

# Where Customers and Marketers Agree: What's Driving The Embrace of Business Messaging Channels?



Marketing strategy often involves the search for a particular “sweet spot” – where the interests of both customer and merchant, supply and demand, want and fulfillment, perfectly align in a mutually beneficial arrangement. Increasingly, this proverbial sweet spot is inching closer and closer to business messaging channels.

One study found an overwhelming 56% of marketers report that they’ve embraced business messaging solutions in the past year, compared to 51% for out-of-home (OOH) and 44% for broadcast television.<sup>1</sup> And while expending, on average, roughly the same for each channel – about 11% of their total marketing spend – marketers reported a much better return on their investment with messaging channels: a 58% increase in leads, compared to 37% and 45% for OOH and broadcast television, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

Business messaging solutions are also rapidly nipping at the heels of the digital mainstays like social and email

channels, and may well surpass them.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, that change might come sooner than you think: Likely accelerated by pandemic-inspired changes in shopping behavior, messaging has catapulted from consumer’s fifth-ranked channel to the second-most widely used channel overall.<sup>4</sup> This, by far, makes business messaging the fastest growing channel in popularity.

Clearly, [the rise of business messaging’s](#) popularity among marketers and customers alike is driven, at least in part, by its ability to meet customer expectations – thereby generating leads – more efficiently than competing channels. That being said, understanding the underlying reasons for this effect can be helpful: both to guide your marketing strategy, and ensure you maximize your brand’s potential in the channel – whether you’re newcomer or a seasoned player.

Below, we’ll take a closer look at some of the underlying reasons driving the channel’s popularity on both sides of the register.

## The Trust Is There

We know that trust acts as the fundamental bedrock of any successful marketing campaign – particularly when it comes to ecommerce.

Luckily, the personal connections brands can forge with messaging channels are a helpful way to assure customers that their expectations will be met, and demonstrate that your company is a partner worth doing business with. To illustrate: An impressive 67% of marketers described business messaging channels as “very trustworthy,” outranking rivals like social media, online ads, OOH, and broadcast television.<sup>5</sup>

Unlike those other channels, customers are required to “opt-in” to receiving your business messages – in other words, demonstrate an explicit interest in your brand and a willingness to be engaged with further marketing materials. Make sure to meet this act of good faith by your customer with some good faith engagement of your own.





# Engagement is Lively

Speaking of the “opt-in” process, you might consider it a sort of instant power-up for your campaign’s lead generation capabilities. As customers self-select to join your mailing list, you’ll begin developing an interested audience with expressed curiosity about your brand’s next moves.



That built-in audience leads to a tremendous boost in engagement rates. For example, one study found that SMS business messages achieved an astonishing 98% open rate,<sup>6</sup> while another found a similar (also 98%) rate for marketing messages sent on the WhatsApp platform.<sup>7</sup> Other channels, such as email which averages a 20% open rate don’t even come close to this level of engagement.

Beyond open rates, business messages are also much more likely to receive a response from your customers — one study found that 45% of text messages receive a response, a staggering eight times higher than the response rate for email.<sup>8</sup>

By leveraging business messaging, marketers can ensure their messages are seen, heard, and foster meaningful interactions with a primed audience.

# It's Where Your Customers Are Comfortable

Marketing is all about removing barriers-to-purchase for your customers. As such, meeting your shoppers where they're most comfortable is a great way to drive conversions and ongoing loyalty with your customers.

It may make intuitive sense why customers are so comfortable in messaging channels — it's where so many of them spend the day talking to family, friends, and colleagues already. But it can be somewhat surprising just how much more customers tend to prefer these channels when connecting with businesses.



We discussed in the intro just how quickly business messaging moved from consumer's fifth-preferred to second-preferred medium for contacting brands during and after the pandemic, with one study projecting the channel will be the first most popular channel by the end of 2023.

Beyond that, another study found that 91% of consumers report they'd be willing to opt-in to promotional and marketing messages from businesses they trust.<sup>9</sup> It's hard to imagine many consumers today would say that about phone solicitation or mailer campaigns.

# It's Quick and Efficient

These days, nobody likes to wait — especially when shopping online.

Thankfully, one of the advantages of business messaging solutions is their ability to provide rapid, often instantaneous replies to customer inquiries. In fact, in one study, 56% of marketers identified this as a “key benefit” of these platforms — the most popular reason identified in the poll.



Why does that matter? Well, for one, the quicker you answer a customer's question, the more likely they are to buy from you. About 90% of customers in one study rated an “immediate” response as “important” or “very important” when they have a customer service question; 60% of those customers define “immediate” as within ten minutes or less.<sup>10</sup>

Sound hard to please? Perhaps. But the rewards for brands who meet those expectations can be significant: brands who are capable of responding to customers within just one minute of their initial inquiry have been found to increase their conversion rate by as much as 391%.<sup>11</sup>

Customers also tend to open messages very quickly — one analysis found that 95% of text messages are read within 90 seconds, with most read under five.<sup>12</sup> That makes the platform ideal for advertising timely or time-sensitive offers or promotions.





# Automation Keeps “The Lights On”

Something of a “sister benefit” to business messaging’s rapid-fire responsiveness, automation can streamline your customer interactions by addressing any number of frequently asked questions they may pose.

This not only leads to customers receiving expedited replies, but allows your agents to focus on only the most sensitive, complicated, or unusual questions that may arise. By harnessing automation within business messaging, brands can streamline operations, deliver consistent experiences, and enhance customer satisfaction.

## Messaging For The “Win-Win”

Thanks in large part to its remarkable engagement rates, comfort for customers, and speed/efficiency, business messaging platforms have become an increasingly popular channel among marketers and customers alike.

By embracing business messaging, brands can unlock the true power of personalized customer engagement while building long-lasting relationships that drive results. Don’t miss out on the opportunities this transformative channel can offer your business.

Interested in learning more about how business messaging solutions can enhance your omnichannel marketing strategy? Check out our blog on [Debunking Business Messaging Myths](#) to learn more.

<sup>1</sup> “WhatsApp Business Platform Research Report”, by Ipsos, US only (study of adults commissioned by Meta), November 2022.

<sup>2</sup> “WhatsApp Business Platform Research Report”, by Ipsos, US only (study of adults commissioned by Meta), November 2022.

<sup>3</sup> “Customer Communication Preferences: 2023 Report”, by Hubtype, April 2023

<sup>4</sup> “Drive Conversational Experiences For A Future-Ready Customer Support Strategy — Unlocking The Power Of Conversational Support To Fuel Customer Retention And Business Growth”, by Forrester Consulting, April 2021.

<sup>5</sup> “WhatsApp Business Platform Research Report”, by Ipsos, US only (study of adults commissioned by Meta), November 2022.

<sup>6</sup> “Want 98% Open Rates? Launch An SMS Marketing Program For Your Online Store”, by The Daily Egg, April 2019.

<sup>7</sup> “Top WhatsApp Statistics Compilation for Business 2023”, by Landbot, September 2022.

<sup>8</sup> “SMS Marketing Statistics 2023 For USA Businesses”, by SMS Comparison, April 2023.

<sup>9</sup> “Texting Vs. Email: Which Is Better For Sales & Marketing?”, by VipeCloud, June 2023.

<sup>10</sup> “40 Customer Service Stats to Know in 2022”, by HubSpot, June 2022.

<sup>11</sup> “9 Lead Response Time Statistics”, by ServiceBell, February 2023.

<sup>12</sup> “Text vs Email Marketing: Which Is Better?”, by Kenect, October 2022.