THE LOCALIZED CHATBOT GUIDE

Everything You Need to Know to
Create a Winning Chatbot Strategy

Happy Haircuts - NYC - LES
Typically replies instantly

Welcome to Happy Haircuts
How can we help today?

2:12 PM

Hello

Hi I'm the Happy Haircuts Lower
East Side Bot.

I'm here to get you the help you
need. Please select an option
below to get started or type your
question!

choose from the options below:

COVID Inquiries   Locations   Book a

Type a message...
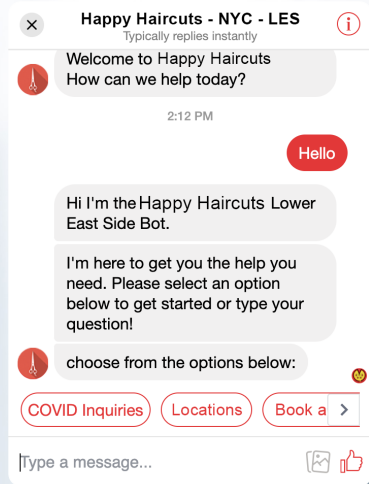
With more than **1.3 billion people** on Facebook Messenger, local search on the rise, and **64 percent** of people preferring messaging over emails or phone calls, chatbots have become an essential marketing and communication channel. Additional research reveals that **53 percent** of consumers say they are more likely to shop with a business they can message with, so reliance on social interactions alone will potentially miss valuable customer interactions.

In today's digital-first world, chatbots can also be an effective way to stay in touch with your customers in real-time. **Sixty-four percent** of internet users say 24-hour service is the best feature of chatbots, and it's a great added benefit for businesses too. Solutions that extend service beyond business hours will be able to capture more conversations and leads.

Chatbots: What Are They?

Let's define chatbots and explain how they work before diving into how they can help strengthen your localized marketing strategy. A chatbot is a software application used to conduct an online chat that simulates human conversations. Through chatbots, computers can understand and respond to human input through written or spoken language. Many industries utilize chatbots to improve or streamline customer service.

You may be asking yourself, how exactly do chatbots work? While some of it can get pretty technical, it's essential to understand that chatbots work through a mixture of artificial intelligence and natural language processing. Essentially, a chatbot tries to match what a customer has asked to an intent that it understands. The more frequently a chatbot is used, the more understanding it has. There are ways to program responses in chatbots, which we'll get into later in this guide.

SEE OUR BLOG:

INTRODUCTION TO CHATBOTS FOR MULTI-LOCATION MARKETERS
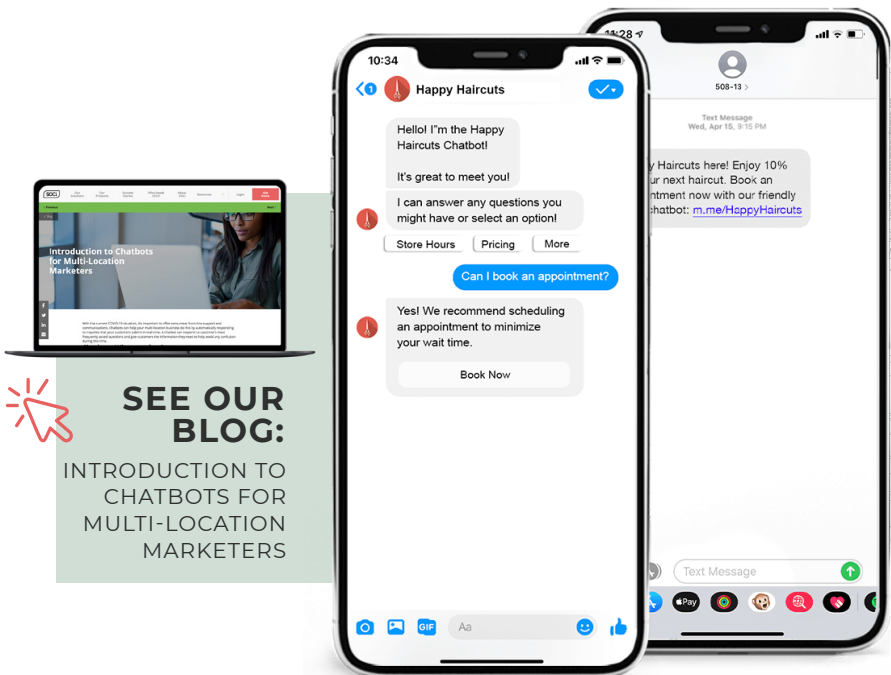
Why Should You Add Chatbots to Your Localized Marketing Efforts?

Not only can chatbots provide 24/7 customer support to your customers, but they can also be leveraged to generate leads and increase your sales funnel. Without a chatbot solution, think of all the missed opportunities outside of traditional operating hours your multi-location business could have. Now that you understand that chatbots are a non-negotiable, let's look at how you can leverage them in localized marketing.

There are a variety of ways that chatbots can function in localized marketing. Consumers are looking for local business information digitally, and chatbots can help bridge that gap to provide those answers on certain channels. For instance, chatbots can be included on your business's website and be used on Facebook Messenger, through Google's Business Messages, formerly Google My Business Messaging, and through SMS. If a customer comes to your owned or earned channels, such as your location's website or local search or social profile to look up information about your local business hours or a specific product, it provides an opportunity for the chatbot to step in. Instead of spending time searching for information, the chatbot can pop-up instantly and answer the consumer's questions within a matter of seconds.

How to Get Started with Chatbots

After determining that chatbots are a worthwhile tactic, you should find a solution that allows you to set up chatbots through all of the channels mentioned previously - your website, Facebook Messenger, Google's Business Messages, and through SMS. However, before you program the chatbot, your multi-location business must decide what it wants to accomplish with the chatbot and how sophisticated you want it to be. Do you want your chatbot to answer basic questions for consumers or gain insight into their business needs? Chatbots can do all of the above!

As a multi-location business, think about how chatbots can help your marketing strategy. For instance, if there are frequently asked questions your business locations receive, make sure to find ways to answer those questions through chatbots. On the other hand, if you're offering a promotion or have exclusive news about a local business location, include that information in your chatbots as well. Chatbots allow you to communicate to your customers efficiently, allowing you more time to focus on other aspects of your localized marketing strategy.

Programming chatbots, especially for multi-location businesses, may seem overwhelming, but there are a variety of platforms available to do that work for you. Don't let the logistics of setting up chatbots keep you from utilizing this great tool!

Text on phone screen:

10:34

Pacific Beach Palisades

Get Started

Hello! I'm the PB Palisades Chatbot 🤖

It's great to meet you!

I can answer questions you might have or select an option below!

Do you allow dogs?

We love your furry friends as much as you do at Pacific Palisades!

...but we do have a few restrictions. Please see our pet policy here: www.sociridge.com/petpolicy

If you and Fido 🐕 want to learn more, select an option below!

Available Units

We've got vacancy!

Please head to the link below to see our available units along with up to date pricing.

Availability

Aa

# Best Practices for Incorporating Chatbots Into Your Localized Marketing Strategy

1.

Personalize the content

One of the most important things to consider when setting up a chatbot for your multi-location business is the type of content you want your chatbot to share. The more personalized the chatbot is, the more connected the consumer will feel, strengthening their relationship with your business and increasing their chances of making a purchase. For instance, at the beginning of your chatbot conversation, you can ask the user for their name and other details, which you can use to personalize the rest of the conversation.

In addition to understanding why the user is interacting with the chatbot, you can also provide them with localized text specific to the business location they are chatting with. This will, again, make the experience more personalized and enhance their experience using your chatbot. If you're wondering what type of localized content you could use, consider incorporating an image of your storefront as the chatbot image or provide details about your hours of operation or any upcoming events that are location-specific. If the consumer feels as though you have made an effort to personalize their experience, they will feel more connected to your business.
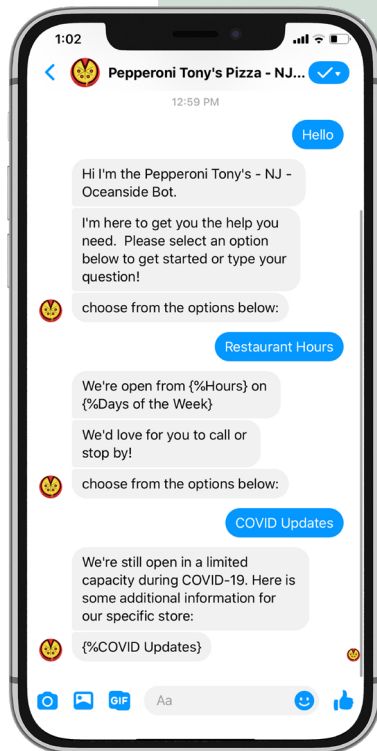
2.

Set the right user expectations

Another critical tactic to keep in mind is setting the users' expectations up-front. Make it clear that the user is speaking with a chatbot and include a welcome message explaining what the chatbot can do. At the beginning of a conversation, you can also have quick reply options to highlight the main topics that the bot can handle or include prompts to guide users on the next steps and provide precise details on when to expect a response.

At the end of a conversation with the chatbot, you can include a sentence like, "We hope you found this conversation helpful! If you still have some unanswered questions or need more information, please provide your name and email address, and someone from our team will get back to you within 24 hours". If you set expectations throughout the conversation, there's a much lower chance that your users will be disappointed or unsatisfied with their chatbot experience.
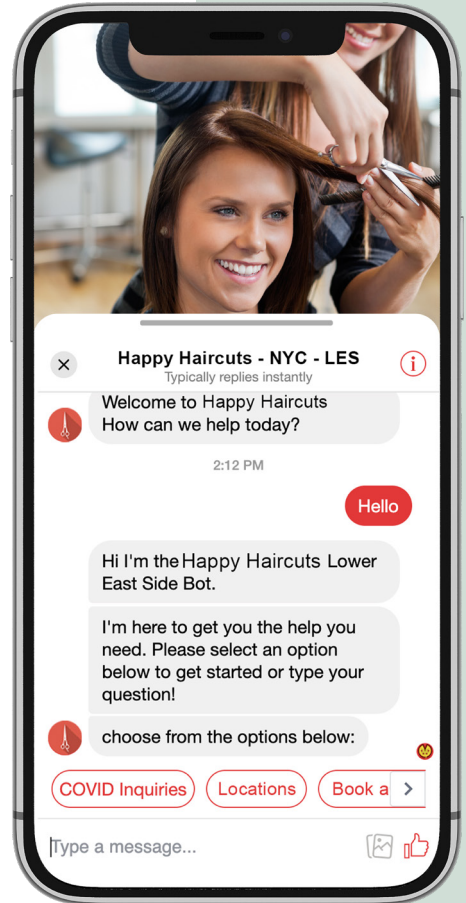
3.

Give your bot some personality

The beauty of chatbots is that you can tailor them to match your business's tone and brand personality. The chatbot doesn't need to be formal and forced. There are opportunities to make the chatbot more conversational and add in some branding. In many cases, your multi-location business will be able to write the script for the chatbot. Make sure this script includes similar language used on your website and fits along with the rest of your brand. You want your chatbot to fit the persona of your brand and provide a natural, conversational experience!

4.

Include qualifying questions

Similar to setting up the right expectations upfront, qualifying questions are also vital when planning your chatbot strategy. Qualifying questions allow you to ensure that you're aware of what problem the consumer is trying to solve, to drive them to the right outcome.

You can include different options for the user to select for why they are using the chat. Are they looking for information about the local business, have a question about a product, or are they looking to solve an issue? These are just a few ways you can break down the introduction to get more information about the consumer and why they are using the chatbot. From there, you can tailor your content to fit the user's needs and ultimately make the experience more positive.

If your multi-location business only serves specific types of consumers, it's essential to ask those qualifying questions initially. For instance, if your business is explicitly targeting teachers, that may be an intelligent question to ask at the beginning of the conversation, so you don't waste a user's time if they don't qualify.
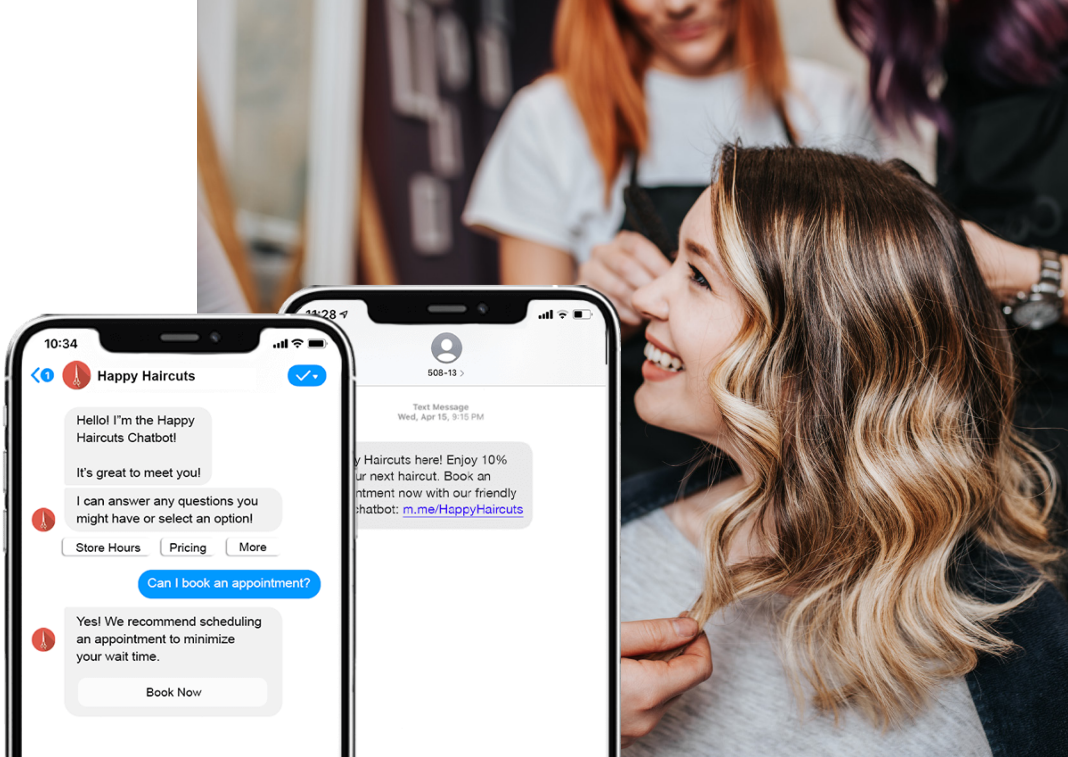
5.

Include an offer or incentive

Consider including an offer or incentive if you're looking to drive a higher conversion rate through your chatbot conversations. There are various incentive types you could include on your chatbot that would help drive conversions. For instance, consider sending a 10 percent off coupon code to those who fill out their email address at the end of a chat conversation. If you are a gym or beauty salon, you could offer a free class or haircut to those using a referral code on the chatbot.

The key here is to be creative! You want to ensure that your chatbot stands out from others. An incentive also increases the likelihood that users will interact with your chatbot until the end of the conversation, and will help your multi-location business collect more information for leads.

6.

Target more users through Facebook Messenger, Google's Business Messages, and SMS

FACEBOOK MESSENGER

Some chatbots, like **SOCi SmartBot™**, can set up your chatbot on Facebook Messenger. As analyzed in our **State of the Market Report**, consumers spend more time on social media than ever before. Businesses are increasing the number of posts on social platforms; however, you can't be available 24/7. Having the option to use your chatbot on Facebook Messenger is essential.

If your multi-location business is already running ads on Facebook, Facebook allows you to retarget someone interacting with the ad using the Facebook Messenger chatbot. If someone has already seen your ad on Facebook and gets a message from your chatbot, they will be more likely to recognize the brand. As we all know, sales come down to increasing your visibility and widening your net of prospective consumers, and a chatbot on Facebook Messenger can help you do just this. It's important to note that with the recent changes to Facebook's Messenger policy, companies only have 24 hours to respond to messages from Facebook users — making it more critical than ever to deliver timely responses at all hours of the day.
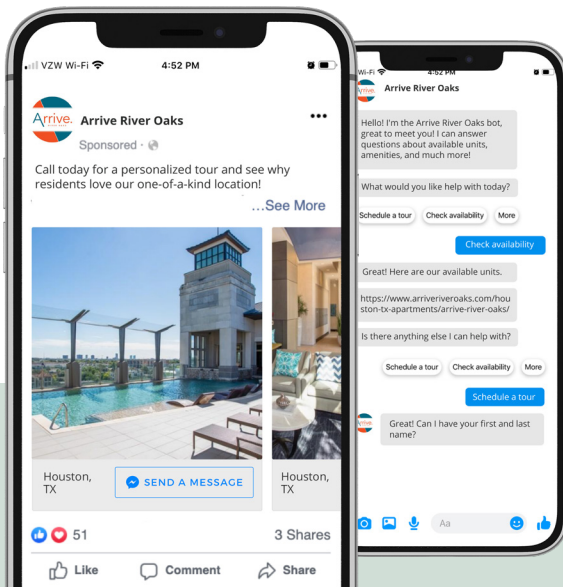
GOOGLE'S BUSINESS MESSAGES

Similar to the Facebook Messenger functionality, **SOCi Smartbot™** can also be set up through Business Messages. As described by Google, Business Messages is a mobile conversational channel that combines entry points on Google Maps, Search, and brand websites to create rich, asynchronous messaging experiences that delight customers and drive business results. As a multi-location marketer, you're likely working to increase visibility on Google, which is why this feature is great. Currently, **46 percent** of searches have local intent. As more consumers start to find your business through local search, they will be able to have instant conversations with your business to find out more information through your Business Messages chatbot.

SMS

SOCi Smartbot™ also allows consumers to text an auto-generated SMS number that provides your customers with 24/7 customer service and again provides your business with lead capturing capabilities. So, whether your consumers are on Facebook, Google Business Profile, formerly Google My Business, or not, SOCi Smartbot™ continues to allow companies to secure 100 percent lead capture, increase the number of leads collected, and save both customers and your business time and effort. With this tool, customers can text your business through the auto-generated phone number, and the chatbot will respond.

We'll dive deeper into **SOCi Smartbot™'s** functionalities later in this guide, but it's essential to understand the benefits of connecting with Facebook, Google, and SMS.
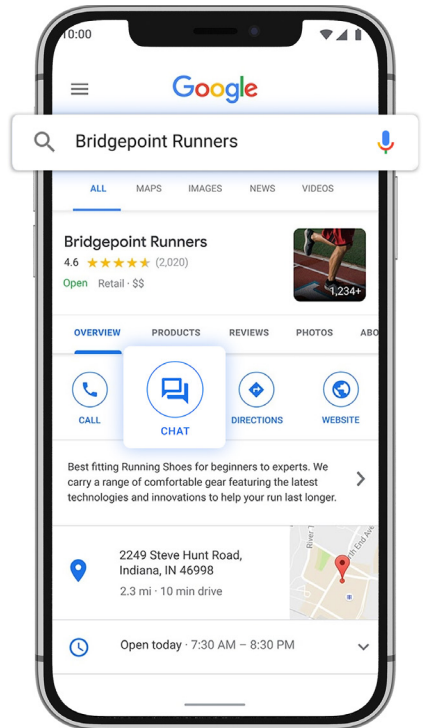
How to Drive Local Engagement & ROI with Chatbots

Now that you have the best practices for adding chatbots to a localized marketing strategy, you must think strategically about implementing this tactic. After all, when deployed correctly, chatbots can help your business drive local engagement, ultimately increasing your return on investment (ROI). Here are specific tactics on leveraging chatbots effectively to engage with consumers, deliver personalized information, and increase leads.

Engage with Consumers in Real-Time

As mentioned previously, chatbots allow consumers to ask questions about products or services, leave feedback about their experience, and receive answers – all in real-time. These real-time conversations also provide consumers with a more personalized experience and help retain engagement.

Before chatbots, consumers would have to send an email to your business or call directly, often leading to long waits for response times. If a consumer sends an email and doesn't hear back from the company promptly, they will likely move on by the time they receive a response. On the other hand, with chatbots, consumers can receive answers instantaneously. If a consumer has a product- or policy-related question, they can ask the chatbot and get an answer right away, often leading to a purchase.

DID YOU KNOW:
TWO OUT OF THREE CONSUMERS PREFER AN UNFAMILIAR BUSINESS TO CONTACT THEM VIA MESSAGE OVER CALLING

If your multi-location business can engage with consumers in real-time, sales will increase, therefore increasing your ROI.

Also, your consumers will feel like they can rely on your multi-location business. If consumers feel acknowledged after engaging with the chatbot, they will be more likely to leave a positive review about the business location. Many chatbots include the functionality to receive reviews and feedback within the chat as well. For example, at the end of a conversation with a consumer, the chatbot can prompt a consumer to "rate their experience" or "leave feedback." More than **half** of consumvers have passed up a business due to their ratings and reviews, so the more positive reviews your business can gain through chatbots, the better!

Deliver Personalized Answers Across Business Locations

While chatbots are great for increasing engagement among your target audience, some chatbots can also come in handy when trying to spread a message across multiple business locations. For instance, if your multi-location business is changing its hours of operation across store locations or will be closed for an upcoming holiday, your chatbots can help relay this information. While the messaging on chatbots can be changed relatively easily, adjusting the messaging across locations can be tricky.

When choosing a chatbot solution, it's essential to look at whether or not localized content can be included. As mentioned previously, localized messaging helps consumers feel more connected to your business, which will help your business when it comes to ROI. For instance, if you need to communicate a change in hours of operation to your San Diego location, but business hours remain the same in Austin, your chatbot should communicate this. Similarly, suppose a business location in NYC will be closed the morning of the New York marathon. In that case, your chatbot could share this information to those searching for your New York locations. If you provide a consumer with information specific to their location, they will be more likely to trust your business and ultimately make purchases there. This is why localization on chatbots is critical.

Generate More Leads, Increasing Sales

One of the most crucial goals of a multi-location business is to generate leads, increasing sales. Chatbots can help your business do precisely this. Through chatbots, your locations can collect the information of those asking questions about your business. For instance, many chatbots start with getting the user's name and email address, which can then be used later to reach back out to them on the sales side.

At the end of a chatbot conversation, you can also provide an opportunity for the user to leave feedback on their experience, as mentioned earlier in this guide. This is another way to get data from the user and slowly transition them into your sales funnel. While you might not see the results overnight, chatbots are worth the investment in the long run.

60 PERCENT OF ONLINE CONVERSATIONS ARE HAPPENING OUTSIDE OF BUSINESS HOURS

The feedback you gain from surveys can be beneficial to your business in other aspects as well. Multi-location businesses can use the feedback collected from chatbots to influence and make improvements and optimizations to current marketing strategies.

In a test of SOCi SmartBot, **Case and Associates** was able to increase leads by 45.1 percent and engage in more than 700 unique conversations. Messaging is proving to be a powerful lead generation channel.

How to Choose the Right Chatbot Solution

With so many chatbots out there, choosing a solution for your multi-location business can be challenging. When selecting a chatbot, you should look for a tool that delivers localized responses to questions about your business locations, including hours, products, services, pricing, offers, and more.

In addition, as a multi-location marketer, it's crucial to find a chatbot that deploys localized chatbots across various local search and social platforms, including Google and Facebook and prioritizes chat conversations to various team members across business locations. SOCi SmartBot™ is the only AI-driven chatbot explicitly built for multi-location marketers to scale and deploy localized chatbots across 1000s of locations.
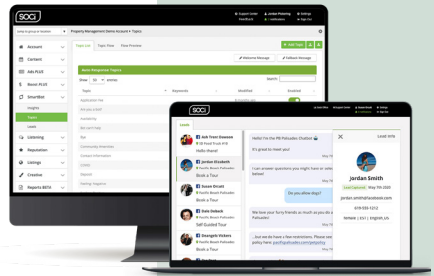
LEARN MORE ABOUT SOCI SMARTBOT™

SOCi SmartBot™ is on 24/7. It doesn't sleep, and it never misses a question. SOCi SmartBot™ can convert 100 percent of conversations into leads, giving you full lead source attribution. Best of all, it can book appointments and can be paired with Messenger Ads, Business Messages, and SMS to increase conversions across all your locations. To learn more about SOCi's latest release, SOCi SmartBot™, **request a demo**.

As a multi-location marketer, it's crucial to be strategic about your localized marketing plans. If you don't already have chatbots as an integral part of your localized marketing strategy, what are you waiting for?

SOCi

Discover What SOCi Can Do For You.

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