

TWILIO NAMES THE CULPRIT ITSELF

Most campaigns that fail are rejected on **the consent description** — the free-text field asking how end users opt in. Not the architecture, not the samples. Describe the mechanism concretely: where the number is collected, what the person saw or heard at that moment, and what they agreed to. If several opt-in routes exist, list all of them.

The privacy policy sentence carriers look for

Your privacy policy must be live at a real URL and must state that opt-in data is not passed on. Its *absence* is a named, common rejection cause, so the wording is not decorative:

No mobile information will be shared with third parties or affiliates for marketing or promotional purposes. Text messaging originator opt-in data and consent are not shared with any third party.

If numbers are collected on a web form

The page must show, next to the phone field and not hidden behind a link: the programme name, what the messages are about, Message frequency varies, Message and data rates may apply, opt-out and help instructions, links to terms and privacy, and **two separate unticked checkboxes** — one for messaging consent, one for terms. Never pre-ticked, never combined. Consent must not be a condition of purchase.

Sample messages

Carriers use them to recognise your traffic. **They must match what you actually send**, including the merge fields. Samples written for a programme that does not run are both a rejection risk and a misrepresentation to the carriers.

Do not put personal data into campaign fields. Brand names and business phone numbers are fine; customer details are not.

STAGE FOUR, PREPARED

What has to exist before you press submit.

The campaign form checks things that live outside Twilio. Build them first, or the review clock starts on a rejection.

Your website comes first

PAGE	WHAT THE FORM CHECKS
Privacy policy	Live at a real URL, and stating that opt-in data is not shared onward — the sentence on page 08
Terms	A section on your texts: the programme name, what you send, how often, “message and data rates may apply”, a support contact, and HELP and STOP in bold. Most terms pages have none of this
Both	Required fields on the form since June 2026, linked from the site, returning a page rather than a 404

A consent line that does the whole job

The one our own receptionist says after it books a call. Every clause maps to a requirement: who is texting, why, how often, that it is automated, the cost, how to stop, and that saying no changes nothing.

“One last thing — can Hisora text you a confirmation and a reminder for this call, at this number? It’s usually two or three texts, sent automatically. Message and data rates may apply, and you can reply STOP to opt out or HELP for help at any time. Saying no won’t affect your booking.”

CONSENT COVERS WHAT YOU ASKED FOR, AND NOTHING MORE

If people agreed to confirmations and reminders, that is all you may send them. Adding promotions, review requests or win-back messages later means **new consent** — written consent for anything promotional — and an **updated campaign**. Start with the messages you actually need, and widen it on purpose.

Sample messages: name your brand in every one, carry STOP in every one, and write the variable parts in brackets. Leaving links and phone numbers out of the messages keeps two content boxes on the form unticked — fewer things for a reviewer to question.

STAGE FOUR, FIELD BY FIELD

Filling in the form, and what you agree to at the end.

Most fields are short. Two decide whether you pass: how people consent, and the sample messages.

FIELD	WHAT GOES IN
Use case	Low Volume Mixed for most small businesses — the cheapest monthly tier, under ~2,000 segments a day to T-Mobile. <i>2FA</i> is only for login codes
Messaging Service	Create a new one. Numbers attach to it after approval
Description	Who you are, who receives texts, why, and what you never send. Two to four plain sentences
Sample messages	Two to five, in real wording. Brand name and STOP in each, the variable parts in brackets
Message contents	Tick only what is true. No links and no phone numbers keeps both boxes empty
How users consent	Where and when people agree, the exact words they hear or see, and how it is recorded. Twilio says most rejections start here
Privacy & terms	Live URLs — see page 09
Opt-in keyword & message	Blank, unless people can text a keyword to join

WHAT YOU AGREE TO WHEN YOU PRESS CREATE

A one-time **\$15 vetting fee**, charged even if the campaign is rejected. **\$1.50 to \$10 a month** for the campaign. **Carrier fees on every text segment**, on top of Twilio's own per-message price. And **one message per second per number** to most carriers. Until approval, your texts stay on unregistered routes and are filtered.

How long review takes — nobody knows, including Twilio

On the day we filed ours, the confirmation email said **1–3 business days**, the console said **2–3 weeks**, and the help centre said **10–15 days**. **Ours was approved in under two hours**. One data point is not a promise, and the queue is what it is on the day — so **quote a client the longest estimate** and let a fast approval be the good news.

WHAT ACTUALLY GOES WRONG

Almost every rejection is clerical.

Not technical, not judgement calls. Typing, mismatches and dead links — each costing another turn through the queue.

CAUSE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE, AND THE FIX
Name or tax ID mismatch	The registry's leading cause. Copy the legal name and address character for character from the tax authority's own letter
A policy URL that 404s	The privacy or terms link resolves to nothing. Open both in a private window before submitting
Missing sharing sentence	A privacy policy exists but never says opt-in data is not shared onward. See page 08
A personal email address	A free webmail address as the business contact. Use one on the company's own domain
Vague consent description	"Customers opt in on our website" describes nothing. Say where, when and what they saw
Samples that do not match	Generic placeholders instead of the messages the system genuinely sends
Wrong customer type	Registering as a reseller with nothing to resell. See page 06

THE COMPOUNDING COST

A brand rejection costs days. **A campaign rejection costs the full queue again** — the full review again, for a typo. This is why the paperwork deserves the same care as the build, and why it goes first rather than last.

Fees are charged per submission, not per approval. A rejected registration is not refunded, and the resubmission is billed again.

BEFORE YOU BUILD

A number rented from a voice platform cannot join your campaign.

Most voice-agent tutorials buy the phone number inside the voice platform. That one click quietly decides how your texting works.

Your campaign is linked to a **Messaging Service in your own Twilio account**, and only numbers held in that account can join it. A number bought inside a voice platform such as Retell lives in *the platform's* Twilio account instead. It answers calls perfectly well, but it **cannot send the texts you just registered**. The number a caller dials and the number your confirmation comes from end up being two different things, unless you plan for it.

Three ways to handle it

OPTION	HOW IT WORKS	THE COST
Two numbers	Calls on the platform's number, texts from a number in your Twilio	No setup, but the confirmation arrives from a number the caller never dialled, which reads as spam
The platform's own SMS	The voice platform texts from the same number, for example Retell's SMS add-on	A second A2P registration run through the platform (2–3 weeks), a monthly add-on fee, and texts that bypass your own automation
Bring your own carrier	Buy the number in your Twilio and connect it to the voice platform over a SIP trunk	About an hour of configuration. One number for calls and texts, owned by you, on the brand you already registered

THE RULE OF THUMB

Platform numbers are for prototypes and voice-only lines. **Anything that sends texts, and anything a client depends on, gets a number you own** — and for client work, owned in the client's own account, so it stays theirs if they ever change provider.

Retell also offers a pool of pre-approved numbers that need no registration, but they send a fixed template during the call only — not a custom booking confirmation. Retell SMS details per Retell's documentation, September 2026.

FINISHING, AND LIMITS

Approved is not the same as connected.

One step remains, and it is the one people skip because the console stops nagging.

An approved campaign does nothing on its own. **Your phone numbers have to be attached to the Messaging Service the campaign is linked to.** A number left outside it is still unregistered, still filtered, and still fails silently. Check every number, not only the one you tested with.

Two limits, and neither crashes your automation

Per second, bursts above your throughput tier are throttled and can fail with error 30022. **Per day**, T-Mobile caps each brand — about 2,000 segments for a small business — and past it messages go undelivered with 30023 until midnight Pacific. Either way the API accepts the request, so your workflow reports success: **the failure only appears in the message's status afterwards.** Watch delivery status, not the send.

What this document does not cover

NOT COVERED	WHERE IT GOES INSTEAD
Toll-free numbers	A separate toll-free verification process
WhatsApp	Meta business verification, a different regime entirely
Short codes	Months of lead time and roughly \$1,000/month
Non-US recipients	Each country has its own sender rules
Caller ID and spam labelling	Voice-side products — verification, branded calling, attestation

REGISTRATION IS PERMISSION FROM CARRIERS, NOT FROM THE LAW

Passing A2P registration means the carriers will *deliver* your messages. It says nothing about whether you were entitled to send them. Consent, opt-out handling and the rules on what a message may contain are governed separately by the TCPA, and a registered campaign is no defence to any of it. **They are two different permissions and you need both.**

Fees and timings verified against the Twilio console, September 2026. Both move; check them at the point of use rather than quoting this page to a client.