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When an SMS notice fails: retries, returned credits and falling back to e-mail from your system

WhatsApp & APIs

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When an SMS notice fails: retries, returned credits and falling back to e-mail from your system

WhatsApp & APIs Created on **November 13, 2026** 2 min read



The short answer: when an SMS does not go out, we try **twice more, 10 minutes apart**. If it still fails, the message becomes **failed** and the **credits go back to your balance**. What your system does next is up to you: the most useful step is to send that notice through another channel, such as e-mail.

Refused at once, or failed later

A notice can miss its target in two ways, and each is handled differently:

What happened	How you see it	What to do
Refused on request	The API answers 422 with the reason in details.reason (invalid_number, number_opted_out, insufficient_credits, daily_limit_reached, sender_not_approved…)	Fix the cause. Repeating the same request gives the same error.
Accepted, but not sent	The status becomes failed, with the error delivery_failed	Notify through another channel, or review the customer's number.
Scheduled, balance short at send time	The status becomes failed, with the error insufficient_credits	Buy credits and schedule again.

The full list of reasons is in **SMS API errors and message statuses**.

Falling back to e-mail, automatically

1. **Save the webhook** with the sms.failed event (or both). See **the SMS webhook**.

2 **Store with each notice** the SMS id returned on sending and the customer's e-mail address.

3 **When an sms.failed arrives**, your system finds the notice by id and sends the same content by e-mail.

4 **Flag the number** as doubtful if it fails repeatedly, and ask the customer to confirm it next time they sign in.

Do not resend the SMS in a loop.
We have already retried. Repeating the request unchanged wastes requests, may use credits if the fault was temporary, and a wrong number stays wrong.

Without coding

On the SMS page in Meu Interweb, filter the History by the **Failed** status. You see who it was for, the message and the date, and you can reach those customers another way. Filters and statuses are covered in **SMS history and scheduling**.

Confirm numbers when you collect them.
Most failures come from mistyped numbers or numbers no longer in use. A verification code at sign-up catches that early: **verification codes through our API**.

RECOMMENDED

Want notices that never get lost on the way? See the API page.

See the API page →

SEE ALSO

- The SMS webhook: how your system learns that each notice was sent or failed →
- SMS API errors and message statuses: what each one means and what to do →
- SMS history and scheduling: statuses, filters and what happens when a message fails →
- SMS, e-mail or WhatsApp for customer notices: which channel for each message →
- SMS webhook not arriving or rejected: HTTPS, signature, the 5-second answer and retries →

Verification codes by SMS through our API: a practical guide for your site or app

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Interweb Mozambique

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