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Baileys (QR code) or the WhatsApp Cloud API: the risk and the rules

Choosing a WhatsApp Option

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Choosing a WhatsApp Option Created on **October 10, 2026** 3 min read



The short answer: if the number is your company's and the messages matter to the business, use the **official Cloud API**. If it is a trial number you can lose without harm, Baileys is fine for experiments. The difference is not technical, it is about **who gave permission**: with the Cloud API, Meta did; with Baileys, nobody did.

What each one is

Baileys is a third-party library that behaves like WhatsApp Web: you scan a QR code with the phone, it stays linked as an associated device and a program sends and receives messages through it. Evolution API uses it in one of its integrations. The **Cloud API** is the interface Meta itself offers to businesses, with a developer account, an app, a number, a token and a webhook.

Side by side

	Baileys	Cloud API
Status	Unofficial, built by reverse engineering.	Official, documented by Meta.
Getting started	Scan a QR and you are done.	Developer account, app, number, token and a verified webhook.
Number ban	The main risk. It can happen without warning and without appeal.	Possible if you break the rules, but the rules are public and Meta has channels to appeal.
Messages you start	No templates. Meta cannot tell legitimate automation from abuse, and acts on behaviour.	Approved templates outside the 24-hour window.
Stability	Can break when WhatsApp changes. The instance sits on "connecting" until the library is updated.	Stable by contract, with documented versions.

	Baileys	Cloud API
Who answers if it fails	Nobody. The project's community and forums.	Meta, through its own channels.

What Meta asks for, in general terms

1. **Consent.** You write only to people who agreed to be contacted. It is the rule that burns the most numbers, with any technology.
2. **No mass sending to strangers.** Bought lists, numbers scraped from websites and recycled groups bring reports, and reports bring bans.
3. **A clear reason for every message.** On the Cloud API each template has a category and is reviewed before use.
4. **Read the current terms.** Meta's rules change. What is here is a summary, and their text is the one that counts.

Nobody promises recoveries.
A number banned for using an unofficial connection may not come back. If customers know it, you lose the whole number and the channel to them. See also **the risks and the practices that avoid them**.

Deciding in three questions

1. **Can you afford to lose this number?** If not, Cloud API. If yes, Baileys is good for proving an idea.
2. **Will you write to someone first?** If so you need templates, therefore the Cloud API.
3. **Is there someone to maintain the server?** Evolution API is yours to update with either integration. If nobody can, the Cloud API used directly has fewer moving parts.

You can start with Baileys on a test number and move to the Cloud API when the project turns serious. Since Evolution API speaks both, the rest of your automation does not have to change. Before choosing, compare the options in **ordinary WhatsApp, Business or the Cloud API**.

RECOMMENDED

Want to try Evolution API on a server of your own? Start with the VPS.

See VPS servers →

SEE ALSO

- What Evolution API is →
- Getting started with the Cloud API →
- VPS servers →

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