

To Mark Zuckerberg — keep WhatsApp *open for business*.

September 11, 2026

From October 1, 2026, businesses will pay to answer their customers on WhatsApp. Through the Business Platform, every free-form reply sent within 24 hours of a customer's last message will be charged per message beyond 1,000 free messages per phone number each month, whether a person or an AI writes it.¹

Meta charges no delivery fee for its own Business Agent: it bills tokens only. Independent AI and business service providers pay a delivery fee on every reply.³

This reaches well beyond chatbot developers:

- *Users*: less choice of assistants, and the risk of higher prices or reduced support as businesses try to cover the bill.
- *Businesses and brands*: pay more to serve existing customers, whether they absorb the cost, pass it on, or move support to another channel.
- *BSPs, CPaaS providers and integrators*: absorb the charge or raise prices, giving clients another reason to consider Meta's agent.
- *AI providers*: a charge that grows with every conversation, making some assistants too expensive to keep running on WhatsApp.
- *Model developers, inference providers and independent clouds*: when a client moves to Meta's agent, the models and infrastructure behind its previous service can lose that business too.

This letter calls on Meta to keep customer service replies free, give independent providers the same delivery terms as its own agent, and treat the businesses and developers affected as partners.

[Calculate the impact on your business → keepwhatsappopen.com/calculator](https://keepwhatsappopen.com/calculator)

Dear Mark,

WhatsApp became the global standard by making messaging free, accessible, and reliable anywhere under the same conditions. That foundation replaced the friction of paid SMS and turned WhatsApp into everyday infrastructure, reaching more than nine in ten internet users in some countries.

In 2024, you brought that same principle to business messaging by making customer service replies free, while retiring the self-hosted gateways and moving every business onto Meta's Cloud API. Today, many businesses rely on WhatsApp to deliver support, assistance, and intelligence.

From October 1, 2026, you will charge those businesses for each service reply through the Business Platform, whether a person or an independent AI writes the answer. The 1,000 free messages per phone number each month are spent by the second business day for an operation answering 20,000 customers a month.¹

The published rates run from 0.14¢ to 5.5¢ per billable service message, set market by market. A business does not choose its rate: it inherits the geography of its customers. At those endpoints, one million billable replies means \$1,400 to \$55,000 in delivery fees alone, before software, before inference, before the people who make the service work.² And you can revise those rates every quarter.

Your own Business Agent pays no delivery fee: you bill it by the token, about four to five cents a reply, and nothing for delivery.³ Every independent assistant pays for its intelligence, then pays you to deliver the answer. In the most expensive markets, that delivery fee alone matches what your agent bills for the whole answer. A reply is charged either as a Business Agent message or as a service message, never both: the delivery fee applies only to replies you did not write.³

For any customer service, replies are the work itself. While AI inference is becoming cheaper every month, these delivery fees set an artificial floor. In those markets, delivering a reply costs 5.5¢ while generating it on an efficient model costs a fraction of a cent: the fee can be ten times the intelligence it carries. No amount of technical efficiency can optimize away a delivery fee set by the platform.

This leaves businesses with a bad choice:

They can pay delivery charges on every reply, absorb them, or pass the cost on to their users.

Or they can switch to your Business Agent to escape a delivery fee that applies only to independent replies, while giving up sovereignty over their AI, their data, and where their models run.⁴

No business should have to trade control over its processes and data just to get fair delivery terms.

You make the case for that freedom yourself. In *The Future is for Everyone*, you argue for competing agents and open models, and say agents should share "a person's goals and values, not our company's."⁵ Those principles must hold when an independent service wants to reach a customer on your platform. Give them room to serve their customers on fair terms.

Businesses should choose who supplies their intelligence and where it runs.

The ask is simple:

- 01 Reverse the service-message charges scheduled for October 1, 2026. Preserve free customer service replies within the service window, whether written by a human or an independent AI assistant.
- 02 Give independent providers the same delivery terms as your own agent: no per-reply delivery fee within the service window, or one published delivery price that applies identically to Meta's agent and to everyone else. Let businesses choose their models and infrastructure without paying more for choosing someone other than Meta.
- 03 Treat the ecosystem as partners, not competitors. Work with developers, service providers, and businesses to keep WhatsApp the world's leading business channel. An open platform drives faster innovation, gives users the services they actually choose, and builds long-term value for Meta and the businesses that rely on it.

The signatories of this letter are ready to have that conversation.

Keep WhatsApp Open For Business.

*Sincerely,
the undersigned*

SOURCES

- 1 Meta for Developers — *Upcoming pricing updates for Meta Business Agent, service and utility messages*: "Effective October 1, 2026, Meta will charge on a per-message basis for service messages"; "Meta does not offer volume tiers for service messages"; "Meta may update rates up to quarterly" — <https://developers.facebook.com/documentation/business-messaging/whatsapp/pricing/non-template-messages>. Service messages free since November 1, 2024, and the 1,000 free service messages per phone number per month: Respond.io — <https://respond.io/help/whatsapp/whatsapp-pricing>
- 2 WhatsApp Business Platform rate cards (service messages billed at each market's utility/authentication rate) — <https://developers.facebook.com/documentation/business-messaging/whatsapp/pricing>; per-country table: Wasync — <https://wasync.app/whatsapp-api-cost>
- 3 Meta for Developers — *Upcoming pricing updates for Meta Business Agent, service and utility messages*: "Effective August 1, 2026, Meta will charge all businesses for Meta Business Agent messages"; "One global rate of \$2.00 USD per 1M tokens"; "Charges reflect the token consumption to ingest the user's message (the prompt) and to generate a response"; "One message typically consumes about 20,000–25,000 tokens, which translates to approximately 4–5 cents (USD) per message"; "A non-template message is charged either as a Meta Business Agent message or as a service message, never both." — <https://developers.facebook.com/documentation/business-messaging/whatsapp/pricing/non-template-messages>
- 4 Meta Business Agents & Platform Terms of Service (July 16, 2026), §2.b: Meta may use Content "to improve our artificial intelligence models and algorithms, including Business Agents"; §5.b.i: Output may not be used "to develop models, algorithms, or systems to compete with Meta". WhatsApp Help Center — About using Meta Business Agent to chat with customers — <https://faq.whatsapp.com/291930066973116>
- 5 Mark Zuckerberg — *The Future is for Everyone: The Path to a Positive AI Future*, August 10, 2026: "we view alignment as ensuring that agents share a person's goals and values, not our company's." — <https://www.meta.com/thefutureisforeveryone/>