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Generated on 13/11/2026 19:28

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Why an SMS answer says queued: the sending queue, batches and what to tell your customer

WhatsApp & APIs

CODE	VERSION	COUNTRY · LANGUAGE
RLX-MZ-KB-2612	v2026.11.13	Mozambique · English

Interweb Mozambique
RLX Holdings, S.A. · Group RLX Holdings
Tax ID (NUIT) 401 191 607 · Legal entity no. (NUEL) 105 045 974 · Economic activity code (CAE) 62022

https://www.meu.interweb.co.mz/knowledgebase/2612

Why an SMS answer says queued: the sending queue, batches and what to tell your customer

WhatsApp & APIs Created on **November 13, 2026** 3 min read



The short answer: `queued` means the request was accepted and the message is **in the queue, waiting its turn**. It is not an error and you do not repeat the request. Without scheduling, the API tries to send at once and answers with the real status: `sent` if it went out, `failed` if it failed, or `queued` if it has to wait. Your system keeps the `id` and checks the status later.

When a message waits in the queue

Situation	What happens
A single send	It usually goes out straight away; if it has to wait its turn, you get `queued`.
A batch send (`POST /v1/sms/messages/batch`)	The messages join the queue, which is sent every minute; up to 20 go out straight away. The rest follow over the next minutes.
A message that fails on the way out	It is tried 2 more times, 10 minutes apart. If it still fails, it ends up `failed` and the credits go back to the balance.

What to tell the customer

On your website or app screen, do not say «we have sent you an SMS» just because the request was accepted. A more honest line works better: **«You will receive the confirmation by SMS in a moment.»** If the status later turns `failed`, your system can offer another route, such as e-mail.

Do not send again just because the answer said `queued`.
The message is already on its way: a second request with a different `Idempotency-Key` gives the customer two texts and doubles the credits. If you retry after a dropped connection, always reuse the same key.

Following it through to the end

1. **Store the** `id` from the answer, with the event.
2. **Check the status** with `GET /v1/sms/messages/{id}` a few minutes later, or register a webhook to be told when each SMS is sent or fails.
3. **For a batch**, read `results`: each message has its `index` (its position in the request), its `id` and its status, or `rejected` with the reason in `error`.
4. **If it ends up** `failed`, read the reason, fix whatever is on your side and decide whether to resend or use another channel.

The statuses, one by one, are in **tracking each transactional SMS**.

Urgent notices one at a time; notices that can wait, in a batch.
A single send at the moment of the event tries to go out at once; a batch is for many notices together, which then go through the queue over the following minutes.

RECOMMENDED

Want notices that go out on their own, with a clear status for each? See Transactional SMS.

See Transactional SMS →

SEE ALSO

- Tracking each transactional SMS: the message id, masked numbers, statuses and charged →
- SMS API errors and message statuses: what each one means and what to do →
- Synchronous or asynchronous: why a payment or SMS confirmation arrives later →
- SMS history and scheduling: statuses, filters and what happens when a message fails →
- Timeouts, retries and idempotency: how not to charge a customer twice →
- A reusable send-SMS function in PHP, Python or Node.js, with timeouts and error handling →

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