



Product: Nexmo Voice and SMS APIs

Use Case: IVR, SMS verification

Industry: Voice Bot App Development



OVERVIEW:

Opearlo develops voice bot apps for platforms such as Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant. One of their most popular apps, “Find My Phone,” is powered by Nexmo’s SMS and Voice APIs.

CHALLENGE:

Opearlo’s previous API vendor charged a minimum of one minute, no matter how short the length of the call. Most of Opearlo’s calls are only five seconds on average, so they were paying for much more time than they used.

SOLUTION:

Nexmo SMS and Voice APIs

RESULTS:

- Charged only for the seconds that were used
- Better customer support and resolution of issues
- Clearer documentation

IMPACT:

- More than 50% savings from previous vendor
- Faster response to questions and issues
- Ability to understand products from documentation

With Nexmo Voice, Opearlo Slashes User Verification Costs in Half

A January 2018 report from Voicebot.ai states that over 47 million Americans currently use a smart speaker. That’s 1 in 6 Americans. People are slowly getting used to the concept of conversing with digital assistants in their homes, and rollouts of this technology are happening all over the world. Amazon Alexa is available in about 40 countries and there’s official support for six different languages.

Although Alexa and GA are well known for responding to simple native commands like, “Alexa, what’s the time?” or “Alexa, what’s on my calendar today?”— third-party apps expand the capabilities of these voice bots. Both Amazon and Google, as well as other voice bot platforms, have opened up their digital assistants to third-party apps. Once an app is installed on Alexa or GA, a user simply calls that app by name and it opens. Opearlo is a developer of these kind of apps.

Opearlo was launched two years ago in London as an agency that built voice applications for Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant platforms. Within a year the company transitioned from doing mostly agency work to building its own consumer-facing voice apps.

Today, among their family of voice bot apps is Find My Phone. Where does Nexmo fit in? All the user needs to do is say “Alexa, find my phone” and Nexmo jumps into action.

How It Works

Opearlo uses Nexmo’s Voice and SMS APIs to help power Find My Phone. On Alexa, when a user commands the app to find their phone, it places a call to that phone via the Nexmo Voice API. Unless that phone has been silenced or turned off, the phone will ring so that it can be found.

Nexmo’s SMS API comes into play when Opearlo verifies the phone that a new user will use the app to find. When the user signs on for the first time, Opearlo captures their phone number via a voice message: “Welcome to Find My Phone. To get started I just need your phone number. What’s your number?”

The user then tells Alexa their number. Next, Opearlo validates the number for the country that the user is in and, if valid, uses Nexmo’s SMS API to send the user a security code. Lastly, the user uses that code to verify that they own the phone number, and they can then use the app.

“When our app was promoted by Amazon through its Skills Store, it resulted in quite a large amount of API calls that we needed to make. Having our account manager and the rest of the sales engineering team on hand to quickly resolve any issues that came up was amazing.”

- Oscar Merry
Opearlo
Co-founder and CTO



Switching to Nexmo: Cost Savings, Clear Documentation and Stellar Support

Opearlo had originally used another vendor for SMS and Voice, but ultimately switched to Nexmo as a more cost-effective means of getting what they needed. Since Nexmo charges its customers on a per-second rather than a per-minute basis, the switch ended up saving Opearlo a considerable amount of money.

According to Oscar Merry, Co-founder and CTO of Opearlo: “Most of our calls are only about five seconds in length. All we do is call a phone to say ‘Hey, glad you found your phone’ and that’s it.”

“With our other provider, we would get charged on the minimum for a minute no matter how short the call. With Nexmo, it works out to be a lot less. I’d say that with Nexmo we’re saving about 50% of what we spent with the last vendor. With Nexmo, we can potentially make 12 phone calls for the price of one made with the other vendor.”

Another thing that Merry noted was the documentation that accompanies Nexmo products. He found that it was extremely beneficial. “It’s really clear,” said Merry. “It’s laid out in a way that makes it really easy to understand which product you’re looking at from the docs you’re looking at. As a developer who consumes APIs, especially quite complex APIs, having that really clear, well laid-out documentation is something that’s really beneficial.”

Merry also praised Opearlo’s Nexmo account manager and its sales engineering team. “Having the support of our account manager to help troubleshoot any issues was a tremendous help. When our app was promoted by Amazon through its Skills Store, it resulted in quite a large amount of API calls that we needed to make. Having our account manager and the rest of the sales engineering team on hand to quickly resolve any issues that came up was amazing.”

