

# A three-cabin rental whose guest operations run themselves

How Wild Wood Cabins connected 15 systems into automations that message guests, prepare cabins, screen repeat guests and report back, without a development team.

15

systems connected,  
bookings to thermostats

20+

automated jobs on events,  
schedules and weather

268

past guests screened  
before any marketing send

15 → 211

mailing-list contacts with a  
usable phone number

|          |                                                                                                                                           |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Business | Wild Wood Cabins near Mentone, Alabama: three cabins, also rented as one retreat, on Airbnb, Vrbo, Glamping Hub and a direct booking site |
| Role     | Owner, designer and builder of every automation described; one owner and one co-host                                                      |
| Tools    | OwnerRez, Make, Claude, Mailchimp, Gmail, SmartThings, National Weather Service data, Turno, VoIP.ms SMS                                  |

## THE CHALLENGE

- **Four channels, four inboxes.** Each platform messaged guests its own way. One booking request sat unseen for 23 days because the platform sent no alert.
- **Critical details lost in email.** Door codes and check-in instructions landed in spam, so guests called on arrival.
- **Climate on manual.** Empty cabins ran at the last guest's settings; arriving guests could find a cabin too hot or too cold.
- **Everything else ran on memory.** Review decisions, cleaning follow-up and repeat-guest screening all depended on someone remembering.

## DESIGN RULES

| Rule                             | In practice                                                                          |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Start with the dreaded task      | The first automation decided which guests should get an automatic review             |
| Silence is never an answer       | Every check reports back, even "all quiet" or "couldn't reach it"                    |
| Native first, custom for the gap | Built-in platform features where they work; custom connections only where they don't |
| Proven on real records           | Each automation is tested against live bookings before anyone relies on it           |

## ACROSS THE GUEST'S STAY

| Stage          | What happens automatically                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Book           | Messages and inquiries from every channel are texted to both hosts within minutes. A twice-daily check catches booking requests a platform never alerts on.                                                  |
| Before arrival | Two days out, a unique door code and house manual link go out by text once the stay is paid. Early check-in requests are checked against cleaning status and the hosts get an advisory.                      |
| The stay       | The cabin is warmed or cooled about 4 hours before arrival. A day-after text invites the guest to reply if they need anything.                                                                               |
| Turnover       | When the cleaner marks the job done, the booking is tagged, the hosts are told and the cabin drops to an energy-saving setting. A nightly check attaches any cleaner-reported issue to that guest's booking. |

|                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| After the stay | Day 4: the guest's own messages are read for sentiment and only guests who said they loved it get an automatic review. Day 15: problems are flagged, top reviews are marked for the website and everyone else joins the newsletter. Month 12: a "stay again" offer. |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## GUEST MESSAGING ON THE RIGHT CHANNEL

Direct and Glamping Hub guests get four texts signed by the co-host: confirmation on booking, the door code two days before arrival, a check-in the day after arrival, and thanks with a review link at checkout. Airbnb and Vrbo guests are excluded on purpose because their platform messaging already works and a third channel would confuse them.

## CLIMATE CONTROL THAT READS THE CALENDAR AND THE FORECAST

Every two hours the system checks bookings, the National Weather Service hourly forecast and each cabin's indoor temperature, then sets each unit. Heat or cool is chosen from the forecast, so there is no seasonal switch to remember.

| Situation          | Setting                                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Guest arriving     | 70° heat or 75° cool, about 4 hours ahead     |
| Guest in residence | Left alone; the guest is in control           |
| Cabin empty        | 66° heat, 80° cool, or off on mild days       |
| Out of range       | Owner is texted if a cabin reaches 50° or 90° |

## RESULTS

| Area                    | Before                                 | After                                                                    |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Missed booking requests | One sat unseen for 23 days             | Checked every morning and evening                                        |
| Check-in details        | Email only; guests called for codes    | Direct and Glamping Hub guests also get them by text                     |
| Marketing safety        | Past guests added to lists by hand     | All 268 past guests screened; all 23 "do not rent again" guests kept off |
| Guest contact data      | 15 contacts with a usable phone number | 211, after matching the list to booking records                          |
| Cabin climate           | Set by hand                            | Set every 2 hours from bookings, forecast and indoor temperature         |

## HONEST LIMITS

- Testing against live records found real bugs, including an early check-in alert that had never fired and a cleaning check that missed a late clean. Both were fixed.
- Two platforms offer no integration, so those checks rely on a browser session and report failure rather than going quiet.
- Energy savings are not yet measured; the climate automation launched in September 2026.

**None of this is specific to cabins.** The same patterns fit any business with customers across several channels and work that repeats: write the rule down first, automate it, prove it on real records, and make every job report back.