

Collect Good Data: How to Verify a List of Phone Numbers

by Amber Iven - Monday, July 27, 2020

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If you collect phone numbers to use either for cold outreach or SMS marketing, it's important to verify them to make sure they are valid phone numbers. If not, you waste time calling disconnected numbers.

Additionally, it's also useful to know what line type the number is. Mobile numbers might be eligible for cold calls and text messages, therefore increasing your outreach potential. You also save money by not texting a landline.

Verifying a list of phone numbers also provides you with the location of the number so that you can conduct your outreach at strategic moments. You want to reach out during times when your target is most likely to receive the call or text.

Below we cover why verifying a list of phone numbers is so important and how you can succeed with cost effective tools.

What is Phone Number Verification?

Let's briefly go over the difference between phone verification and phone validation and how they're related.

First, phone verification is the process of checking a phone number to find out whether or not it is active. You can also determine if it's on the [Do Not Call \(DNC\) list](#), what number type it is (landline or mobile), what the cell phone carrier is, and the location of the number.

Phone validation is the process of verifying users by calling or texting codes to the numbers they claim. Validation is done for the purpose of verification.

These processes go hand in hand. You cannot text a validation code to a landline. So, if you use phone validation to authenticate users, you must know whether their number is landline or mobile. Depending on the number type, you might offer validation via call to landlines or text to mobile numbers.

Furthermore, having users register their numbers and verify the code is a good way to enter valid numbers into your database as they are verified in real time. Next, we discuss why it's so important to verify phone numbers.

Why Verify Phone Numbers?

You need to verify a list of numbers that you have entered or plan to enter into your database. Typically, phone numbers are kept for marketing purposes. However, they can also be used for sending alerts, notifications, and updates. These are only successful if the phone numbers are active, though.

If they're not, you waste time and money sending SMS text messages to numbers that are inactive. Or you pay to send a text to a landline. Or you call a lead in the middle of the night because you didn't check the location of the number ahead of time. Without considering these scenarios, you waste time and money by not investing in a [phone verification service](#).

What's arguably worse is reaching out to a number that has changed hands. It's important to regularly conduct list cleaning. This means verifying numbers in your database that you might have initially verified, but that might have become outdated over time. It can be embarrassing to reach out to a stranger with a message intended for someone else....

Not only could you reach the wrong recipient, but the number that was once active could become disconnected over time. You still waste money by housing an inactive phone number in your database. Worse still, the current owner of the phone number could have registered it on the DNC list. Contacting a number that was once A-okay could now result in serious repercussions.

Perhaps the number one reason to verify a list of phone numbers before calling them is to make sure they aren't on the DNC list. Calling a number on the DNC list is a [TCPA violation](#). If you call a number registered on the DNC list, you could incur fines assessed per call!

Phone Validation vs. Email Validation

Have you ever tried registering for a service and been met with this message: "Phone verification is required before proceeding"? Then, you are sent a numerical code to enter into the site you're on in order to verify your identity. Email used to be the go-to for user authentication, but with the ease of creating email addresses, they have begun to lose credibility.

Because of the potential for bot form submissions, fake addresses, and dormant account sign-ups, [phone validation is more secure than email validation](#). This in and of itself saves you time and money.

By developing a database of verified phone numbers, you reach more leads and increase delivery rates. And, since you're communicating via verified phone number rather than email address, you can be sure there is a human on the receiving end of your message, not a bot.

Furthermore, email is strictly an online service. In instances where accounts become compromised, there is little protection against unauthorized email access. However, a phone is a tangible object almost always attached or in close proximity to its owner at all times. This makes phone validation a better security measure than email validation.

How to Verify a List of Phone Numbers

With [Searchbug's phone verification service](#), you can verify phone numbers in minutes. There are three different ways. First, you can verify phone numbers one by one using [Searchbug's identify phone number tool](#). Second, if you need to verify a list of phone numbers, you can use the [batch phone validator](#). Here's how it works:

Step 1: Upload file

Step 2: Identify columns

Step 3: Review options

Step 4: Process

Step 5: Download results

Results for both tools include the following if available:

- Phone type - landline, cell phone (wireless) or VoIP
- Carrier/phone company name*
- Location, time zone, area code info and map

*For VoIP lines, the company name shown will be a local exchange carrier, VoIP reseller like Level 3 Communications, not the actual VoIP service provider like Vonage, Magic Jack or Google Voice

Third, if you want to save even more time and effort, you can verify phone numbers at the point of entry as they are submitted to your database using [Searchbug's phone validator API](#). Verifying phone numbers helps reduce fraud, spam form submissions, TCPA lawsuits, and more.

This phone verification service provides you with

- phone carrier
- line type
- Local Number Portability (LNP) check
- email address for sending text messages
- Reachability
- DNC list check

You have many options when it comes to choosing the API right for you. It just depends on what information you need. Searches only cost cents per query, and the rate goes down as search volume goes up!

You can even go a step further and verify the name of the recipient! [Searchbug's reverse phone lookup](#) provides you with the name associated with a phone number so you can be sure you are reaching the intended recipient.

Conclusion

Let's summarize: phone number verification is important for five reasons.

- Saves time

- Saves money
- Complies with TCPA guidelines
- Generates more leads
- Offers reliability

By weeding disconnected, DNC, and outdated phone numbers out of your database, you guarantee that you only spend time and money reaching out to legitimate leads. You also avoid paying hefty fees for TCPA violations.

You can verify phone numbers at the point of entry and get all of the information you need in real time using [Searchbug's phone validator API](#). However, it's also important to list clean regularly as phone numbers get reassigned and become outdated. You can use [Searchbug's batch phone validator](#) to verify a list of phone numbers at once.

With these tools at your fingertips, there's no excuse for collecting bad data. Store valid phone numbers in your database and use them properly for your marketing and outreach today!

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