



## Messaging in China

Messaging between staff, friends, and family is as important in China as it is anywhere else in the world.

Most international messaging systems are part of social media platforms and are not available in China.

Mobile local and overseas telephone companies, as well as national and international text messaging, are available.

China has developed national messaging systems over the years.

**QQ** - text-based system – Tencent – 1999 – 574 million (2023)



Instant messaging with text, voice, video calls, group chats, and file sharing. QQ remains popular among younger users and gamers and supports QQ Wallet payments.

**Momo** – Messaging app and social networking – Momo Inc – 2010



A location-based social networking and messaging app mainly used for meeting new people and social interaction. It supports text and voice messaging, as well as live streaming.

**MiChat** – Massaging platform like WeChat – Xiaomi – 2010 to 2021



Initially, it started as a messaging platform similar to WeChat. It supports messaging, voice, and video calls, but Xiaomi later discontinued the service in China to focus on other markets.

### WeChat – Messaging App (text) – Tencent – 2011 – 1.26 billion users (2023)



Messaging (text, voice, video), voice calls, group chats, and social features like "Moments." It also supports payments via WeChat Pay and mini-programs for businesses.



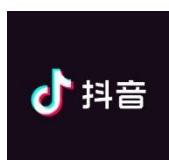
### YiChat - Messaging service – China Telecom and NetEase – 2013

A messaging service offering free SMS (to non-YiChat users), voice, and video calls, it was launched as a competitor to WeChat but never gained the same popularity.



### DingTalk – Messaging (text/voice/video/files) – Alibaba – 2014 – 500 million users (2023)

It is primarily an enterprise communication tool that offers text and voice messaging, video calls, task management, and file sharing for business use.



### DouYin – Messaging, social media, e-commerce platform – ByteDance – 2016 – 730 Chinese users. (2023)

Today, it's mainly known as a short-form video platform similar to TikTok (the international version of Douyin). It's widely used for sharing user-generated videos, challenges, and memes. Used as a messaging platform, mainly by your people

TikTok systems run on different platforms from DouYin and are not linked.



### Feishu / Lark – Enterprise messaging platform – ByteDance – 2019 – 10 million users (2023)

An enterprise messaging platform, similar to Slack or Microsoft Teams, offers messaging, file sharing, video calls, and collaboration tools, focused on work communication.

There is an exception for overseas messaging services not blocked in China.



### Skype – Microsoft - 2003

Used for international communication, offering text, voice, and video calls. Skype is used in China but faces restrictions and competition from local services like WeChat and QQ.

Overseas messaging services are available in China by using a VPN. The Chinese regulations do not allow the use of VPNs. Most VPNs in China are blocked.

In addition to the above messaging services, all social media platforms have their own messaging services. The primary social media not covered above;



**Weibo** – social media – Sina Corporation (30% owned by Alibaba) - 2009 – 584 million users (2023)

While primarily a social media platform, Weibo has integrated messaging features that allow users to communicate privately. It's famous for sharing updates, news, and trends and has a significant influence on public discourse in China.



**Xiaohongshu (Red Book)** - Xingin Information Technology – 2013

A social commerce platform where users share reviews of products and lifestyle tips, particularly popular for fashion, beauty, and travel.

### Overseas messaging to and from China recommendations

- Open a WeChat account. This can be done in most overseas countries. More than 95% of Chinese businesses and consumers have a WeChat account. There is a translation option available.
- A Red Book account may be required if your customer/supplier uses this platform for business messaging. Note: - As stated above, Red Book users will also have a WeChat account.
- Standard text messaging is available, but is not used much in China. If you use text messaging and do not get a reply, there may be a problem in China. Backup texting at the outset to ensure there are no communication problems.
- Please remember to respect Chinese rules and regulations on messaging content.