SMALL BUSINESS GUIDE · 2026

Stop Running Your Business From a Personal Mobile and WhatsApp

The hidden costs, a twelve point self-check, and a one week plan to move to a business line without giving up your mobile.

> The mobile in your pocket is a great business tool. The **personal number** on it, and the **WhatsApp group** standing in for an office, are what cost you customers, records and trust.

Seven hidden costs

- The customer relationship belongs to one person
- Calls ring out while you are doing the work
- Unknown mobile numbers look like scams
- Nothing is recorded or shared
- One lost phone stops the business
- You and your staff can never switch off
- You cannot see missed calls or trends

Why WhatsApp falls short for a team

- History lives on private phones
- Leavers keep their copy of everything
- Former staff linger in groups
- Work and family chats blur together
- Not connected to customer calls
- Hard to meet APP 11 privacy obligations

Self-check: tick what is true today

- [ ] Our published number is someone's personal mobile
- [ ] When that person is busy, nobody else can answer
- [ ] We missed calls this month we never returned
- [ ] Staff call customers from their own mobiles
- [ ] Customers have staff members' private numbers
- [ ] Our team chat is a WhatsApp or Messenger group
- [ ] A former staff member is, or could be, in a work group
- [ ] No recording or notes of important calls
- [ ] Business calls arrive on holidays, nights and weekends
- [ ] If the owner's phone were lost, customers could not reach us
- [ ] We could not say how many calls we got last week
- [ ] A customer ignored our call because they did not know the number

Your score

0 to 3: fine for now. **4 to 7:** it is already costing you work, plan the move. **8+:** you are paying for a phone system in missed jobs, without getting one.

What changes, and what you keep

Today	On a business phone system
One person answers	The whole team rings at once, first free answers
Personal number shown to customers	Business number on every call and text
Calls at all hours	Business hours, then voicemail or AI receptionist
Chats on private phones	Team chat and SMS in an app the business controls
Nothing recorded	Recordings, voicemail to email, AI summaries
Leaver keeps the customers	Remove the user, reroute the line, keep the customers

The one week move

1. **Mon:** list everywhere your number appears and who calls you most.
2. **Tue:** choose a plan and request the port of the number in your name.
3. **Wed:** install the apps, create ring groups, set hours and a greeting.
4. **Thu:** recreate the team groups in the business app and stop using WhatsApp for work.
5. **Fri:** once the number moves, text regular customers so they save it.

The one mistake you cannot undo

Never cancel the old number before the port completes. A disconnected number goes into quarantine and cannot be ported. General information only, not legal advice.

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