



Spam Risk Calls Explained

Last Modified December 15, 2022

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Overview

Many customers are seeing a large uptick in their voice calls showing up as “Spam Risk”, “Spam Likely”, “Telemarketer”, “RoboCall” and other variants. The industry refers to their as “nuisance call labels”. This can be frustrating as it could result in your outbound calls going unanswered or even blocked.

This article will explain the technical reasons for this and best practices that can be used to prevent it, as well as methods to remove the “nuisance” label.

It’s the Carriers (ATT, Verizon, T-Mobile, Sprint, etc.) not the Provider

It is important to note that the downstream carriers of the actual customers that are solely responsible for this and it is 100% in their control. By Carriers we mean ATT, Verizon, T-Mobile, Sprint and others. Their position is that their customers are pushing them for these features where the caller has not obtained prior content to communicate with them. The recent uptick is a result of their respective networks providing more and more tools for the customers to self-report unwanted calls as well as their anti-spam algorithms looking more aggressively for patterns. Previously, these algorithms were mostly focused on Text Messaging but now they’ve turned their attention to phone calls.

Based on that cumulative data of all the US Phone numbers, the carriers themselves mark these numbers as Spam Risk on their own networks irrespective of whomever the provider who on the other side is. Therefore you can see the same phone number showing “Spam Risk” to an ATT customer while it is still okay with Verizon.

IMPORTANT: 360CTI uses the same backend provider (Twilio) as most major telephony vendors such as SmartPhone.io, Call Rail, Call Tracking Metrics, Cloud Call, etc. So, this problem is happening to everyone and even for those vendors that are not Twilio based.

What can I do?

The FCC has established this free registry site: <https://www.freecallerregistry.com/fcr/> which covers the main analytic companies that support major US wireless carriers that can remove a negative label on a call. In addition, the carriers are using other analytical services for call metrics. T-Mobile specifically is using <https://www.calltransparency.com/> (help article from Twilio on the topic of outbound calls potentially being blocked by carriers can be found [here](#))

BolderCRM highly recommends registering your business and phone numbers with both the above, to help ensure your outbound calls are delivered appropriately.

Disclaimer:

While number registration often resolves mislabeled calls, it is not a whitelist or a guarantee to avoid nuisance call labels in the future.

Registered numbers can still be flagged again if certain call patterns are detected inconsistent with registered usage or if consumers file spam or fraud reports against them. Obviously, the Carriers do not disclose to the providers or to the telephony vendors what these algorithms are.

In summary, there are three key practices in removing and keeping your numbers free from mislabeling:

1. Register your numbers for any case of mislabeling or proactively for any new number that you obtain
2. Ensure that you have complied with all relevant TCPA laws, FCC regulations, and Twilio's Acceptable Use Policy. These same Compliance Best Practices referenced for texting can apply to calling as well: <https://boldercrm.com/download.php?f=360-SMS-Compliance-Best-Practices.pdf>
3. Remain consistent in your calling behavior by phone number. Avoid unusual spikes in traffic volumes, when possible - and follow recommended guide for keeping a positive call reputation as outlined above. In other words, don't spam and your number won't be labeled spam risk.

Additional Measures and Workarounds

There are many relatively simple changes to your business practices that can minimize your calls being labeled as nuisance calls.

1. The 360SMS App and Drip Campaigns support sending the customer a Contact Card (a.k.a. VCard) via SMS so that the customer can easily add you as a contact on their phone and thus when you call, your number is recognizable. This video offers some insight into that feature: [360SMS: Sending VCards/Contacts Cards to drive recognition](#)
2. Consider texting the customer right before calling to announce that you'll be calling shortly. That's just polite too.
3. Twilio offers a registered CallerID service for a fee and there is an application process. The problem is that this looks almost the same as "spam risk" because the Id is in all caps and typically still unrecognizable, so we are not recommending this option.
4. **Cold Calling Detection** - Be aware that cold calling is **illegal** under TCPA and effective Jan-2023 the Carriers (ATT, Verizon, T-Mobile, etc.) are now using these metrics below to determine if a call should be blocked from reaching their customer or potentially labelled as SPAM RISK. The blocked call manifests itself as your outbound call getting immediately disconnected (they give you no warning or feedback as they do not want to).

- The calling number has a low answer rate from end users
- The calling number generates low duration calls
- The calling number is responsible for large volumes of unwanted calls

Figure 1 - **Translation** - lots of short calls in a short span of time w/ no answer = Cold Calling and they will detect it

Write your congressman!

Twilio and other providers have filed motions with the FCC and regularly lobby legislators that the Carriers are overreaching and abusing their “gatekeeper” role. Twilio and others feel this is a violation of free speech and impedes businesses. We encourage customers to also contact their representatives to break this stranglehold that the carriers have over freedom to do business.

About the Author

Steve Roch, CEO of Bolder CRM is an SMS Industry expert having worked or consulted with the top three SMS Apps on the Salesforce AppExchange and also having built the popular Salesforce app [ActionGrid™](#), acquired by Conga in April-2016. Bolder CRM is the exclusive distributor of 360 SMS in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

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