

Q&A: Demystifying RCS as a potential replacement for SMS in cross-platform messaging solutions

Article



Dotgo CEO Inderpal Singh Mumick

With **Google** [intensifying complaints](#) that **Apple** is refusing to adopt modern texting standards to enable cross-platform messaging between **iPhones** and **Android** users, the idea that Rich Communication Services (RCS) is the messaging platform to rule them all has crystallized.

Apple, however, remains unmoved. It says cross-messaging isn't a feature its users are asking for. And when asked by a journalist why the company wasn't pursuing solutions to make it possible for him to share video clips with his Android-device-using mother, Apple CEO **Tim Cook** **told** the reporter "buy your mom an iPhone."

So how valid is RCS as a messaging platform?

"RCS has taken major leaps to overtake SMS as the leading message-based communication and will find a way around Apple's messaging platform for consumers as well," says **Inderpal Singh Mumick**, CEO of **Dotgo**, the world's largest RCS business messaging hub.

At the **Mobile World Conference** earlier this year, Dotgo announced its Universal RCS launch, which allows enterprises to use RCS with clients on all smartphones, including Apple models.

In an interview with Insider Intelligence, Mumick discusses the features and benefits of RCS as a messaging platform and whether Apple can easily adopt it in the future.

The following has been edited for clarity and brevity.

Insider Intelligence (II): What is RCS messaging and how is it an improvement over the current SMS standards?

Inderpal Singh Mumick (ISM): RCS, short for Rich Communication Services, is the next generation of SMS and a part of the 5G standard. It also works on 3G and 4G networks. **RCS is a form of IP messaging that supports the sharing of high-resolution photos, videos, location, group chats, read receipts, typing indicators, and more such interactive functions lacking in SMS.**

Unlike SMS, it does not have a 160-character limit. RCS messages are sent from and received on the phone's native messaging app—the same app used for SMS.

RCS also enables rich and interactive business messaging, wherein brands can send interactive messages to customers, complete with brand logos and verified trust marks, in rich card and carousel message formats, with suggested actions and suggested replies.

II: How secure is RCS and does it offer end-to-end encryption and user privacy features?

ISM: Messages by Google, the standard, built-in messaging app on Android phones, comes with end-to-end encryption (EEE) for RCS messages. EEE is already enabled for one-on-one chats and is being rolled out shortly for group chats. Thus, no one, not even Google, not even the mobile carriers, can read the messages exchanged between users.

RCS Business Messages (RBM), exchanged between businesses and customers, also provide enhanced security.

- All business messages are client-to-server encrypted.
- Businesses wanting to send RCS messages must undergo a verification process, so that a trust mark can be displayed in the business chat, and a logo of the business is displayed next to each message, increasing trust among the users.
- It is not possible to inject messages via gray routes or SIM farms, eliminating spoofing.

II. We know Google and other providers use RCS. How difficult would it be for Apple to offer RCS in iMessages?

ISM: While only Apple can answer this question definitively, RCS is an open standard with well-defined specs, and Apple has some of the world's best engineers.

One way Apple can solve the cross-platform messaging issue is to support RCS as a fallback, similar to how Apple supports SMS and MMS. This would resolve many of the problems related to communications between Android and iPhone users, improving overall chat quality and user experience.

II: What are the key reasons that Apple is unwilling to adapt to an industry standard? How does this affect end users?

ISM: The low quality of cross-platform communication between Android and Apple is well known to users, who suffer from poor user experience when chatting with friends and family across platforms.

Perhaps Apple views **iMessage** as one of the biggest sources of ecosystem lock-in, especially in North America. Maybe Apple believes that the low quality of SMS and MMS messages, and lack of group chats ... push many users to switch from Android to iPhone. Maybe Apple believes that iPhone users will apply peer pressure to get their friends and family to buy an iPhone, or just pay to buy an iPhone for their mother!

Paradoxically, the result is that Apple is providing poor user experience to their iPhone customers when communicating with friends and family who are on Android. It is a short-sighted approach, as the users are simply moving to **WhatsApp** and other cross-platform messaging apps that work seamlessly across iPhone and Android.

II: Is the lack of unified messaging between the smartphone duopoly an opportunity for services like WhatsApp or Viber? What are the dangers of trusting Meta (Facebook) with the world's messaging standard?

ISM: The natural tendency among people is to use the built-in messaging app. However, the broken experience between the iMessage app on iPhones and the Messages app on Android is encouraging users to adopt and use some of these apps.

WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram, and Signal provide rich and secure cross-platform messaging, and are free to download, making them much more favorable for adoption. In fact, if you look at WhatsApp, it has grown to over 2 billion users worldwide and is the most-used app on iPhone and Android in several countries, aided in part by lack of cross-platform support between iMessage and Messages by Google.

II. Tell us about Dotgo's Universal RCS solution and its benefits to businesses and enterprises.

ISM: Dotgo's Universal RCS solution allows brands to send RCS messages using RCS APIs to iPhones, helping them reach iPhones with RCS campaigns. Universal RCS activates an automatic fallback SMS being delivered into iMessage, with a link to an RCS experience using PWA in Safari, allowing brands to deliver a rich RCS experience to all their customers.

Dotgo's Universal RCS comes with the complete feature set of RCS, such as rich media including photos, videos, and documents. It has suggested actions, suggested replies, carousels, and more.

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