⏱️ 20 MIN SETUP

Missed call text back in the US

Part of our Small Business Automation guide: what to automate first and the 10 easiest wins.

The problem

If you run a small business in the US, you can't pick up every call. Lots of callers won't leave a voicemail. They call the next business on the list instead. A missed call text back sends them a short text from your business so they know you'll call back.

This guide covers what's different in the US: the number, the registration step, call forwarding and the rules.

What you need

- **A Twilio number that can send texts.** A local US number (10 digits) or a toll-free number both work.
- **Registration for that number.** US carriers want business texts registered. For a local number that's A2P 10DLC registration. For a toll-free number it's toll-free verification. Twilio walks you through both.
- **Zapier or Make**, to connect Twilio to the text you want to send.
- **Call forwarding** on your business phone, so unanswered calls go to the Twilio number.

Step 1: Get a US number on Twilio

1. Sign up at Twilio and go to **Buy a number**.

2. Choose **United States**, tick **SMS** and **Voice**, and pick a local number in your area code (or a toll-free number).
3. Buy the number. Twilio charges a small monthly fee for it.

Step 2: Register for business texting

1. In Twilio, open the messaging regulatory section and start **A2P 10DLC** registration (or **toll-free verification** for a toll-free number).
2. Enter your business details and describe what you'll send, for example "Replies to customers who called us and we missed the call."
3. Add a sample message (use the one in Step 5) and explain how people opt out ("Reply STOP").
4. Wait for approval. It can take a few days or longer, and there are small registration fees. Texts may be blocked or filtered until it's approved.

Step 3: Forward unanswered calls

Set your phone to forward calls when you don't answer or you're busy (often called "conditional call forwarding"), and point it at your Twilio number. Most US carriers and VoIP systems support this. The codes and settings differ by carrier, so check your carrier's help page or ask them.

Step 4: Build the automation

- **With Zapier:** follow the main missed-call text-back guide.
- **With Make:** follow our Twilio and Make guide.

When you enter phone numbers, use the international format: +1 then the 10-digit number. For example, (555) 010-0123 becomes +15550100123.

Step 5: Write a US-friendly text

> Hi, it's [Business]. Sorry we missed your call, we're with a customer. Reply with what you need and we'll call you back today. Reply STOP to opt out.

After hours:

> Hi, it's [Business]. We're closed right now and back at [time] tomorrow. Reply with what you need and we'll call you then. Reply STOP to opt out.

More ideas are in Missed call text back message examples.

The rules in the US

- **The first text** replies to someone who just called you. Keep it about their call, with no offers or promotions.
- **Opt-outs:** include "Reply STOP to opt out" and stop texting anyone who replies STOP. Twilio handles STOP replies for you by default.
- **Marketing texts** fall under the TCPA. In general you need the person's prior express written consent before you send them promotions. Some states have their own extra rules too.
- **Quiet hours:** don't send follow-ups late at night or early in the morning in the caller's time zone.

This isn’t legal advice.

FAQ

Do I really need 10DLC registration?

If you text from a local US number through Twilio, yes. Unregistered business texts may be blocked by carriers. A toll-free number needs toll-free verification instead.

Can I keep my existing business number?

Yes. Customers keep calling your usual number. Only unanswered calls are forwarded to the Twilio number.

Local number or toll-free?

A local number feels more personal for a local business. A toll-free number suits businesses that serve customers across the country. Both need to be registered or verified.

What does it cost?

Twilio charges for the number, each text and the registration, and your carrier may charge for forwarded calls. Zapier and Make have free plans for small volumes. Check current prices.

Skip the build with our template pack

Our US$19 Missed-call text-back pack has a ready-to-import Make blueprint, an n8n workflow, a Zapier build sheet and texts ready to use. Includes a step-by-step guide.

Related

- Missed-call text-back: main guide
- Missed call text back with Twilio and Make
- Missed call text back in the UK
- Missed call text back app: DIY vs buy
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