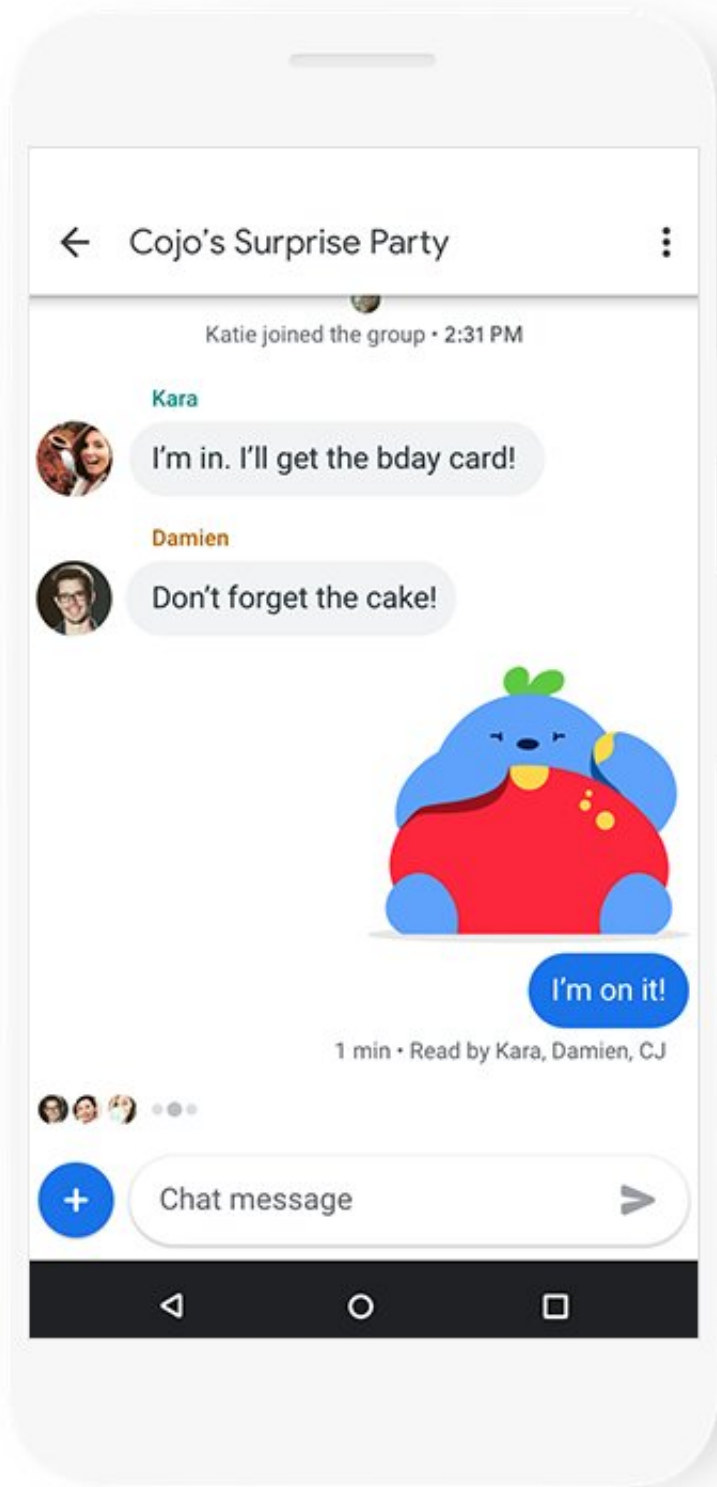


# **RCS rollout for Android raises messaging expectations**

December 15 2019, by Nancy Cohen

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SMS is so 2019. RCS is where the cool will stand around and chat, or so the vision goes at Google which has finally completed the process of rolling out the RCS set of communication standards

Rich Communications Service (RCS) is now available to all users in the US as of Monday. Actually, Google had announced last month that RCS would become the [texting](#) platform on Android. Fast forward to now and you can expect it on Monday. Android users can use it on their mobile devices.

Who said? Sites referred to the tweet by Google's Sanaz Ahari on Dec. 12. "[Hi](#) everyone! RCS is now available to all users in US as of Monday."

The draw toward RCS has to do with its ability to make text messages look and feel more like dedicated [messaging](#) apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook Messenger, Google Hangouts, said *Android Central* back in [November](#). "Basically, it aims to bring "texting" up to the modern standards with features we expect from messaging apps."

Those who want to jump in will need to update the Messages app and Carrier Services.

Abner Li, [9to5Google](#), provided more details: "After downloading or updating to the latest version of Messages (currently 5.2) and the backend Carrier Services (32.0.283645144) from the Play Store, you'll be prompted to upgrade to RCS. You can also visit Settings > Chat features to set-up and control."

*Pocket-lint* [described](#) RCS as "a new online protocol that is meant to replace SMS, the current texting standard."

CNET described it as a texting update to finally bring iMessage-like

features to Android users.

Corinne Reichert, [CNET](#), said the RCS en route will include: (1) chat over Wi-Fi (2) read receipts, (3) typing indicators, (4) sending and receiving high-resolution images and videos (5) group chat naming and (6) adding or removing people from group chats.

Maggie Tillman in *Pocket-lint* also wrote about its capabilities for readers: (1) It lets you know if the person you're texting is available, (2) can send receipts to show they've received or read your message, (3) lets you create longer messages and attach larger files (4) it's better at group messaging. (5) It also enables companies to interact with customers if, for example, you are checking on the status of an order.

In the bigger picture, Google is upgrading messaging directly rather than waiting on carriers, wrote Abner Li in *9to5Google*. Jay Peters in *The Verge* picked up on this too. He [said](#), "even though RCS has taken a while to arrive, it could have taken even longer. Google originally relied on the carriers to roll out RCS, but they dragged their feet so much that Google decided to do the rollout itself."

When will RCS be rolling out to other countries? Ahari said to stay tuned.

Several tech watching sites kept using the phrase "iMessage like" to describe the new experience Android users may gain in messaging. Actually, it's fair to anticipate stepping up in the world for those who depend on their Android smartphones.

Isaiah Mayersen in [TechSpot](#) meanwhile could see why RCS would be appreciated for texting:

"After years of organizing and fighting mobile carriers, Google has

finally finished implementing RCS (Rich Communications Services) for all Android devices in the States. The service, effectively replacing the old SMS and MMS messaging standards, turns typical Android texting into an iMessage-like experience."

Mayersen nonetheless pointed out: "While RCS is undoubtedly a much-needed upgrade over SMS, it still has a way to go before other messaging apps lose their allure. Apple is still refusing to support it, so you get none of the new features when messaging iOS users, and there's no end-to-end encryption."

*The Verge* also told its readers that "Unlike Apple's iMessage, though, RCS doesn't support end-to-end encryption." Jay Peters said if one wanted to send encrypted messages, then one would need to use a third-party app like Signal.

**More information:** [jibe.google.com/](https://jibe.google.com/)

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