

## Verification of Craigslist accounts by phone

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The CLAD Genius software has the feature to verify Craigslist Accounts by phone. This feature is a part of CLAD Genius software, is included in the CLAD Genius software, is not a separate install/download and cannot be used separately.

We do not offer or sell phone numbers. It is the end users responsibility to research a 3rd party solutions for the phone numbers if they choose to use this feature.

### SECTION 1. Semi-automated verification of Craigslist accounts by phone.

If you have access to phone numbers, you may take advantage of our semi-automated phone verification feature described below.

Phone verification is an integral part of the ad posting, so you will need to prepare your ads and make sure you can post them before using phone verification feature.

Make sure you have the following items ready prior to starting phone verification:

- » You have created (or imported) and validated enough non-PVA Craigslist accounts in CLAD. The accounts must be green (validated) in the list of CL accounts under "Accounts" tab
- » You have added phone numbers to the CL accounts by either manually inputting phone numbers in the account properties, or imported them using "Import list of phones" feature, which can be found on the toolbar to the left of the CL accounts list (Group processing button).
- » You have checked the box "Attempt to phone verify this account during posting process" for every account that you want to verify by phone. You can do that either manually for each individual account (in the account properties) or for multiple selected accounts, using group processing->bulk update feature
  - » You have prepared your ads for posting and enabled them
  - » Phone verification feature works to verify Non-PVA CL accounts, and it also works for already verified CL accounts (PVAs), if Craigslist asks to verify them again during posting process:
- » If all of your accounts are non-PVAs and you just want to verify them, switch to "Non-PVAs only" mode under settings->posting->craigslist->posting mode.
- » If you already verified your accounts (or imported ready-made PVAs) and you just want to ensure that CLAD will re-verify them during posting IF Craigslist asks to do that, switch to "PVAs only" mode under settings->posting->craigslist->posting mode.
- » If you have a mixture of PVAs and Non-PVAs, you can mark them all as PVAs, select "PVAs only" mode under settings->posting->craigslist->posting mode and start posting. CLAD will try to use your accounts as PVAs (even if they aren't PVAs), Craigslist will ask for phone verification, and CLAD will start verification process.

It is also recommended (but not required) that you do the following:

- » Place all non-PVA accounts that you plan to phone-verify in a separate campaign. Also place your ads that you wish to use for phone verification into the same campaign
- » Make sure you do not have any accounts under "All campaigns", because CLAD may use them instead of those from your PVA campaign.
- » Make sure you do not have ads in other campaigns enabled for posting.
  
- » If you plan to geo-target your PVAs, set up IP rotation/proxies correspondingly.
- » If you do not want CLAD to ask you whether you want to verify each particular account, un-check the box "Ask before starting phone verification" under settings/posting/craigslist/phone verification

Once you have your ads, accounts and phone numbers prepared as described above, start posting your ads. CLAD will log in to an arbitrary non-PVA account and will start posting your ad. When Craigslist asks to verify the account by phone, CLAD will enter the phone number associated with the selected non-PVA and will submit it to Craigslist automatically. Next, CLAD will ask you to pick up the phone, listen to the code and enter it. Once the account has been verified, CLAD will complete the post, mark your CL account as PVA and will proceed to the next post.

After verification procedure is completed successfully, your non-PVA CL accounts will become bold green in the list of CL accounts in CLAD, which indicates that they have been verified by phone.

Useful tips:

- » Prior to using the phone verification feature, you need to have a list of regular (non-phone verified) Craigslist accounts in the program. Either have CLAD Genius create them for you or import via a text file. When you have sufficient number of non-PVA accounts loaded in the program, use the "Import list of phones and authorization codes to Phone Verify CL accounts" button from the Group Processing button in the list of CL accounts, to add your phone numbers. You can also do that manually by editing each CL account and entering phone number and (optionally) authorization code.

- » If you choose to import, please use plain text file with either phone numbers (each phone number on a separate line, accepted format of the phone number is XXX-XXX-XXXX or XXXXXXXXXXXX)Â

- » Phone verification may not work correctly if you post to Backpage or Kijiji and phone verify CL accounts at the same time. This is due to the fact that backpage/kijiji poster may start waiting for confirmation E-mails at the same time with Craigslist phone verifier, and they will lock out each other. Eventually, Craigslist phone verification will just time out and backpage/kijiji will continue confirming the posts. To avoid this side effect, it is advised not to post to backpage/kijiji when verifying CL accounts by phone.

Â SECTION 2. Fully automated verification of Craigslist accounts by phone using 3rd party voice-to-text services.

CLAD supports the following modes of automated voice-to-text transcriptions via respective voice-to-text services:

- » PhoneTag (<http://www.phonetag.com>) (\$0.35 per recognition or \$30 per month, 90% accuracy)
  
- » Google Voice (free, 50% accuracy)
- » BypassVoice service (<http://bypassvoice.com>)

» VoiceCloud service (<http://voiceloud.com>) You need to set up only one mode, which will be sufficient to perform automated verification. There is no need to set up more than one mode, but you can if you want to. .

#### MODE 1 - Automated verification using PhoneTag - steps-by-step setup:

- » Prepare everything as described in the SECTION 1.
- » Prepare PhoneTag account (one-time procedure):
  - » Go to <http://www.phonetag.com>
  - » Signup for PhoneTag account and select Skype as your Provider
  - » During signup procedure, they will give you a phone # to send your voicemails to (usually 817-440-3150), record that number
    - » In your phonetag account, change the voicemail greeting to something really short (no longer than a couple of seconds).
    - » In your phonetag account, un-check the box "Attach Audio"
  - » In PhoneTag account, setup your E-mail to any account that you use as master account in CLAD. This means that you need to have a Master account in CLAD, and you need to have PhoneTag send transcribed E-mail messages to this Master E-mail Account. If you have many Master E-mail accounts in CLAD, you can select anyone for this purpose, it does not really matter which one. You cannot share Master account across many different CLAD installations. If you want to set up verification on several computers, you need to have separate master E-mail account for each one. It is NOT recommended to use hotmail accounts for phone verification purposes. Hotmail enforces 15-minutes delay between mailchecks, which could lead to some of the verification messages not being processed by CLAD, just because it would not be able to retrieve them from the mailbox within the time allowed for phone verification session to complete. You can use GMail accounts or any other accounts which do not limit number of mailchecks for this purpose.
- » Prepare Skype (one-time procedure):
  - » Sign up for a Skype account (free), load and start Skype.
  - » In Skype, go to Skype -> Account menu, select Online number and purchase 1 (one) U.S. number (anywhere in the U.S., the location does not matter)
    - » Forward your phone lines that you set up in SECTION 1 to the Skype phone number that you just purchased (or ask the supplier whom you purchased the numbers from to forward them for you)
    - » In Skype, set it up to forward unanswered calls to your PhoneTag # that you received when setting up a PhoneTag account above. You will may need to purchase Skype credit to allow outgoing calls, or set up calling subscription (which should be cheaper)
  - » Place a call to a couple of your phone numbers and after a few minutes (usually 1-2 min) check your E-mail account, you should see transcribed message that you spoke into the phone. If you do not see it - you have set up something incorrectly, go back and check everything until you are able to receive transcriptions into your E-mail account

- » Configure CLAD settings (one-time procedure)
- » Load CLAD
  - » Make sure you see the E-mail address (the one you used when configuring Voicemail above) in the list of E-mail addresses in CLAD (Accounts->E-mails), Make sure that E-mail address is bold (master) and green (validated). Also make sure that when you select it, you can see the list of messages in that E-mail account in the list to the right of the account. The list of messages is loaded only when you have Start button pressed in CLAD (in the top left corner). It may take 1-5 minutes to load the messages after you press Start button.
  - » Go to settings->posting->Craigslist->Phone verification
  - » Select "Verification method: Automated - Google Voice/Vonage/PhoneTag". If you do not see that box - either you use older version of CLAD or your license does not allow automatic verification of CL accounts.
  - » Make sure "Start" button (in the top left corner of CLAD window) is pressed (looks like a red box, not like a green arrow)
  - » Click on the "Google Voice/Vonage/PhoneTag" tab and click on Start test. Call one of your phone numbers that you set up above and say a few words. Wait 2-3 minutes. CLAD should pick up the E-mail message and display transcribed text in the log.
- » Proceed to posting and phone verification the same way as in SECTION 1. Once CLAD sees phone verification screen, it will attempt to send phone number to Craigslist and will start waiting for an E-mail from PhoneTag with the transcribed code, then it will input the recognized authentication code into the box on Craigslist's website and voila - your account is verified.  
MODE 2 - Automated verification using Google Voice - steps-by-step setup:Â
- » Prepare everything as described in the SECTION 1.
- » Prepare Google Voice account (one-time procedure, free)
  - » Go to <http://google.com/voice> and sign up for a free Google Voice account. Make sure to use U.S. IP when signing up, otherwise you will not be able to use Google Voice free phone number, which is available for U.S. users only. If you use CLAD Genius on multiple computers, you will need a separate Google Voice account for each computer
  - » When Google Voice asks for a phone number, provide any phone number of your choice that you have a physical access to (this is needed for initial setup only and you will not need this phone number in the future)
  - » When Google Voice account setup is complete, go to Options in your Google Voice account (blue gear button in the top right corner of your browser window), select Voice settings there.
  - » On the "Phones" tab, un-check the box near the phone number that you used to signed up. You may delete this phone number if you want.
  - » On the "Voicemail & Text" tab record new Voicemail Greeting, make it really short - 1-2 seconds, not more. Don't say anything, just start recording and stop it so that the greeting becomes as short as possible. Make sure that you have "Alert me when I have new voicemails - Email the message to" box checked and provide a valid E-mail address, preferably Gmail. You need to have that E-mail address set up as one of your master E-mail accounts in CLAD (you can make a separate campaign for it and put just this E-mail there and make it Master, or you can use any Master E-mail account from any of your campaigns here). Also make sure that the "Transcribe

Voicemails" box is checked. Save changes here.

- » On the "Calls" tab turn call screening off, Save changes.
- » Forward your phone lines that you set up in SECTION 1 to the Google Voice number that you got from Google (or ask the supplier whom you purchased the numbers from to forward them for you)
- » Place a call to a couple of your phone numbers to ensure that you are able to see the call in your Google Voice account. Check the E-mail box that you specified when configuring Voicemail above, you should see an E-mail message with transcribed text of what you have said when making a call. If you do not see the E-mail message (may take 2-3 minutes for it to arrive), check every step above again until you are confident that every call that you make is being transcribed by Google and sent to your mailbox. Also make sure that it does not go to Spam, if it does - configure junk mail settings of your E-mail account to prevent that

- » Configure CLAD settings (one-time procedure)

- » Load CLAD

- » Make sure you see the E-mail address (the one you used when configuring Voicemail above) in the list of E-mail addresses in CLAD (Accounts->E-mails), Make sure that E-mail address is bold (master) and green (validated). Also make sure that when you select it, you can see the list of messages in that E-mail account in the list to the right of the account. The list of messages is loaded only when you have Start button pressed in CLAD (in the top left corner). It may take 1-5 minutes to load the messages after you press Start button.

- » Go to settings->posting-> Craigslist->Phone verification

- » Select "Verification method: Automated - Google Voice/Vonage/PhoneTag". If you do not see that box - either you use older version of CLAD or your license does not allow automatic verification of CL accounts.

- » Make sure "Start" button (in the top left corner of CLAD window) is pressed (looks like a red box, not like a green arrow)

- » Click on the "Google Voice/Vonage/PhoneTag" tab and click on Start test. Call one of your phone numbers that you set up above and say a few words. Wait 2-5 minutes. CLAD should pick up the E-mail message and display transcribed text in the log.

- » Proceed to posting and phone verification the same way as in SECTION 1. Once CLAD sees phone verification screen, it will attempt to send phone number to Craigslist and will start waiting for an E-mail from Google with the transcribed code, then it will input the recognized authentication code into the box on Craigslist's website and voila - your account is verified. You can also use Mode 2 to set up automatic verification using Vonage voicemail transcription services. Just set up forwarding of the transcribed messages from your Vonage account to any the master accounts in CLAD, the rest of the setup is identical to Google Voice. At this time we have no idea how well Vonage performs compared to Google Voice or PhoneTag. We do not know what the accuracy rate is. We have never tested this option. Please do not ask us about the performance of Vonage - we do not know. If you want to find out - the only way for you is to test it yourself. Or stick to the Google Voice / PhoneTag options.

MODE 3 - Automated verification using <http://bypassvoice.com/> service.

Please follow this link for setup instructions: <http://bypassvoice.com/>

MODE 4 - Automated verification using <http://voicecloud.com/> service.

The setup is pretty much similar to that of Mode 2 and Mode 3 - you just need to make sure that E-mails with transcriptions end up in your master account, and CLAD will process them

### **Where to get the phone numbers**

This is the most intriguing part. As we mentioned in the beginning of this article, we do not have a straightforward answer here. But we can offer some useful input to get you started.

You are probably wondering, why can't we just give you the link to the website of the reliable supplier where you could get the numbers? Unfortunately, our experience shows that there are no "reliable suppliers" in this business. No, we do not mean that everyone is a scam, not at all. We have seen very reputable people (some of them are our customers) who tried to make business selling the phone numbers. Initially, their numbers worked well. But as they were getting more and more customers, Craigslist noticed the website, extrapolated the source of the phone numbers and blocked them.

Therefore, our first advise is to stay away from the websites that offer phone numbers. Unless they have some sort of refund policy or able to give you at least a week of free trial - most probably the numbers won't work.

The second advice is to look around in your neighborhood and find someone who sells sim cards/did numbers or represents some phone company. They may be able to sell phone numbers in bulk and forward them for you, which is what you need. Depending on the quantity, you can get very competitive prices. Generally, that is the most reliable way, because you can be sure that Craigslist won't be able to block these numbers (unless all your neighbors are heavy Craigslist posters and also get the numbers from the same source, which is unlikely).