

BUSINESS MESSAGING

What Is RCS Messaging? A Guide for Australian Business

RCS is the messaging upgrade everyone is talking about in 2026, branded senders, buttons, carousels and chatbot flows on top of an ordinary text.

RCS (Rich Communication Services) is the successor to SMS: a richer, app-like text experience that adds **verified branded senders** (your logo, name and a trust badge), plus buttons, image carousels and chatbot-style flows. Apple added RCS in **iOS 18**, so Android and iPhone can now exchange RCS messages, and RCS reaches up to **~85% of smartphones** in major markets. The catch in Australia: the carriers haven't finished the job. **iPhone RCS is not yet enabled by Telstra, Optus or Vodafone**, so RCS can't reach every Australian mobile. Plain SMS still can. This guide explains what RCS is and how it works; the separate question of whether to *switch* your business messaging is answered in our companion article, [RCS vs SMS in Australia: Should Your Business Switch Yet?](#)

■ The short version

Factor	SMS	RCS
Carried over	Carrier signalling network	Internet (data / Wi-Fi)
Message length	~ 160 characters	✓ Long-form
Rich media & buttons	✗ No	✓ Yes
Typing / read receipts	✗ No	✓ Yes

■ Key points

- Want business SMS that's ready today?

The one-line definition

RCS is the modern successor to SMS, delivered in the phone's native messaging app, but capable of branded senders, rich media and interactive buttons. Think "SMS with an app-like experience bolted on," not "a new messaging app to install."

■ Questions the full guide answers

- ☐ What does RCS stand for, and what is it?
- ☐ What is the difference between RCS and SMS?
- ☐ Can iPhones use RCS now?
- ☐ Is RCS available in Australia?
- ☐ What is a verified RCS business sender?
- ☐ Should my Australian business switch from SMS to RCS yet?

This is the summary. The guide has the detail.

Every point above is worked through in full on our site, with the Australian context, the numbers and the exceptions. If you would rather talk it through, call **1300 663 222** or visit vocphone.com/about/contact-us.