

Ultimate Guide on How to

Start Conversations With WhatsApp





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Winning Customers on WhatsApp



2 Billion+
users

180
countries

As businesses adapt to changing consumer expectations and behaviors, it's essential to keep up with the latest communication channels to engage with customers effectively.

One such platform that has become increasingly popular for business communication is WhatsApp.

With over two billion users in 180 countries, WhatsApp has emerged as a powerful tool for businesses to connect with their customers and drive sales. In this ebook, we will explore the power of conversational experiences and how leveraging WhatsApp can help businesses create personalized, seamless, and convenient interactions with customers.

Using WhatsApp as a channel for customer communication can improve:



Customer
satisfaction



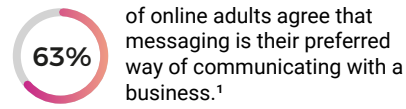
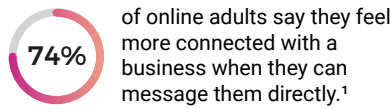
Increased sales
and revenue



Streamline business
operations

Why Is There a Need for Conversational Commerce? Answer: Evolving Consumer Expectations

Today's consumers expect personal attention when interacting with brands on their favorite platforms.



These numbers highlight the growing demand for personalized and convenient interactions with brands online.

Meet customer expectations through conversational engagements

Analyzing and understanding customers' specific needs is critical to delivering personalized and responsive conversational engagements. By understanding consumer expectations and leveraging conversational engagement solutions that prioritize personalization, convenience, and responsiveness, businesses can effectively meet customer needs and build lasting customer loyalty. To deliver exceptional conversational engagements, businesses need to meet the high expectations of their customers.



Analyze and understand the customer's specific needs.

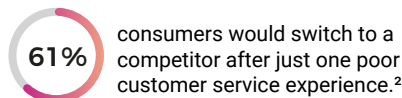
Provide two-way conversations with self-service and human options.

Message customers in real-time on their preferred channel.

Enable a seamless handover between AI bots and human agents.

Conversations unlock business growth

Leverage the strength of messaging to generate immediate responses, and foster brand loyalty over time.



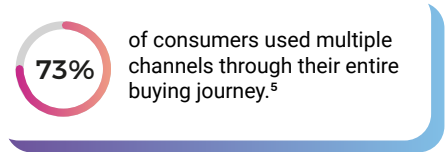
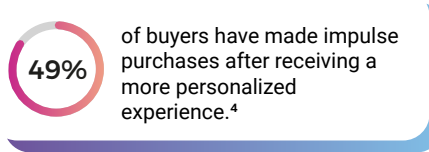
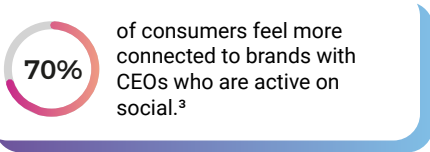
Want quick information via chat/messaging but phone is only option.

Long wait times to speak to agent.

Contacting customer service multiple times to resolve issue.

Impact of Conversational Experiences

Consumers want personal attention while interacting with brands on their favorite platforms.



Conversational commerce delivers on the three tenets of superior customer experiences:



1. Effectiveness
Customers derive value from experience.



2. Ease
Value comes without difficulty and frustration.



3. Emotion
Customers feel satisfied with the experience.

Drive consumers across discovery, consideration, and conversions with **conversations that connect**

One billion
people connect with business accounts weekly via social media



Deliver the personal touch of in-store shopping



Convenience of digital commerce

Conversational experience hits the sweet spot between offline and online.



³ <https://www.asicentral.com/news/how-to/march-2022/build-your-personal-brand-on-social-media>

⁴ www.superoffice.com/blog/customer-experience-statistics/

⁵ www.moengage.com/blog/omnichannel-approach-for-retail-marketing-part-1/

What to consider while choosing a channel for your brand?



Business use cases

Evaluate if the communication channel aligns with your campaign goals and allows for effective deployment of your marketing materials.



Your demographic

Research the communication habits of your target audience and their geographic location to select channels they frequently use.



Message personalization and customization

Assess the level of personalization and customization options available on the channel.



Integration capabilities

Evaluate whether the channel can seamlessly integrate with your customer relationship management (CRM) software, marketing automation platforms, or other relevant systems.



Analytics and reporting

Determine whether it provides detailed insights and metrics to measure the effectiveness of your communication efforts.

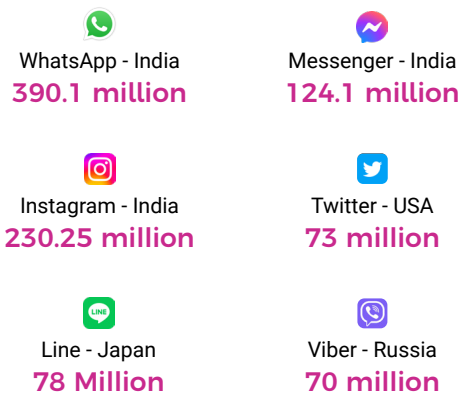


Scalability and future-proofing

Choose a channel that can scale with your business and ensure a long-term investment in delivering high-quality conversational experiences.

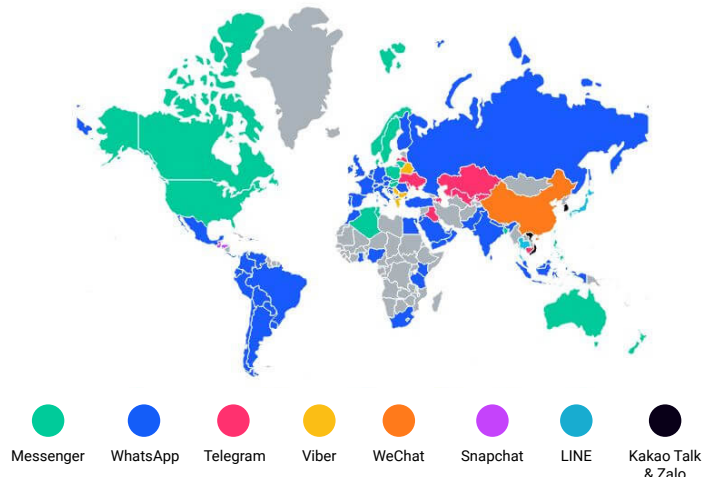
Where should you engage customers?

*Countries with the most user bases:



Most Popular Messaging Apps

Android Data April 2022



The Power of Conversations on WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a highly-popular messaging app for both personal and business use. In less than a decade, it has gained significant traction in key markets – including Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia.



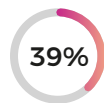
175 million users⁷

contact WhatsApp Business daily for product info, notifications, and quick responses.

292 million downloads⁸

of WhatsApp Business on Android and iOS devices in 2022.

WhatsApp is the preferred platform for **order updates (54%)** and appointments, webinars, and **events (50%)⁹**



use it for customer service⁹



to receive promotions⁹

In 2022, WhatsApp for Business generated

\$906 million

making it the main source of revenue for the platform¹⁰

To keep up with customer expectations, businesses must understand how to use WhatsApp to grow their audience, boost sales, and offer swift customer care. With WhatsApp Business, brands can also enable commerce features like single- and multi-product messages, allowing for in-chat sales.

Creating a happy and returning customer experience is the future of conversational commerce. And Vonage can help enterprises effectively integrate WhatsApp Business into their communication channels.

Conversational commerce with WhatsApp: the future of in-chat sales

WhatsApp was a consumer favorite social platform in 2022 ¹¹

Reach customers inside their preferred app

WhatsApp Business is an indispensable tool for low-threshold conversations and customer satisfaction. Make it easy for customers to reach you and resolve issues through their preferred app.

Engage customers like never before

WhatsApp Business drives unprecedented engagement with over 100 billion messages sent daily. Reach customers on their favorite messaging app and deliver higher open rates and effective conversations with rich media.

Personalize the communication to boost customer satisfaction

WhatsApp Business improves customer experiences by offering accessible and personalized communication. Brands prioritize customer care as a key growth strategy and use WhatsApp to connect with a wider audience.

Leverage the global WhatsApp user base

WhatsApp Business has over two billion users in 180 countries, making it a powerful tool for businesses to connect with customers. And with 50 million business users, it's clear that reaching customers on their preferred messaging channel is a key differentiator for high growth.

Make WhatsApp your customer's favorite place to shop, too. Leverage conversational experiences to:



Bring your entire product and service catalog to WhatsApp



Have your sales associates take over when required



Deliver notifications directly to your shoppers phones



Make data-driven improvements to your processes

⁷ verloop.io/blog/whatsapp-statistics-2023/

⁸ trengo.com/blog/whatsapp-business-statistics

⁹ m.aisensy.com/blog/whatsapp-statistics-for-businesses/

¹⁰ www.newvisiontheatres.com/whatsapp-statistics

¹¹ it-online.co.za/2023/03/01/whatsapp-the-favourite-social-media-platform



Identify customer pain points

Pain points can be anything that causes frustration or difficulty, such as complex onboarding processes, slow response times, or lack of personalization. By identifying these pain points, you can find ways to reduce friction, increase efficiency, and create a better customer experience.

Choose top use cases

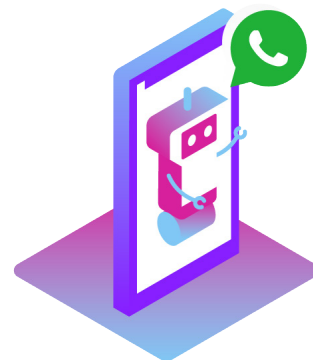
It's best to select use cases that have the highest impact and fastest implementation, such as customer onboarding, order updates, and support inquiries. By focusing on these high-priority use cases, you can make the most significant impact on your customer journey and see results quickly.

Transform pain points into opportunities

Now it's time to transform these pain points into positive customer experiences.

Leverage WhatsApp Business Platform features

It's essential to leverage the platform's features — such as automated messages, quick replies, and chatbots — to help you streamline your customer journey, reduce response times, and provide personalized experiences.



With Vonage, you can transform your customer care, stand out from the competition, and drive revenue growth. Let us help you leverage the power of the WhatsApp Business Platform and take your customer journey to the next level.

Build Trust and Connection on WhatsApp

If you're looking for an effective way to build trust and connection with your customers, WhatsApp could be the perfect solution. With its rich elements, precise targeting, and personalized customer experience, WhatsApp allows businesses to communicate with their customers in a more engaging and meaningful way. Additionally, with features like real-time customer service, easy payment options, and automated messages, WhatsApp provides a cost-effective and efficient channel for businesses of all sizes.



Rich elements

WhatsApp allows richer elements such as photos, hyperlinks, PDFs, and more to be shared.



Delivery and read receipts

WhatsApp provides delivery and read receipts for messages, allowing businesses to track and monitor the success of their communication strategies.



Continuity

WhatsApp allows conversation continuity whereas web chat ends when the tab is closed.



Easy payment options

WhatsApp supports payment integration, allowing customers to make purchases and payments within the chat.



Approachable

WhatsApp allows more entry points for the customer to choose from based on their comfort level.



Quick customer service

WhatsApp provides real-time customer service, allowing businesses to quickly respond to customer inquiries and resolve issues.



Precise targeting

WhatsApp allows accurate and effective targeting parameters that can uncover customer insights.



Automated messages

WhatsApp allows for the automation of messages to improve efficiency and save time. Use pre-created, pre-approved structured messages for businesses to drive conversational outcomes.



High engagement

WhatsApp has a high open rate and response rate compared to other communication channels, leading to higher customer engagement.



Cost-effective

Using WhatsApp as a communication channel is cost-effective for businesses, especially for small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs).



Personalized customer experience

WhatsApp allows for personalized communication and tailored customer experiences to improve satisfaction and loyalty.



Two-way communication

WhatsApp allows for two-way communication, providing a platform for customers to offer feedback and suggestions.



Multilingual support

Businesses can communicate with customers in their preferred language, which increases accessibility and inclusivity.



Integration with other systems

WhatsApp can be integrated with other business systems and tools to streamline operations and improve efficiency.



Security

WhatsApp provides end-to-end encryption, ensuring that messages exchanged between businesses and customers are secure and private.

Get Started on WhatsApp

The WhatsApp Business Platform helps medium to large businesses connect with customers at scale – inside their preferred channel – with the power of personalized service and support. WhatsApp enables businesses to initiate conversations, send notifications, and process purchases quickly.



WhatsApp has two options for businesses:

1 WhatsApp Business Platform

Ideal for larger businesses with higher messaging volumes

2 WhatsApp Business App

Ideal for small businesses

Consider the benefits and requirements of the WhatsApp Business Platform

The WhatsApp Business API is a tool designed for medium to large businesses to communicate with customers through WhatsApp.

Pros:

1. Integration with ERP and CRM
2. Unlimited users and devices support
3. Useful for programmatic messaging like notifications and alerts

Cons:

1. Account creation requires approval
2. Pre-approval is necessary for template messages from both WhatsApp and Business Platform Provider

Boost your business with WhatsApp: Two ways to connect with customers

Customer-initiated

Respond to customer-initiated messages

- Use channels linked to WhatsApp, such as your website or storefront, to drive awareness of your WhatsApp number
- Encourage customers to initiate WhatsApp messaging with your business

Service Messages

(also known as customer service messages and user-initiated messages)

Facilitate user-initiated messages related to customer service, ensuring prompt assistance and support whenever your customers need it

Business-initiated

Reach out to customers with business-initiated messages across the buyer journey

- Confirm that customers opt-in, then proactively messages them on WhatsApp
- Use customizable message templates to create text-based, media-based, or interactive messages
- Maintain communications throughout the buyer journey to keep customers engaged and informed

Authentication Messages

(formerly transactional messages)

Help businesses authenticate users through secure one-time passcodes, enhancing security measures and enabling seamless access to your platform or services.

Utility Messages

(formerly transactional messages)

Provide post-transaction updates or billing notifications, ensuring your customers stay informed and connected throughout their interaction with your brand.

Marketing Messages

(formerly non-transactional messages)

Enable businesses to proactively reach out to customers, allowing you to effectively market your products or services and reengage with your audience at strategic touchpoints.

Ready to Take Your Business to the Next Level?

Explore our list of WhatsApp Business Platform use cases across industries and learn how to transform your customer journey, and increase efficiency and revenue.



Logistics



Retail and ecommerce



Travel and hospitality



Financial services



Telecommunications



Luxury



Automotive



B2B and services

Notify and Chat

1. Keep your customers updated on key events:
 - Product launches
 - Campaign launches
 - Loyalty
 - Order Confirmations
 - Abandoned carts
2. Maintain a unified inbox to chat with customers

Engage

1. Go beyond notifications and engage users with:
 - Marketing automation bots on messaging
 - Lead generation
 - Customer care
 - 1:1 consultation
 - Product finders
 - Customer profiling
2. Automate bots on multiple platforms using advanced flow builders
3. Engage users through comments on feed, live streams, and 1:1 conversations

Convert

Turn engagement into sales

- Automated checkout journeys on messaging platforms
- Integrated payment gateways
- Built-in commerce engine
- Integrations into OMS/WMS platforms

Use live chat designed for commerce

- Turn consultation into cart creation
- Attribute sales to the advisor for performance and incentivization
- Route conversations to the right advisors

Integrate checkout link generator

- Enable retail staff to generate orders through external channels or sources.

Use APIs to fetch and transfer crucial information through Vonage Conversational Commerce from your existing tech stack

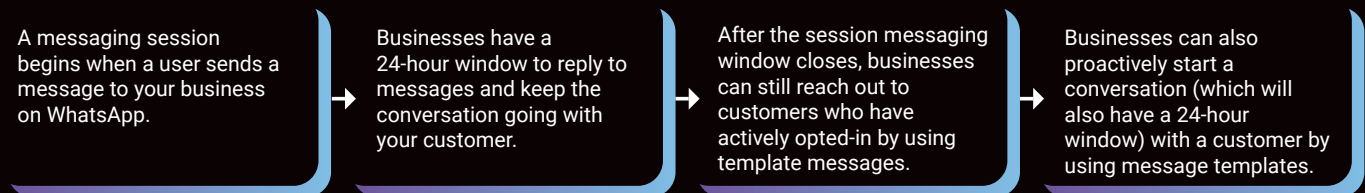
Use a one-time password (OTP) to

- Add an extra layer of security with two-factor authentication.
- Verify accounts and authorize transactions

Unleash the Power of WhatsApp With an Expertly Crafted Plan

WhatsApp has certain messaging approaches called Conversation Sessions, which are put in place to ensure a positive customer experience, respect privacy, and facilitate quick responses to incoming messages.

Here's how it works:



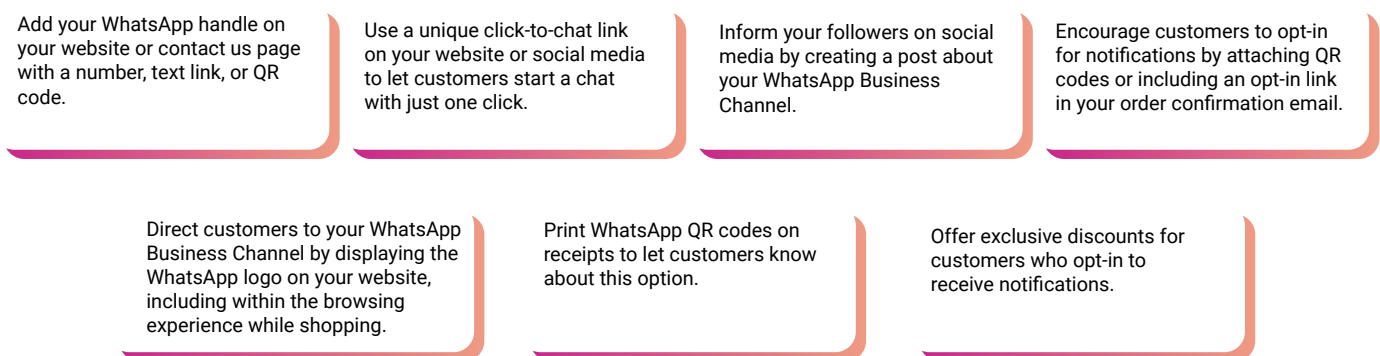
By following these guidelines, businesses can use WhatsApp to establish a strong presence, engage with customers in an efficient and respectful way, and maintain quality messages.

Maximize your WhatsApp Business Channel: Entry points to boost adoption

To ensure that customers are aware of this channel and can easily adopt it, businesses need to promote it across different entry points.

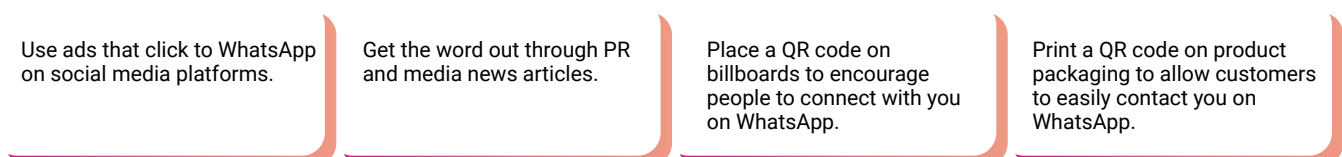
Organic entryways

Organic entry points, such as the ones outlined below, can help businesses increase their WhatsApp Business Channel adoption by making it easy for customers to discover and connect with them.

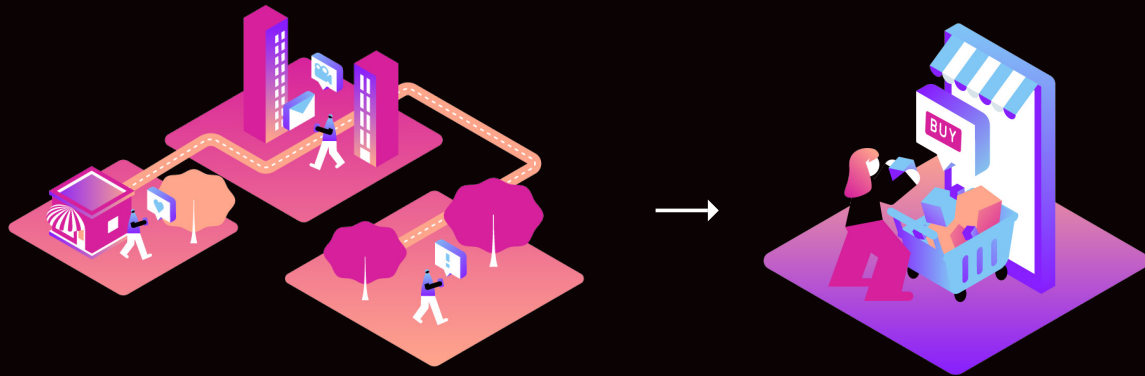


Paid entryways

Leverage the power of advertising and PR to reach a wider audience and increase customer adoption. Consider these paid entry points to promote your WhatsApp Business Channel and make it easier for customers to connect with your business.



Key Considerations for Business Success in Conversational Commerce



When starting the conversational commerce journey, it's important for businesses to assess and select a Business Solution Provider (BSP) that aligns with their unique needs and goals. We will explore the key considerations that businesses should keep in mind while evaluating various BSP options. By using the following value propositions and benefits, you can make an informed decision without feeling overwhelmed by a biased focus on any specific provider.

Global services and developer support

Look for a BSP that offers worldwide assistance and provides extensive developer resources, including sandboxes for testing. This allows you to experiment, refine your strategies, and ensure smooth integration of conversational commerce solutions into your existing infrastructure.

Localization and global coverage

Consider a BSP that can support your business's global reach. Look for features like Local Virtual Numbers (LVNs) and mobile numbers that facilitate localized communication with your customers. Additionally, consider providers with a global infrastructure that can offer coverage and support across regions like the U.S., EMEA, and APAC. This ensures that you can deliver consistent conversational commerce experiences to your customers, regardless of their location.

Comprehensive solutions for enhanced engagements

Look for features that allow you to leverage advanced technologies, such as AI chatbots, to scale conversations and provide self-service options for your customers. These solutions should enhance your WhatsApp interactions and enable faster responses, ultimately driving customer satisfaction and boosting sales.

Flexible API channels

Find a provider that offers a single API that grants access to various channels such as SMS, MMS, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and Viber. Having the flexibility to handle different use cases, such as using SMS for one-time passwords (OTP) and WhatsApp for conversational commerce, simplifies your communication processes and streamlines your operations.

Data privacy and security measures

Ensure that the BSP prioritizes the protection of customer data and complies with relevant regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Look for providers that offer end-to-end encryption of messages, safeguarding the privacy of your customer communications.

Flexible integration options

Evaluate the flexibility of integration options provided by the BSP. Look for tools like the Vonage Dispatch API, which enables the failover of WhatsApp messages to SMS, ensuring message delivery even in challenging network conditions. Also, consider providers that offer authentication capabilities – such as the Vonage Verify API – to further enhance the security and reliability of your conversational commerce workflows.

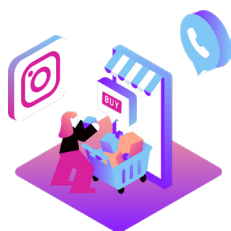
Expert consultation and customized solutions

Consider a BSP offering expert consultation to help you design and implement customized solutions tailored to your business needs. Collaborating with knowledgeable consultants ensures that you can maximize the benefits of conversational commerce and achieve your desired outcomes efficiently.

By considering these key factors and evaluating multiple BSPs based on these considerations, you can make an informed decision that aligns with your business objectives, without feeling influenced by any particular provider. Remember, the goal is to find the BSP that best suits your needs and enables you to leverage the full potential of conversational commerce for your business's success.

Unlocking Seamless Conversations: Empower Your Ecommerce With the Vonage Omnichannel Solution

Vonage combines cloud-based power with omnichannel campaign automation. Now you can easily manage and deliver messages at scale – including the ability to send and receive two-way messages seamlessly. Additional Vonage benefits include:



Personalized marketing campaigns

You can orchestrate a range of campaigns across multiple channels, including WhatsApp, giving you complete control over your messaging strategy. The personalization helps build lasting customer relationships.



A flexible and adaptable platform

You can leverage our chatbots, contact center integrations, and external services to create a messaging solution that meets your specific requirements.



Dedicated talent and technology

Vonage offers a range of services that can help businesses quickly enter and scale up in a market – all while minimizing development resources. Vonage provides tailored solutions to meet customers' specific needs. It also provides access to a feature-rich, scalable, and compliant solution that delivers high-quality mobile customer experiences on the WhatsApp Business Platform.

Revolutionize your customer connections with Vonage

Partnering with Vonage gives you access to a suite of tools that enables you to engage with customers on their preferred messaging app, streamline customer service, and ultimately increase sales. Whether you need to send automated messages or have real-time conversations with customers, our solution is designed to help you achieve your business goals.

[Click here to contact us](#) to learn more about our conversational commerce solution and how we can help your business succeed in the digital age.