twilio

Global Study: Consumer Engagement Best Practices for 2020

Methodology

In partnership with Lawless Research, Twilio surveyed 2,500 consumers in the US, UK, Germany, and Australia about their communications preferences and experiences.

Respondents all owned a smartphone or mobile phone and had been the recipient of communication from a business via a variety of channels including email text message, messaging app, social media, phone, or a company's mobile app.

Executive Summary

Despite an explosion of new channels, email and text are still the preferred channels for consumers when talking to businesses.

Over the past decade, the number of ways consumers communicate with one another has dramatically increased. With a slew of new channels rising in popularity, businesses are presented with the challenge of figuring out how to interact with their customers on all these new mediums. According to Twilio's research, while most consumers are annoyed by communications from businesses, they will also reward businesses who listen to their preferences and communicate with them in the right way.

Email is king, but text if urgent

83%

of consumers prefer to receive communications from businesses over email
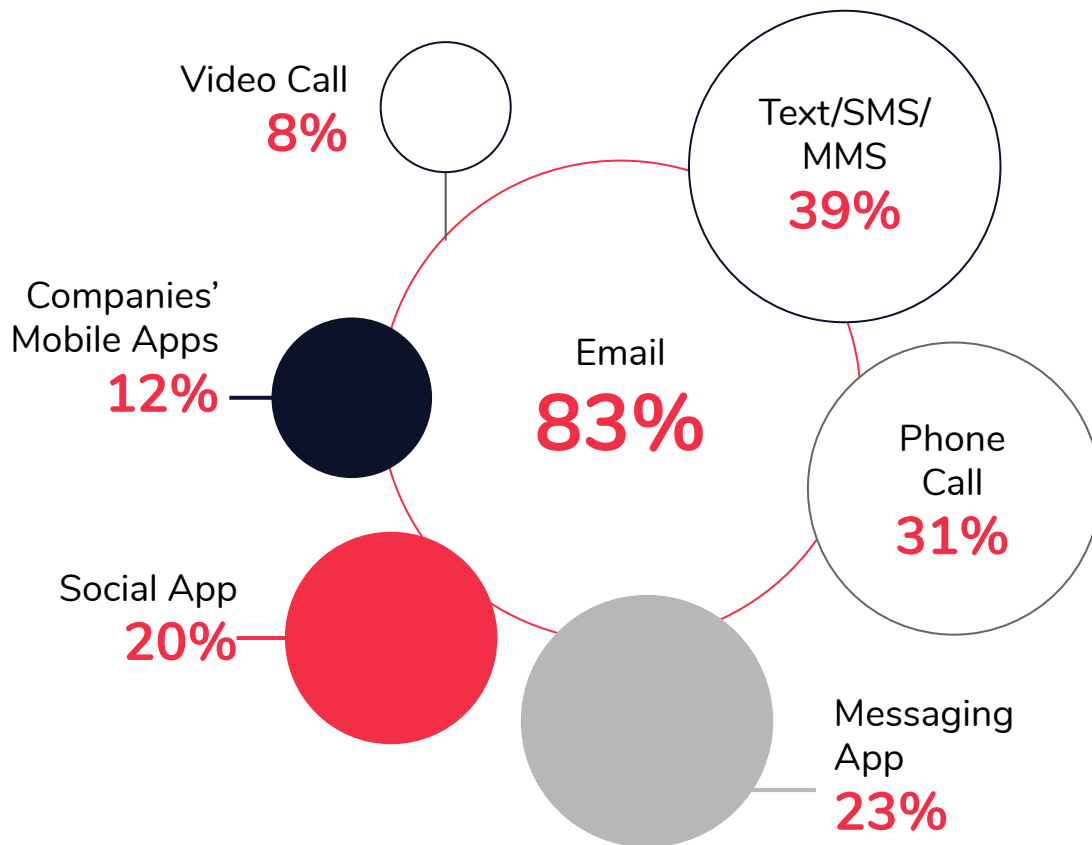
Text is

2.5x

more preferred than email for urgent communications

Email is still the preferred way to receive messages from businesses

In general, what digital communication methods or channels do you prefer when receiving communications from businesses? Select all that apply.

Video Call
8%

Text/SMS/MMS
39%

Companies' Mobile Apps
12%

Email
83%

Phone Call
31%
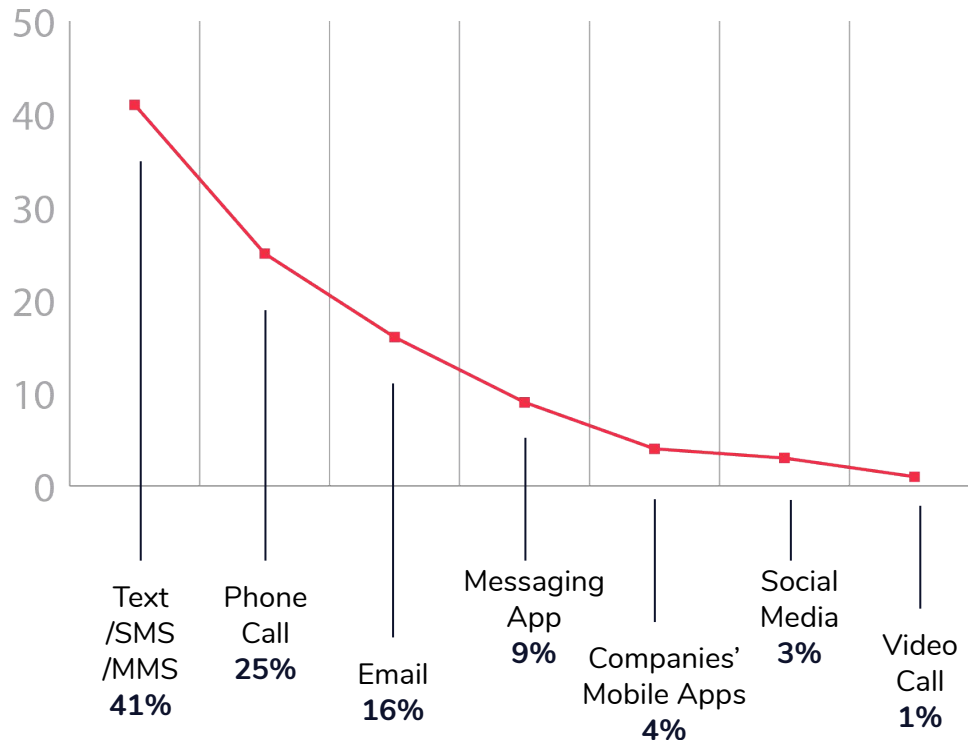
Social App
20%

Messaging App
23%

However, texts are over twice as popular as email when receiving urgent communications from businesses

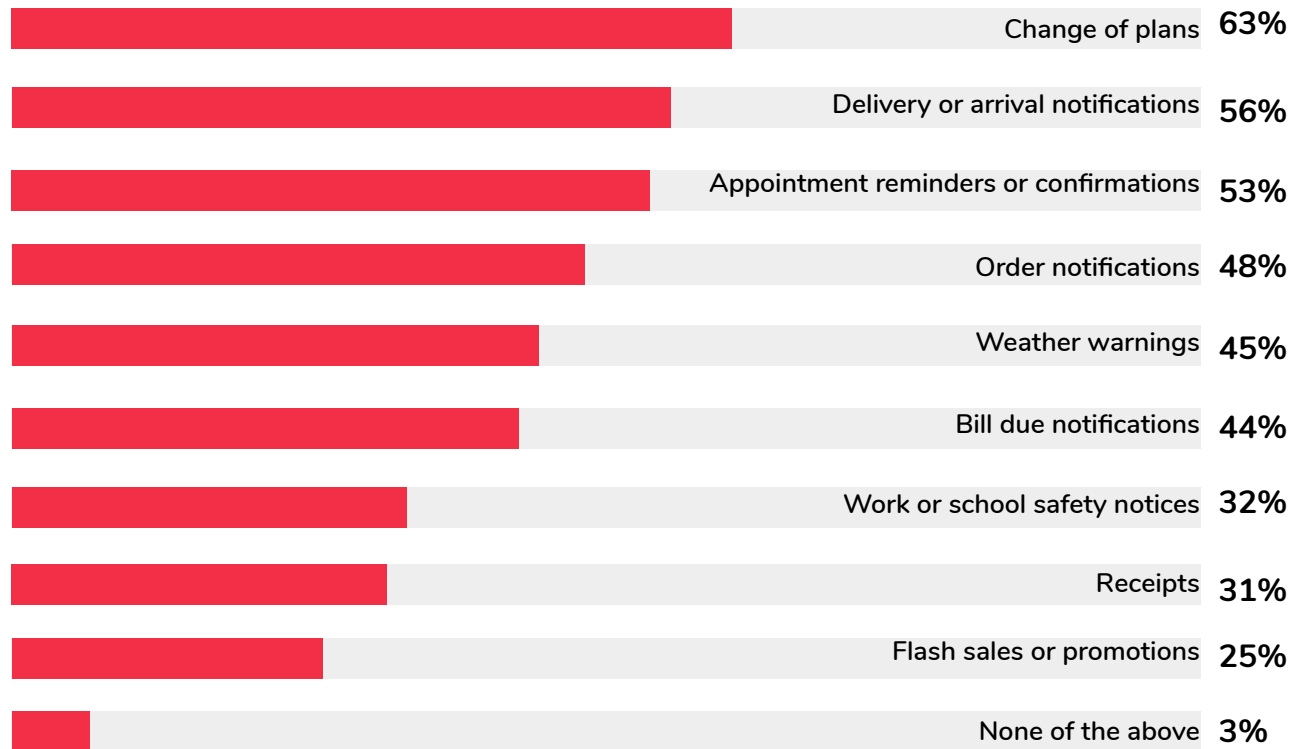Text/SMS is **2.5X** more preferred than email for urgent communications (41% vs. 16%)

What method is best for receiving communications that are urgent or require an immediate response? Choose one.

Text /SMS /MMS **41%**	Phone Call **25%**	Email **16%**	Messaging App **9%**	Companies' Mobile Apps **4%**	Social Media **3%**	Video Call **1%**

Messages about change of plans are considered most urgent

What types of communications do you want to receive immediately? Select all that apply.

Change of plans	**63%**
Delivery or arrival notifications	**56%**
Appointment reminders or confirmations	**53%**
Order notifications	**48%**
Weather warnings	**45%**
Bill due notifications	**44%**
Work or school safety notices	**32%**
Receipts	**31%**
Flash sales or promotions	**25%**
None of the above	**3%**

Majority of consumers want to receive the following communications immediately:

63%
Change of plans

56%
Delivery notifications

54%
Appointment reminders/confirmations

Only 12% of consumers prefer a company's mobile app for receiving communications.

7 out of 10 consumers curate their home screens

Email, browser and messaging apps are the most popular home screen apps.

Less than half of consumers say they put corporate mobile apps on their home screen.

Communicate correctly and reap the rewards

75%

of consumers have rewarded businesses that communicate in the way they prefer

Businesses that communicate using the right frequency and channels enjoy higher consumer goodwill, including:

42% visited their website

34% made a purchase

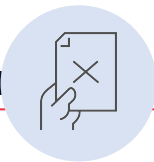**31%** had a higher opinion of the company

17% recommended the business

15% posted a positive review

7 in 10 consumers have penalized a business for using the wrong frequency and channel

Most common method is unsubscribing

(41%)

Least common method is posting a negative review

(8%)

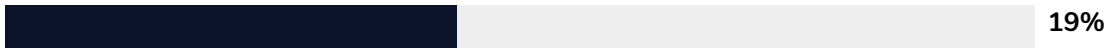# When a business did not communicate with you in the way you prefer - did you do any of these in the past year?
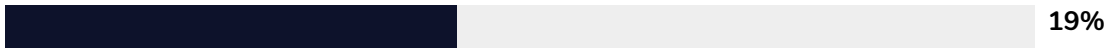
Unsubscribed/disabled notifications from the business

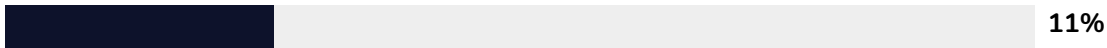**41%**

Had a lower opinion of the company
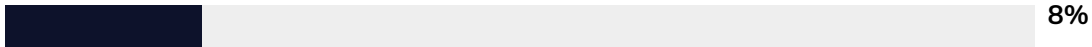
30%

Stopped doing business with the company

19%

Purchased less

19%

Recommended against using the business

11%

Posted a negative review online

8%

None of the above

29%

Give consumers contact control

What is most important to you when a business communicates with you?

Can specify the frequency I want to receive messages
29%

Easy to opt out of receiving messages
54%

Can choose the ways I receive communications
52%

Can specify the types of communications I receive
44%

Communications are personalized
21%

Can easily reply to the message
32%

Only receive messages when I've opted in
49%
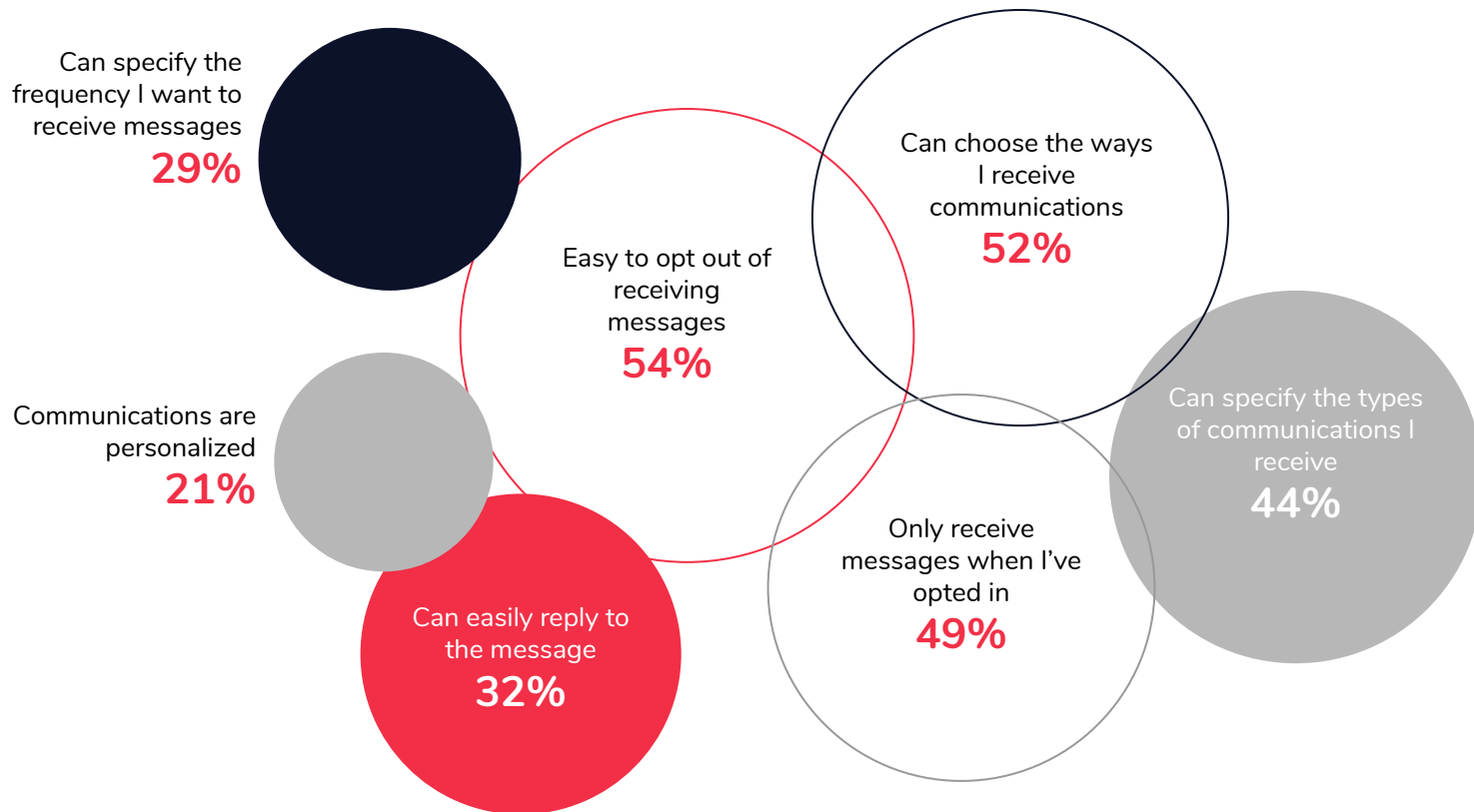
54%

of consumers want businesses to make it easy to opt out

52%

of consumers want the option to choose the channel where they receive messages from businesses

Personalization is key, especially for younger generations

If you want to reach younger generations, you need to meet your customers where they are.

Younger generations want to be able to receive communications on more channels than **older generations (3 vs 2).**

Gen Z and Millennials want communications to be **personalized** and want a choice of the **time of day** of when messages are received.

Millennials prefer to receive **promotions/sales messages more frequently** than Baby Boomers.

While they are open to more frequent communications, younger generations are more likely than older generations to penalize companies for **poor communication experiences.**

Personalization is more important to Gen Z and Millennials

Compared to older generations,
Gen Z and Millennials want
personalization and a **choice of
the time of day** of when messages
are received.

40% of Millennials have made a purchase as a result of being communicated with in their preferred way

When a business communicated with you in the way you prefer (eg., using the right frequency and channels), which of the following did you do in the past year? Select all that apply.

23%

of Millennials

Would recommend a business, whereas only

11%

of Baby Boomers

would do the same

22%

of Gen Z's

Would post a positive review online, whereas only

12%

of Gen Xers

would do the same

Younger generations more likely than older generations to penalize companies for poor communication experiences

As a result of a poor communication experience, Gen Zs and Millennials are more likely than Gen Xers and Baby Boomers to:

1
Have a lower opinion of the company
(33% vs. 27%)

2
Stop doing business with the company
(23% vs. 16%)

3
Purchase less
(23% vs. 16%)

4
Recommend against business
(15% vs. 7%)

5
Post a negative review
(12% vs. 5%)

Meet consumers on the right channel with the right message

94%

of consumers are annoyed by communications from businesses

Annoyances include:

56%
Content is
not relevant
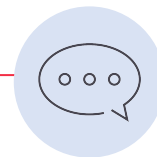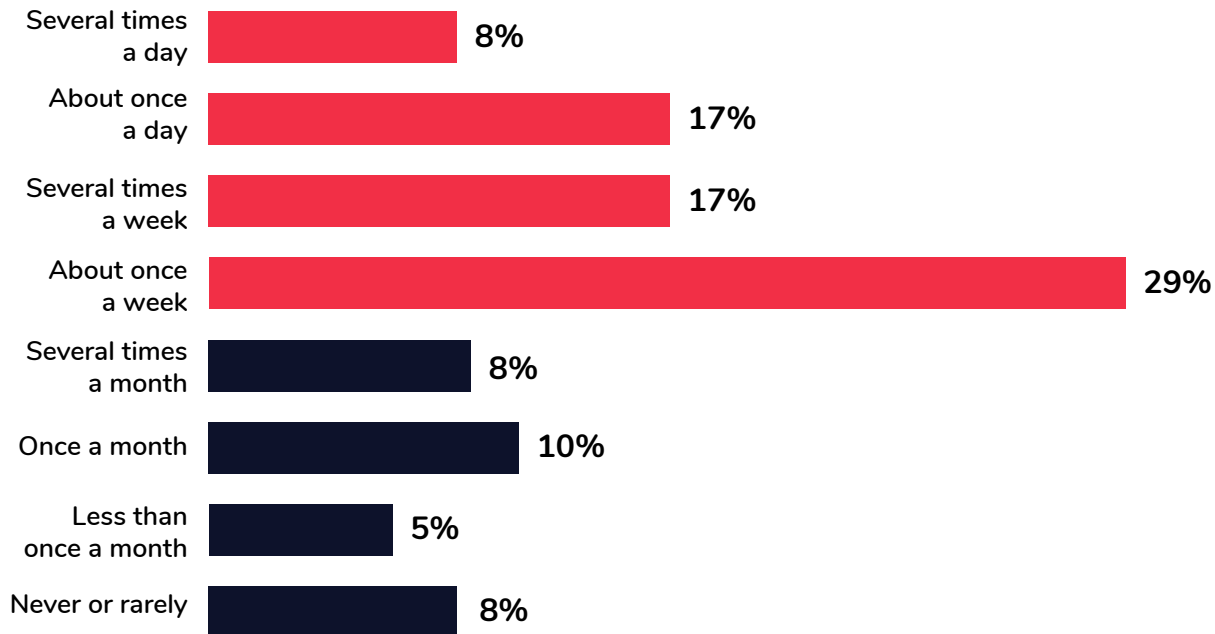
41%
Don't remember
opting in

33%
Being contacted in the wrong
communication channel

7 in 10 consumers prefer receiving messages about promotions or sales once a week or more

How often do you prefer to receive messages about promotions, sales or discounts from individual businesses?

| Category	Percentage
Several times a day	8%
About once a day	17%
Several times a week	17%
About once a week	29%
Several times a month	8%
Once a month	10%
Less than once a month	5%
Never or rarely	8%

Millennials want to receive promotion communication more often than baby boomers

Afternoons are the preferred contact time by consumers.

In general, what time of day do you like to receive communications from businesses? Select all that apply.

Afternoon
39%

Morning
32%

Any time
31%

Evening
13%
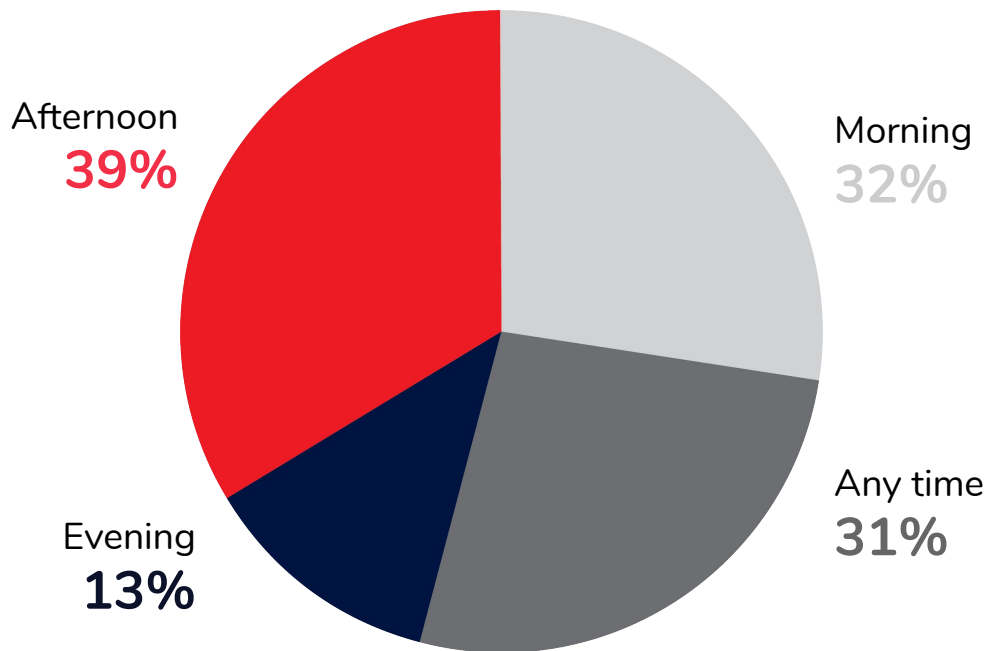
Time of day matters and preferences vary by individual, so it's best to ask consumers when they want to receive messages

Afternoons are preferred by more consumers (**39%** afternoons only, **70%** afternoons or any time)

Only **13%** of consumers prefer to be contacted in the evening

Best Practices

Don't treat every customer the same. While generations have specific preferences, we are in the time of uber personalization, so getting communications right for the consumer should be the goal. Let customers identify what communications they want and when they want them in order to build a lasting relationship.

Embrace different channels for different purposes. Consumers have different reasons for using different channels and want businesses to be able to adapt. It's no longer enough to know channel preferences of your customers, you now need to map the power of each channel to the type of communication you are sending them.

Consider the urgency of the message when selecting the channel. Be clear about what communications are urgent and don't abuse channels that customers prioritize for immediate needs.

Embrace an omnichannel approach and make it easy for customers to customize where they want to be reached. Consumers prefer experiences where they can control the frequency and channel when they hear from you. If you reach customers in the right channel, at the right time, they are more likely to reward you by purchasing more or leaving a positive review.

Know the demographics of your audience and tailor your communication to match. Research shows that younger generations are open to more channels and higher frequency of communication but want control and personalization.

About Twilio

Twilio powers the future of business communications.

Millions of developers around the world have used Twilio to unlock the magic of communications to improve any human experience. Twilio has democratized communications channels like voice, text, chat, video, and email by virtualizing the world's communications infrastructure through APIs that are simple enough for any developer to use, yet robust enough to power the world's most demanding applications.

By making communications a part of every software developer's toolkit, Twilio is enabling innovators across every industry — from emerging leaders to the world's largest organizations — to reinvent how companies engage with their customers.

https://www.twilio.com/