

RingCentral

**THE
CUSTOMER
SERVICE
GUIDE TO
FACEBOOK
MESSAGING
APPS FOR
BUSINESS**





In response, early adopters in business-to-consumer messaging are tearing down their old communication models and replacing them with new, customer-centric visions.

Giants like Facebook, Google, and Apple have developed a raft of communication methods that support instant connection to improve customer satisfaction, NPS, and adoption, while reducing churn.

They can now offer support whenever, wherever, and however their customers want. If that support happens to be a stock query at three o'clock in the morning via Instagram, then so be it.

Staying abreast of such a monumental change is difficult. We've developed this short Guide to Facebook messaging channels to help you stay on top of evolving digital channels and rising expectations, including:

- An overview of the changing communications landscape
- An in-depth look of each Facebook messaging app or service (including Facebook Business Messenger, WhatsApp Business, and Instagram Business)
- A look at how organizations are already implementing the new technology to connect with and serve customers on their preferred channels.

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CUSTOMER SERVICE SHOULD BE

AS EASY AS MESSAGING A FRIEND

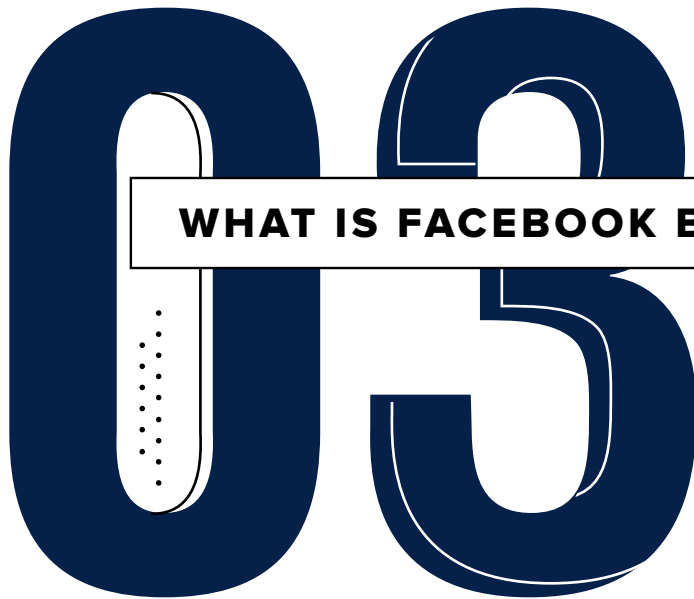
When organizations increase the number of channels they support from four or fewer to more than eight, their **customer rating increases by 63%**.

The attraction of asynchronous messaging apps, which make it possible to spread an interaction over hours and even days, is clear. Users can drop a conversation in January and pick it back up in February, share photos, video, hyperlinks, voice messages and more. Now, we expect to have this kind of interaction with brands on any device touchpoint. Ultimately, it's about customers communicating on their terms, their schedule, their channel...their purpose.

Facebook has invested heavily to ensure it owns as many new messaging apps as possible. Internally, it developed Messenger, once a core part of its social network and now a standalone app with 1.3 billion monthly active

users. And Facebook complemented Messenger with two careful acquisitions: Instagram, in 2012 for \$1 billion, and WhatsApp, in 2014, for \$19 billion. Together, Facebook's messaging apps have 3.9 billion monthly active users, more than half of the world's population.

In the past, these apps have largely stayed within a personal communication context. People organize camping trips through Facebook Messenger, family dinners on WhatsApp, and dates through Instagram Direct Messages. But as they grew in popularity, consumers began using their personal messaging apps for their service needs which presented a huge opportunity for businesses.



WHAT IS FACEBOOK BUSINESS MESSENGER?

Facebook's business-focused features on Messenger allow companies to increase customer engagement and reduce drop-off by enabling transactions, service updates, and agent interactions, all from within the Facebook Messenger app.

Since 2016, Facebook Messenger has grown exceptionally quickly, particularly amongst business users. The messaging app has more than 1.3 billion monthly active users, including 20 million businesses. Facebook is not resting on its laurels. The tech giant continues to develop new Messenger functionality and features.

- **Appointment Booking:** Book appointments directly within customer chat, using real-time availability information from your calendar.

- **Lead Generation:** Integrate your business' automatic lead qualification processes within Messenger and merge that data with your CRM.
- **Message Tags:** Categorize every message you send, with limits in place to reduce the possibility of spam to the user, and massively improve open rates and engagement.
- **Conversion Tracking:** Track the result of each customer conversation to see the impact that messaging is having on business goals.

Some really interesting use cases have emerged over the years, as more businesses begin to invest in messaging apps. LEGO uses Messenger to provide gift recommendations to its customers, and guide confused shoppers through its immense product catalogue. KLM developed an AI-powered chatbot that can reply to customer queries via Messenger, answering over 60,000 common questions and requests, including ticket booking, check-in reminders, flight status updates, and issuing boarding passes.





WHAT IS WHATSAPP BUSINESS?

WhatsApp was originally intended to operate like SMS but provide free communication for users over the internet. It was a huge success from day one, attracting 250,000 users within the first year, and 400 million users within the first four. That success attracted the interest of Facebook as it looked to shore up their position as a messaging leader.

After Facebook acquired WhatsApp in 2014, they continued operations much as they had before — as a personal messaging and calling app. In 2018, WhatsApp Business for SMB and enterprise customer messaging was launched, and has since acquired more than 5 million business customers with the following functionalities at its core:

- **Document Delivery:** Send boarding passes, tickets, and other documents straight to the customer's phone.
- **Live Location Tracking:** Share live location data with customers to track deliveries in real-time.
- **Rich Content:** Attach rich content to your messages like images, videos, and gifs. This is especially useful for e-commerce brands and retailers who wish to show off their products.
- **Message Types:** Categorize every message you send, with limits in place to reduce the possibility of spam to the user, and massively improve open rates and engagement.

Wish eCommerce uses WhatsApp to allow customers to track their order delivery status in real-time, and Booking.com uses WhatsApp to send customer communications when a user books a hotel, flight, or car.



As a social network, Instagram isn't entirely analogous to standalone messaging apps like Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp. But its built-in messaging system, Direct Messages (commonly "Instagram DM"), is often used like one, particularly among younger generations. And with text, image, video, group chat, and voice message support, it's clear to see why.

Instagram DM operates like a fully-fledged messaging app, the only difference is that it lives inside of a larger app.

- **Multimedia Support:** Add photos, videos, gifs, and audio recordings to your message to support customers with visual context.
- **Private Conversation:** Redirect complaints or sensitive queries to a direct message to deal with customers personally and privately.

- **Augmented Reality:** Utilize Instagram's library of augmented reality effects like filters and stickers to facilitate a more informal conversation.
- **Brand Recognition:** Strengthen brand loyalty and recognition with one-to-one customer communications.

Since Instagram DM is a component of Instagram, any brand on the social network will have to offer messaging via DM as well. For example, the Hyatt Hotel chain used direct messages to wish their followers a "Happy Holiday." And Michael Kors announced a giveaway via DM. Followers were asked to share a photo of their favorite Michael Kors item using the hashtag #MKDirect. They received a massive influx of user-generated content and boosted earned impressions for the brand.



HOW TO GET STARTED WITH FACEBOOK BUSINESS MESSAGING

Adding Facebook messaging apps to your customer communication stack will shift your customer communication to a more informal tone, with users expecting quick, friendly, and very personal responses. With this expectation comes new problems. The interactions you'll be having will still be asynchronous, like email, but the expectation will be that of an instant, real time chat.

If unprepared, a business could easily become overwhelmed by the increased demand in communications. Here are some tips for how to get started managing the influx of messages.

- 1. Build a plan:** Clearly define your business needs before you add Facebook Messenger for Business, WhatsApp for Business, or Instagram: What is your objective on this messaging app? Who is your audience? Why should they speak with you?
- 2. Define the experience:** Make customer service as easy as messaging a friend. Align your experience on Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, and Instagram with your digital customer engagement strategy to deliver consistent, and personalized customer experiences.

Select a digital customer engagement platform to build, manage, and maintain an experience that accomplishes your business goal and merges together identities across multiple digital profiles.

- 3. Engage with your audience:** Experiment with every aspect of your Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, or Instagram experience from the welcome greetings and videos you share, to the way updates are delivered in conversations. Once you know what works, discover new challenges you can solve with conversations, and keep optimizing your presence to reach new audiences.

THE RULES OF CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT...

...have changed.

Getting started with any of Facebook's messaging apps is not difficult — and using a customer communication platform to help get set up makes things more straightforward. While it's a great opportunity to improve your customer experience, your business will be challenged to seamlessly and efficiently handle these new customer interactions. But if you get it right, you will have future-proofed your business for the next era of customer communication.

Companies that refactor their customer communication systems, aligning their services with the expectations of contemporary customers, will reap the benefits down the line. With 1.6 billion users on WhatsApp, 1.3 billion users on Facebook Messenger, and 1 billion users on Instagram, those rewards are bound to be immense.

WE SPEAK DIGITAL

RingCentral Engage Digital is a customer service platform for every digital interaction. Schedule a demo today, and see how you can take your customer service strategy to the next level.

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