

Connect WhatsApp to WatchSense

A step-by-step guide to using your own WhatsApp Business number with WatchSense, through Meta's official WhatsApp Cloud API. You set this up yourself, in your own Meta account, so the number, the approvals and the billing stay yours. The first time takes about an hour of your time, plus Meta's review time.

What you need

A computer

Meta's screens are easiest on a laptop or desktop.

A number for WhatsApp

Not on the WhatsApp or WhatsApp Business app. A new SIM is simplest.

A Facebook login

Personal is fine. It is not shown to customers.

A card for Meta

Meta bills WhatsApp messages to you directly.

How it works once connected

1. WatchSense watches the dates

Every customer has a birthday, anniversary, purchase or visit on record. When a date arrives, or a campaign is due, WatchSense picks the right people.

2. It checks consent first

Only customers who agreed to hear from you are messaged. Anyone who replied STOP, or opted out of email, is skipped automatically.

3. It sends through Meta

The message goes out from your own number through Meta's official WhatsApp Cloud API, using one of your approved templates, in the customer's language.

4. The customer answers

The customer sees your shop name. Replies and STOP messages come back to WatchSense, and you can answer from the inbox within WhatsApp's 24-hour window.

The steps

1 Create your WatchSense account

WatchSense · 2 minutes

Sign in with Google and your shop is created on the Free plan. No card is needed.

1. Open WatchSense and choose Continue with Google.
2. Enter your shop name and the email address customer emails should come from.
3. You land on the dashboard. WhatsApp is connected from Settings, in the steps below.

☐ Done

2 Create a Meta app and add WhatsApp

Meta for Developers · 10 minutes

Meta runs WhatsApp. You create a small “app” in your own Meta account, which is what lets WatchSense send messages for you.

1. Go to developers.facebook.com and log in with your Facebook account. A personal account is fine; it is not shown to your customers.
2. Open My Apps, choose Create App, pick the Other use case, then the Business app type.
3. Give it any name you like, for example “WatchSense WhatsApp”. Customers never see it.
4. On the app dashboard, find the WhatsApp product and choose Set up.
5. Choose your Meta business portfolio, or create one with your business name and email. Accept Meta’s terms if it asks.

☐ Done

3 Add your phone number and shop name

Meta for Developers · 10 minutes, then up to a day for approval

This is the number customers will see messages from, with your shop name on it.

1. In the app, open WhatsApp → API Setup (or Getting Started) and choose Add phone number.
2. Enter your display name (your shop name, as customers know it), a business category and a short description.
3. Enter the number, choose SMS or a voice call, and type the 6-digit code Meta sends.
4. Meta reviews the display name. This usually takes up to a day. Until it is approved, customers may see your number instead of your name.

Important: Use a number that is not on the WhatsApp app or WhatsApp Business app. Once a number is connected to the WhatsApp Business API it cannot also be used in those apps, so pick a number you can dedicate to your shop. Back up any chats first.

☐ Done

4 Copy your two ID numbers

Meta for Developers · 1 minute

Two long numbers tell WatchSense which WhatsApp account and which number to use.

1. On the WhatsApp API Setup page, find the Phone number ID under your number.
2. Find the WhatsApp Business Account ID (also called the WABA ID) on the same page.
3. Paste both into a safe note for now.

Keep these for step 8: Phone number ID (15 to 16 digits); WhatsApp Business Account ID, the WABA ID (15 to 16 digits)

☐ Done

5 Create a permanent access token

Meta Business settings · 5 minutes

The token is a long password that lets WatchSense send on your behalf, day and night, without you being logged in.

1. Go to business.facebook.com/settings and open Users → System users.
2. Choose Add, name it (for example watchsense_bot), give it the Admin role and create it.
3. Select the new system user and choose Add assets. Add your app with full control, then your WhatsApp account with full control.
4. Choose Generate token, select your app, set the expiry to Never, and tick whatsapp_business_messaging and whatsapp_business_management.
5. Copy the token (it starts with EAA). Meta shows it only once.

Keep these for step 8: Access token (starts with EAA)

Important: Treat the token like a password. Never send it in a chat or email. WatchSense stores it encrypted and never shows it again.

☐ Done

6 Add a payment method in Meta

Meta Business settings · 5 minutes

Meta bills WhatsApp messages to your own account, at Meta's own rates. WatchSense adds no markup.

1. In business.facebook.com, open WhatsApp accounts, pick your account and find Payment methods (billing).
2. Add a card. You are charged by Meta only when messages that Meta charges for are sent.
3. If Meta offers a spending limit, set one you are comfortable with.

☐ Done

7 Get your message templates approved

Meta or WatchSense · 5 minutes, then Meta's review

WhatsApp only lets a business start a conversation with a pre-approved template. Meta usually reviews one in minutes to a day; a brand-new account can take 1 to 3 days.

1. Option A: in Meta's WhatsApp Manager, open Message templates and create two: one in the Utility category (name it watchsense_utility) and one in the Marketing category (watchsense_marketing).
2. Use the language your customers read, and write the body exactly as Hello {{1}}, {{2}} - {{3}}. WatchSense fills in the customer name, the message and your shop name.
3. Option B: if your shop has the WhatsApp template designer switched on, write your own templates inside WatchSense, with a live phone preview, and send them to Meta from there. WatchSense emails you when Meta approves or rejects one.
4. You can carry on with the next step while Meta reviews.

Keep these for step 8: Utility template name; Marketing template name; Template language

☐ Done

8 Paste it all into WatchSense and test

WatchSense · 3 minutes

Everything you copied goes into one screen. A single button checks it.

1. In WatchSense, open Settings → WhatsApp.
2. Paste the Phone number ID, the WhatsApp account ID and the Permanent access token.
3. Enter the two template names and choose the template language.
4. Choose Save, then Test connection.
5. A green "Connected" message shows your number, your name on WhatsApp and Meta's quality rating for the number.

Important: If WhatsApp is not connected yet, messages that fall due wait for up to 72 hours and go out as soon as you connect. They are not lost.

☐ Done

9 Switch on delivery tracking and STOP replies

WatchSense and Meta · 5 minutes, optional but recommended

This lets you see which messages were delivered and read, and automatically stops messaging anyone who replies STOP.

1. In your Meta app, open App settings → Basic and copy the App secret.
2. In WatchSense Settings → WhatsApp, paste it under Meta app secret and save.
3. WatchSense shows a Callback URL and a Verify token. In your Meta app, open WhatsApp → Configuration → Webhook, enter both and choose Verify.
4. Subscribe to the messages field.

Keep these for step 8: Meta app secret

☐ Done

Your setup sheet

Fill this in as you go, then type each value into WatchSense under Settings → WhatsApp. Keep the sheet somewhere safe: the access token is like a password.

Value	Write it here
Phone number ID (15 to 16 digits)	
WhatsApp Business Account ID, the WABA ID (15 to 16 digits)	
Access token (starts with EAA)	
Utility template name	
Marketing template name	
Template language	
Meta app secret	

Who pays for what

What	Who pays	Good to know
WatchSense plan	You pay WatchSense	Free, Starter or Pro. See pricing. Plans differ only in customers and WhatsApp messages per month.
WhatsApp messages	You pay Meta directly	Billed to the card on your Meta account at Meta's own rates. WatchSense adds no markup and takes no cut.
Marketing messages (offers, festival campaigns)	Meta charges per message	The highest rate on Meta's rate card.
Utility messages (reminders, updates)	Meta charges per message	A lower rate. Meta does not charge for a utility message sent inside an open 24-hour customer service window.
Replies you type inside 24 hours of a customer's message	Free	Free-text replies to a customer who messaged you in the last 24 hours.
Email	Included	Email reminders and wishes need no Meta account at all.

Meta's message rates change several times a year. Check the rate card in your Meta account.

If something goes wrong

Meta says my number is already registered on WhatsApp.

The number is still in the WhatsApp app or WhatsApp Business app on some phone. Back up your chats, delete that account in the app (Settings → Account → Delete account), wait 5 to 10 minutes and add the number again. Or use a different number.

I did not get the verification code.

Wait a minute and try again, then choose a voice call instead of SMS. Enter the number without a leading zero.

Test connection says the token is invalid.

The token was probably cut short when copied. In Meta Business settings, open the system user, generate a new token with the Copy button and paste it again. Make sure `whatsapp_business_messaging` and `whatsapp_business_management` were ticked.

Test connection says it failed, but my token is fine.

Check the Phone number ID and the WhatsApp account ID. They look alike, but they are different numbers. Copy each again from the API Setup page and save.

The “Never” expiry option is missing when I create the token.

Make sure the system user has the Admin role and that your app and WhatsApp account were added to it with full control. If it is still missing, create a new system user and try again.

Meta rejected my template.

Check that the category fits the message (reminders are Utility, offers are Marketing) and that the body is exactly `Hello {{1}}, {{2}} - {{3}}`. Fix it and submit again. WatchSense shows Meta’s reason if you use the template designer.

My shop name is not showing on messages.

Meta is still reviewing your display name, which usually takes up to a day. Until it is approved, customers can see your number instead.

My messages are “waiting”.

WatchSense holds due WhatsApp messages for up to 72 hours while WhatsApp is not connected or Meta is still reviewing your account, then sends them the moment you are connected. You can also send them by email instead.

Meta changes the names of its menus from time to time. If a button is not where this guide says, use the search box in Meta Business settings, or see Meta’s own WhatsApp Cloud API guide at developers.facebook.com/docs/whatsapp. The latest version of this guide is at watchsensecrm.com/whatsapp-setup. Questions: info@akbhcodeai.com.