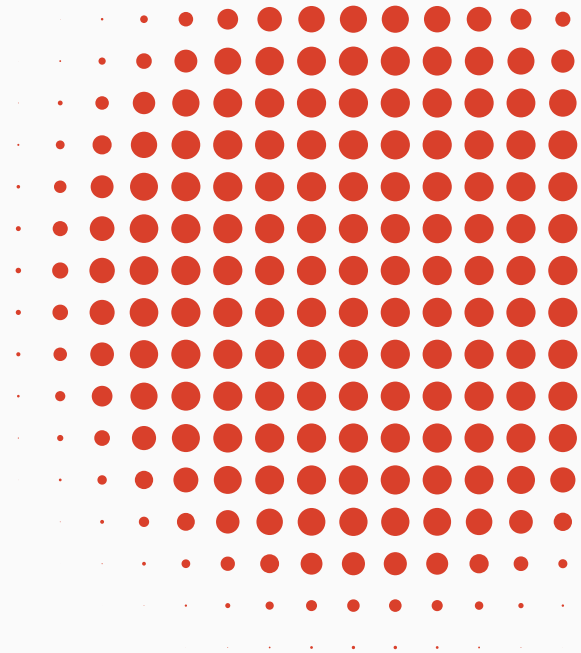




A PHONOVATION REPORT

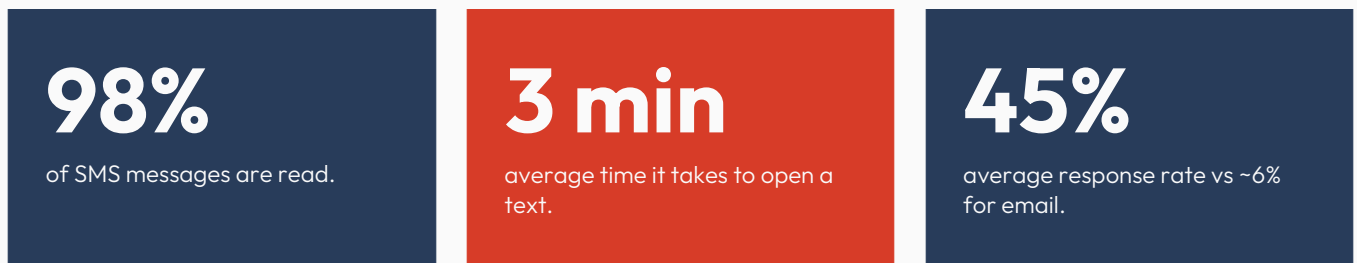
# The 98% Channel.



The one your customers actually read, and why most businesses still aren't using it well.

Across every channel businesses use, attention is getting hard to hold. Email open rates are falling, ad costs are climbing, response rates are sliding, and the cost per message that actually gets read is quietly rising every year.

Except in one place.



Sources: Forbes, Validity, Business.com

This report draws on independent research from Twilio, HubSpot, Klaviyo, Attentive, and Infobip, covering tens of thousands of consumers and billions of messages. Every figure is sourced.

**750+**

Irish businesses

**400M+**

messages processed annually

**37+ yrs**

in telecomms space

# Attention is getting expensive and the cost is climbing.

Whatever you send appointment reminders, order updates, sale announcements, service alerts, fraud notifications, you're sending it into a more crowded, more filtered, more ignored space than you were a year ago. The pressure builds every quarter.

## Email

The average professional now receives **121 emails a day** and reads each one for under 11 seconds. Cold response rates have moved from 8.5% (2019) to 3.43% (2026).

## Social & paid

**56% of marketers** say feeds are flooded with AI-generated content. **65% of consumers** actively ignore it. Paid CPMs keep climbing while organic reach keeps falling.

## Customer loyalty

Only **44% of consumers** describe themselves as loyal to brands — down from 48% last year. The harder it gets to be heard, the faster customers drift.

Every silent message has a price tag. A no-show at an Irish dental practice costs around €120 in lost chair time, across a year of unread reminders, that's tens of thousands gone. A "where's my order?" call costs €4–€8 to handle. A welcome message that never opens means the cost of acquiring that customer was paid for a relationship that never started.



Every channel in your stack is getting more crowded and less effective at the same time. Standing still means losing ground.

# 121

emails per professional, per day  
HubSpot, 2026

# 3.43%

average cold outreach response rate,  
down from 8.5% in 2019  
Instantly, 2026

# 61%

of marketers say their industry is in its  
biggest disruption in 20 years  
HubSpot, 2026

# The one channel that doesn't have this problem.

While every other channel works harder for less, SMS is doing the opposite. No algorithm. No promotions tab. No competing notifications. The message arrives, gets read, and gets acted on, in minutes.

The numbers aren't close.

Metric	Email	SMS
Open rate	~21% (and falling)	~98%
Time to open	Hours to days	Around 3 minutes
Response rate	~6%	~45%
Algorithm risk	High and rising	None
Inbox competition	121 messages/day	A handful

Sources: Forbes, Validity, Business.com, Campaign Monitor, Klaviyo 2025 Benchmark Report

Why does SMS work when other channels are getting harder? Four structural reasons:

- It's permission-only (the customer handed you their number).
- There's no algorithm in the way.
- The "inbox" is nearly empty.
- AI hasn't flooded it.

Those four conditions don't apply to any other channel — and they're not changing soon.

**SMS doesn't replace anything in your stack.** It slots in alongside. In 2025, 97% of SMS subscribers also engaged with the brand's emails — they aren't channel-rejectors, they're among the most engaged customers a brand has. SMS isn't an alternative. It's the message that needs to land now, sitting next to the message that can wait.

**98% of SMS messages are read. 90% within three minutes. No other channel comes close.**

Sources: Forbes, Validity

# Two Irish businesses. One channel. Real numbers.

The data is one thing. Real Irish businesses are another. Two examples:

## SHEDS DIRECT

"I was completely against SMS six months ago."

Ahead of a new store launch, Sheds Direct was frustrated with email, WhatsApp, and social, all building awareness, none converting. They tried SMS as a focused launch campaign. The response was immediate.

**€100k+**

month-on-month revenue uplift during launch

**184 → 500**

subscriber list grew nearly 3x, with only 5 opt-outs

**No.1**

SMS shifted from "unproven" to most reliable channel

"I was completely against SMS six months ago... but it has genuinely surprised me. It works, and it works really well."

— Sheds Direct Ireland

## CENTRA

"People were in the door within five minutes."

Centra needed a channel local store owners could use easily, while keeping head office in the loop on compliance. They rolled out opt-in SMS across their 450+ stores. The results landed within minutes, literally.

**5 min**

customers walking in after a message was sent

**€1,500+**

sales boost in one store on a single Saturday vs a normal Saturday

**450+**

stores using local autonomy with head office visibility

"People were in the door within five minutes on a Saturday. The shop was packed out — €1,500 / €1,600 boost compared to a normal Saturday."

— Liam O’Riordan, Owner, Centra Tory Top Road, Cork City

One small and sceptical. One national and confident. Both arrived at the same conclusion: when a message has to land, SMS lands it.

# The only question left: what would you send first?

If you've read this far, you already have an answer. The booking that gets ignored. The offer that gets buried. The alert that arrives too late. The update that costs you a support call. You know which message in your business needs to land, and isn't.

Three quick questions to sense-check it:

**1** Which of your messages absolutely have to be read?

**2** What is it costing you when they aren't?

**3** What would change if 98% of them got opened?

## Trusted messaging infrastructure for 750+ Irish businesses.

Over 400 million messages processed annually across SMS and messaging channels.

Supporting organisations across retail, healthcare, finance, utilities, government, and enterprise.

Built for security, ComReg compliance, and scale, with direct, Irish-based support from a team in Dublin.

## Start sending in minutes.

Get 25 free credits to try SMS in your business..

[phonovation.com/start](https://phonovation.com/start)

## Or book a 30-minute call.

Talk through where SMS fits with our team in Dublin.

[sales@phonovation.com](mailto:sales@phonovation.com)

When every message counts, count on us.