# 10DLC vs Dedicated Short Code

Choosing Between 10DLC or Dedicated Short Code?

Within the mobile messaging industry, there are two types of numbers from which to send text messages – long codes or short codes. Everyone is familiar with long codes, they're the 10-digit phone numbers that people use to call or text each other.

On the other hand, short codes are 5-or 6-digit numbers used by organizations only for text messaging programs. A new kind of ten-digit long code, dubbed "10DLC" was recently introduced specifically for businesses and organizations to use for text messaging on long codes. Let's explore which option is best for you.

+1 (123)-456-7890

VS

123456
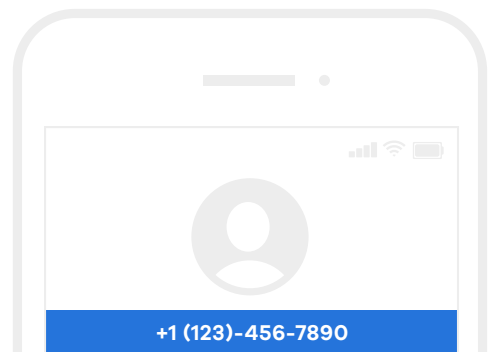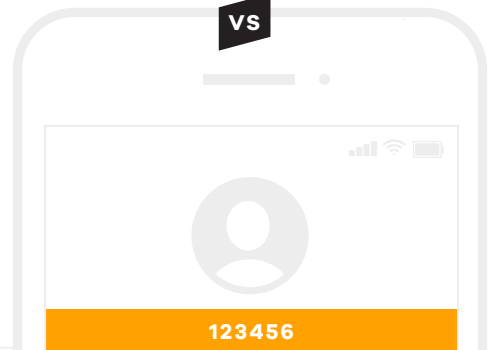
How did we get here?

Short codes were first implemented by the wireless industry to support business and organization text messaging, and have been the gold standard for deliverability, send speed, and compliance. However, due to the leasing and hosting costs associated with short codes, sharing them became an acceptable and economical solution for some organizations.

However, as text message marketing grew in popularity, so too did opportunities for bad actors to exploit the system, often using both shared short codes and local long codes to send unsolicited or spam messages. Enter 10DLC. In an effort to regulate the industry and reduce the frequency of spam, the major US carriers developed this new kind of ten-digit long code specifically for business and organization text messaging. The main difference between traditional long codes and the new 10DLC is the registration and vetting process required to obtain a 10DLC number. The registration and vetting process will introduce compliance oversight and regulations on long codes similar to what already exists on short codes. With 10DLC now available on Verizon, AT&T, and T-Mobile (including Sprint) businesses and organizations have a safe, low-cost, carrier-sanctioned alternative to dedicated short codes. While 10DLC may be an option for some, it may not provide the same level performance (volume, send speeds) as others are accustomed to.

With the launch of 10DLC service, all major US carriers have discontinued the issuing of new shared short codes and are phasing out support for existing shared short code service, forcing all businesses and organizations who are using them to switch to either a dedicated short code or a 10DLC.

Any business or organization that is currently using a short code that is shared with other unaffiliated businesses or organizations will need to decide between a dedicated short code or a 10DLC.

How do I weigh the options?

While the move from a shared short code to a new number may seem inconvenient, businesses and organizations will gain much more control. For instance, with your own dedicated short code or 10DLC comes the use of unlimited keywords, control over all messaging on the number – including adherence to compliance guidelines, and the ability to associate your brand and reputation uniquely with the number.

As an organization or business using a shared short code, we recognize that there are many factors to consider in the decision between choosing a dedicated short code or a 10DLC. For example, if you run contests or communicate any sort of time-dependent information, getting messages out fast is key to the success of your campaigns. A dedicated short code offers the fastest, most dependable send speeds and is the best choice for your program. On the other hand, if you are only interested in sending one-time passwords or two-factor authentications at low-cost, and do not require delivery receipts, then 10DLC might be the answer. If you have requirements above the basic SMS functionality, such as needing delivery receipts or sending MMS messages, a dedicated short code is optimal. Today, delivery receipts and MMS are not supported on all 10DLC networks. Although some of this is likely to change – especially the MMS support, you can still expect the MMS send speeds and throughput to be lower than the 10DLC SMS rates, which are lower than those on a dedicated short code. Whereas, if you're operating on a small budget, interested in adding SMS functionality to your existing local business phone number, or being able to associate your local area code with the number you text from, 10DLC offers a low-cost option that can allow you the benefits of both voice and text on the same local number.

Below is a comparison table to help match your answers to the options and highlight the main differences and benefits between dedicated short codes and the new 10DLC, although speaking with an expert to determine your volume requirements will help you obtain a final recommendation.

Comparison Table

NEW 10DLC Long Code	Dedicated Short Codes
Designed for business/organization voice and text This new kind of 10-digit number is used to send text messages from businesses/organizations to many people through a software program.	**Designed for business/organization text** A 5- or 6-digit number used to send text messages from businesses/organizations to many people through a software program.
Variable throughput and variable send times The size of an organization, its industry, and its messaging use case(s) are used to determine a "trust score." Rate and volume caps vary and are determined by the carriers. A good estimation/expectation is 30 messages per second. See below for more detail.	**High throughput and fastest send times** Wireless carriers dedicate more and wider "lanes" of traffic to support short code messaging. Rates are determined through agreements between the carriers and providers and can range from 100s of message per second up to 1,000s/second. There are no volume caps.
Sanctioned The 10DLC registration process and fee structure was created to confirm that long code messages are being sent from verified organizations for legitimate purposes.	**Sanctioned** Messages on dedicated short codes are regulated and approved by the carriers and trusted by recipients. They are reliable, secure, and the gold standard for text messaging from organizations to individuals.
Simple Metrics While 10DLC does not offer delivery confirmation/receipts, reporting within certain enterprise products, like Upland Mobile Messaging, might provide other simple metrics.	**Full Metrics** Delivery confirmation/receipts make it easy to track the number of messages received, giving organizations better insight into the reach of their messaging program(s) and the ability to optimize campaigns (when combined with other messaging data).
Convenient Businesses can convert their existing, local long code number to 10DLC and take advantage of approved messaging along with voice service.	**Recognizable** 5- or 6-digt numbers are easier for most recipients to remember and associate with your organization's brand.
Limited All major US carriers support SMS. MMS is currently supported on Verizon, Sprint, and T-Mobile only. MMS on AT&T will be available soon (date TBD).	**Flexible** Fully supports both SMS and MMS messaging from an organization to many.
Shorter Registration Time It is estimated that 3 to 5 days will be required to register campaigns and receive a trust score.	**Longer Registration Time** Typical time to provision a new dedicated short code is 4-6 weeks (after documentation is submitted to the carriers).
Recommendation Best for any business with lower messaging volume that is not time-sensitive, those who would like to associate their business with their local area code or existing number, and/or those with budget constraints.	**Recommendation** Best for any businesses or organizations who value using a trusted, recognizable number and/or those who send time-sensitive communications, have a large audience, or send both SMS and MMS messages.

Next Steps

If you're currently on a shared short code, time is of the essence. While the carriers haven't communicated a shut-off date yet, we anticipate support for shared short codes will be discontinued Summer 2021. We have a team of experts that would love to speak with you and help you make the best decision for your organization. **Let's get your transition started!** If you're new to mobile messaging, there are no external forces rushing your decision-making process, but we'd still love to speak with you and help you make the best decision for your organization. **Contact us** to learn more about the ways Upland Mobile Messaging can help your business or organization reach more people, increase conversions, and get better results.

Ready to get things done?

Contact Us

Let us show you what Upland Mobile Messaging can do.