

WHITEPAPER

Unleashing the potential of WhatsApp Marketing for business growth and scalability



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Summary

WhatsApp Marketing, a method of chat marketing that is becoming increasingly popular, simply refers to advertising a brand on WhatsApp. **WhatsApp Marketing** involves using the **WhatsApp Business Platform** to connect with, engage, and target both current customers and new users.

In this white paper, brands will get a chance to explore how WhatsApp works as a marketing channel, why and how to leverage WhatsApp marketing using the WhatsApp Business Platform and examine the role of AI in empowering businesses to deliver personalised customer experiences at scale.



Hi! I have a question.



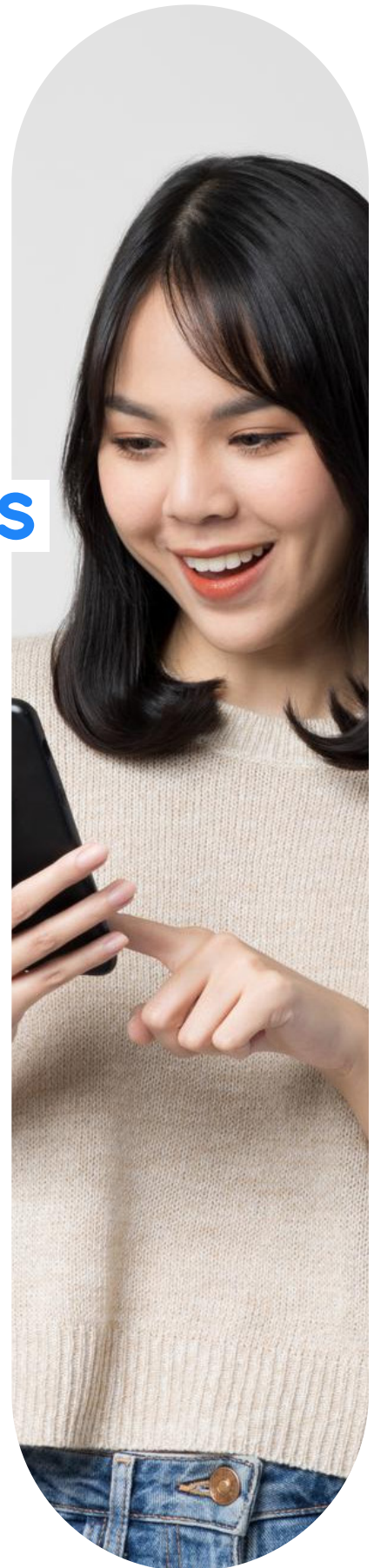
How can I help?



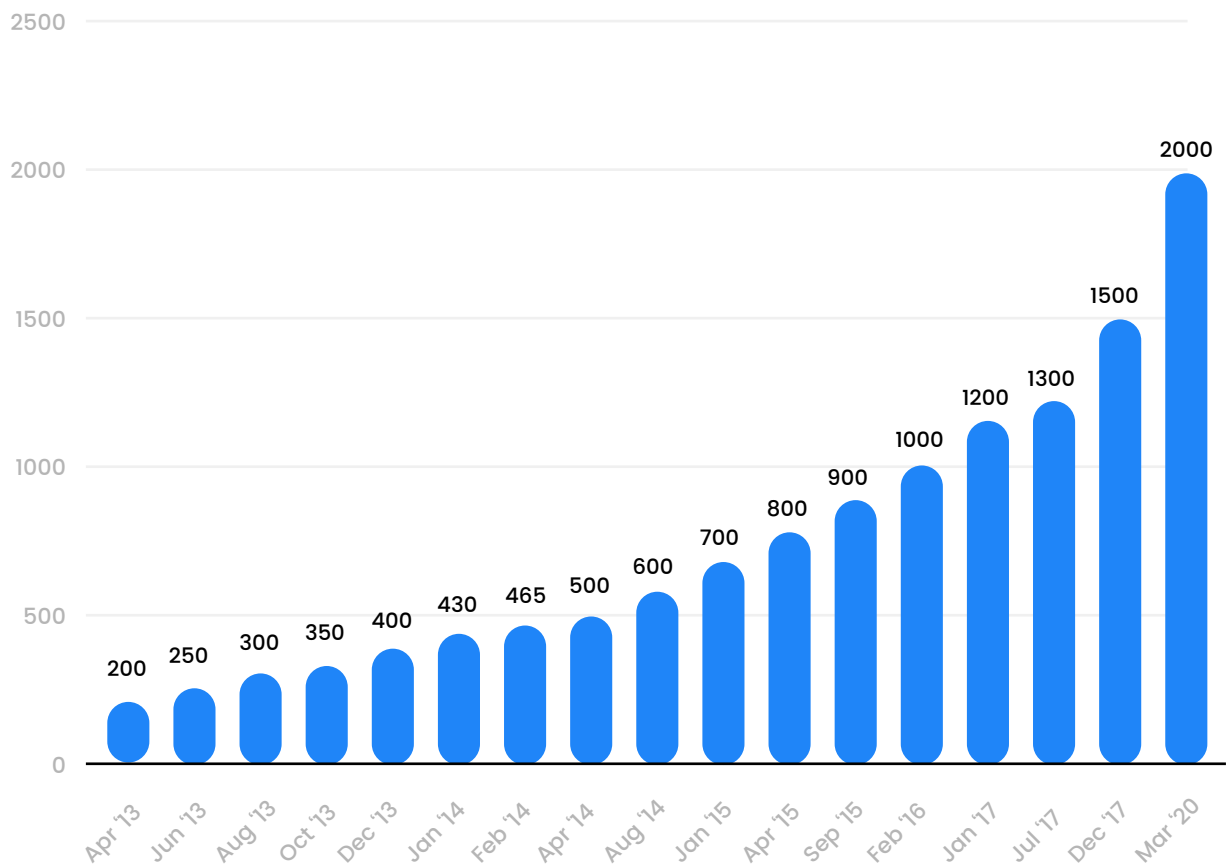
WhatsApp - a new channel to reach customers

One of the consistently emerging trends over the past few years has been the dramatic shift towards mobile and this trend is expected to ramp up in 2023 and beyond. In 2022, there will be 326.3 million smartphone users¹ in Southeast Asia, with Indonesia and Vietnam leading the way. These users will make up 88.0% of the region's internet users.

In a mobile-first world, WhatsApp is one of the world's most-used apps. With a little more than 7.5 billion inhabitants, the app is used by more than one-fourth of the world's population. Based on the latest data, more than 2.44 billion unique active users² were using WhatsApp in April 2022, this is an increase of 6.4 percent from the same month in 2021.



NUMBER OF MONTHLY ACTIVE USERS IN MILLIONS



Owing to the emergence of WhatsApp and its increasing usage worldwide, it has become the “IT” platform for reaching out to new markets, engaging existing customers, lead generation and conversion. WhatsApp Marketing is no longer a “nice-to-have” or an addition to the list of the marketing stack but it is now an integral core element of the entire marketing plan.

Within just a year after WhatsApp launched its business-to-business initiative, WhatsApp Business, it attracted more than 5 million business users³, and this number has only grown since then.



There are more than
5 MILLION
businesses using
WhatsApp Business.

WhatsApp is arguably the best tool for connecting with audiences, spreading the word about product launches and promotions, promoting solutions and services, and having real-time conversations with customers. It is also affordable and easy to get started.

Check out this ultimate guide to WhatsApp Marketing for tips on getting started, building efficient strategies and more.⁴





Understanding the difference between WhatsApp, WhatsApp Business App and WhatsApp Business Platform

WhatsApp Marketing offers amazing reach, engagement and growth opportunities but to make the most of WhatsApp for business, it is important to understand the difference between basic WhatsApp, WhatsApp Business App and WhatsApp Business Platform (previously known as WhatsApp Business API).



These are three distinct tools meant for various users.
Here's a quick review:

Basic WhatsApp	WhatsApp Business App	WhatsApp Business Platform
Meant for personal use	For small businesses up to 5 employees	For large enterprises
One-on-one messaging platform	Ideal for ad hoc customer service and small-scale marketing	Meant for running messaging campaigns and strategic customer service at scale
Self-served via mobile app and browser-based	Self-served via mobile app and browser-based	Set up via WhatsApp Business Solution Providers (BSPs)
No business tools	Basic business tools including • Business profile • Log-in limited to up to four linked devices and one phone at a time • Limited access to Broadcast and automated messages options like "greeting message" or "away message"	Various business tools including • Business profile • Shared team inbox for multiple agents • AI chatbot integration • Broadcast and template messages • Lead gen form builder • Chat analytics • Green tick for official account
Free	Free	Paid

03

Why WhatsApp Marketing?



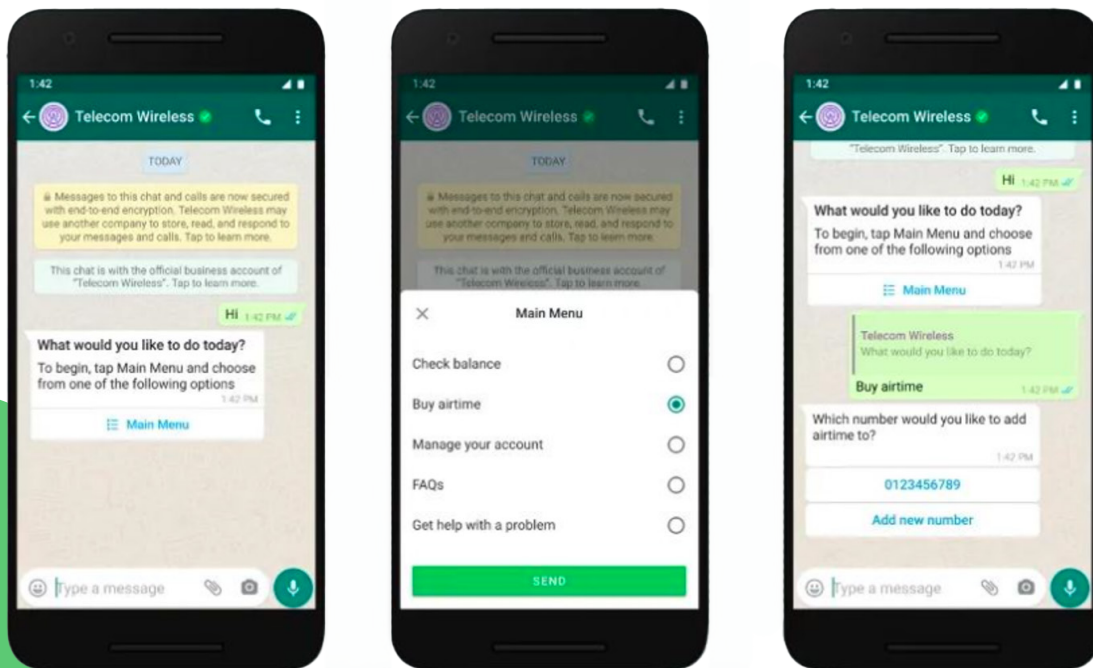
WhatsApp is not only a platform with a large audience but WhatsApp messages also have a high conversion rate. It allows brands to better engage, qualify, and nurture potential customers toward a transaction in addition to reaching more of them.



With the WhatsApp Business Platform, enterprises are able to automate and save over 80 percent of their efforts and considerable costs on expensive call centres and outdated CRM systems.



Customers get a chance to interact with brands in a familiar and ad-free environment.





How businesses can leverage WhatsApp Marketing

According to Statista⁵, there were more than 1.2 billion users of WhatsApp Business worldwide in 2021. Furthermore, there were approximately 779 million regular WhatsApp users and business accounts in the Asia-Pacific area by 2021. This clearly indicates the relevance of WhatsApp for Business globally, especially in the Asia Pacific.

Another interesting fact is that 1.5 percent of WhatsApp users are unique to the platform⁶, which means they exclusively use only WhatsApp. So, marketers who are not leveraging WhatsApp are actually losing out on a significant user base.



a.

Key features & benefits of WhatsApp Business Platform

Let's take a quick look at some of the key features and main benefits of WhatsApp Business for companies across the region in general.

Benefit 1:

Engage customers at scale with rich messaging experiences

Building relationships with customers and boosting brand engagement are both made possible through interactive content. Additionally, it sets a brand apart from competitors. It is a crucial element of seamless and high-quality user experiences and can be achieved easily with WhatsApp Business Platform.

With the [Message Templates](#) available on the WhatsApp Business Platform, interactive elements, such as buttons, can be added to communications. Users of the WhatsApp Business Platform can now create two different kinds of preconfigured buttons:



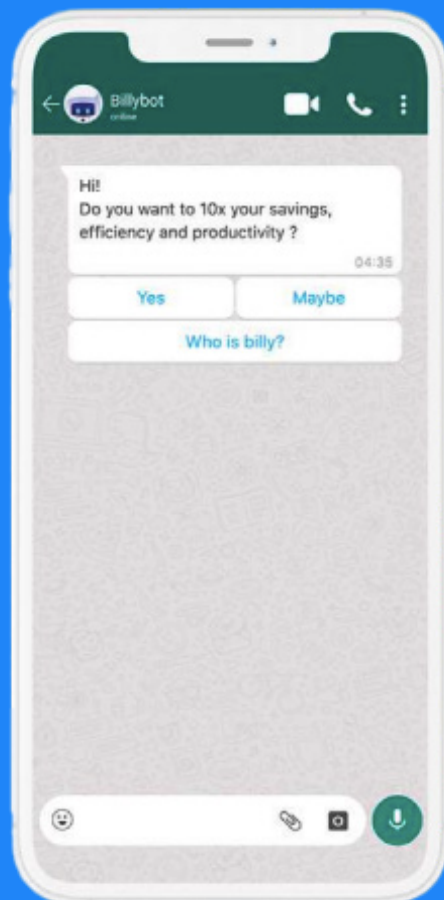
Call-to-action: Users are given the option to contact a phone number or go to a website with this button.

Quick response: Brands can create quick replies that clients can use to communicate easily without having to write out a full response.

BEFORE



AFTER



These messages are a great way of promoting your business on WhatsApp as you can send out a wide range of information, including appointment reminders, delivery updates, issue resolution or payment notifications.

Benefit 2:**Drive better marketing outcomes with Ads that click to WhatsApp**

By including a call to action to send a WhatsApp message in click-to-WhatsApp advertising, brands can enable their audience to send a message directly from an advertisement they saw on Meta platforms such as Facebook or Instagram. It enables an immediate connection with the brand and starts a conversation with high-intent users. Using the WhatsApp Business Platform, WhatsApp conversations with customers can be fully automated.



This is especially relevant in countries like Singapore where WhatsApp is predicted to be the most used social media platform in 2023. Even in Malaysia, according to Statista, almost 99 percent⁷ of people say WhatsApp is their preferred messaging app.

6 Most Used Social Media Platforms in Singapore 2023

Social Media Platform	Number of Active Users	Monthly Average Time Spent	Ad Reach
 WhatsApp	4.5 Million	17 Hours	N/A
 Facebook	4.48 Million	18.2 Hours	60%
 Instagram	3.05 Million	9.9 Hours	51.5%
 TikTok	1.8 Million	16 Hours	30.8%
 LinkedIn	3.2 Million	17 Minutes	54.1%
 YouTube	5.08 Million	20.8 Hours	85.8%

Marketers can create a high-converting WhatsApp Chat Marketing Funnel with ads that click to WhatsApp to reach audiences in markets like Singapore, Malaysia and beyond.

Here's how:

Step 1:

Define marketing goals

First, it is important for brands to analyse the existing marketing funnel. Identify weak spots and set clear, realistic goals accordingly.



Step 2:

Setting up WhatsApp Business Platform

a. For new clients without a WhatsApp Business account: Embedded Signups

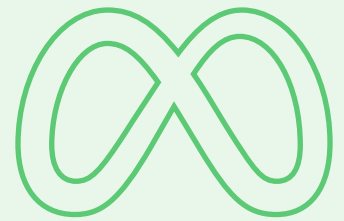
- Appoint a BSP like AiChat for this particular service
- Create a Business Manager account on Facebook (Meta). Sign in and complete your Business Verification. You will need to prepare supporting documents for submission. This process may take up to three weeks.



- Login into AiChat CMS and start your WhatsApp Embedded Signup flow using your Facebook Business account. You will provide your desired Display Name and verify the Phone number to use during this step.
- After the registration is complete, WhatsApp will verify everything is complete (this takes less than 1 day). AiChat will set up the configuration so you can start conversations with your customers.

**b. For businesses with existing WhatsApp Business App account:
Manual Onboarding**

- Appoint a BSP like AiChat for this particular service.
- Create a Business Manager account on Facebook (Meta). Sign in.
- Send your Business Manager ID to your appointed BSP.
- Verify your business and policy in the Business Manager.
- You will receive AiChat's "messaging on behalf of" request on your Business Manager. Approve it. This process may take up to three weeks.
- You will receive the verification code for the phone number via SMS manually from your BSP.
- Once everything is checked, AiChat will set up the configuration so you can start conversations with your customers.



Step 3:**Connect the WhatsApp Business number and Facebook page**

- Add the WhatsApp business number to the Facebook business page.
- After the number is successfully connected, brands will be able to start running ads that click-to-WhatsApp campaigns on Facebook and Instagram with messaging automation to generate traffic and leads.

**Step 4:****Create an ad that clicks to WhatsApp Campaign**

To start a campaign, marketers need to enter Facebook Ads Manager, create a New Campaign, and choose “Messages” as the Campaign Objective.

Using messages as an objective enables users to interact with the company’s marketing materials and initiate discussions with the brand via WhatsApp. As opposed to a normal ad campaign, this shortens the funnel and turns it into a conversational experience, doing away with the necessity for a landing page.



From the Messaging Apps section, select WhatsApp.

Marketers can choose a daily or lifetime budget for the campaign after selecting the target. There are two campaign bid strategies—Highest volume or Bid cap—based, which can be chosen based on the goal of the campaign. The next step is to specify the ad sets for this campaign after successfully deciding on the campaign's goal and budget.

Once the destination of the ad, budget, duration, target audience, and ad placement spots (it can be auto or manual), are determined, brands are ready to preview, optimise and publish the ads.

Marketers can refer to Facebook Ads Documentation⁸ for a comprehensive understanding of bid strategies.

Step 5:

Analyse performance

It is challenging to monitor interactions on the WhatsApp Business app, and this is where integrating with a chatbot to quickly follow analytics and see drop-offs can help.



Benefit 3:**Privacy and security**

First, here are some facts:

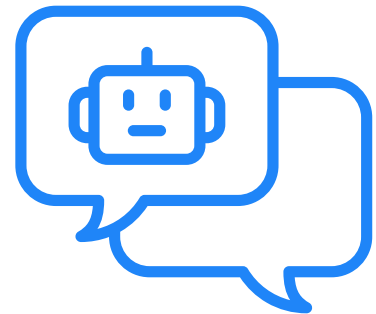
- On October 17, 2022, the new Personal Data Protection Law in Indonesia went into force.
- The Personal Data Protection Act in Thailand, which went into full effect on 1 June 2021, has been supplemented with a number of data protection recommendations.
- In Singapore, the Personal Data Protection Act went into force on October 1st, 2022, with increased administrative penalties of up to 10% of an organisation's annual turnover (if yearly sales reach SGD 10 million).

These recent developments clearly indicate that security and privacy are the top concerns in the eyes of all stakeholders, including consumers. This makes the WhatsApp encryption feature an extremely important one. WhatsApp encrypts messages and calls end-to-end. This helps to build trust and confidence between the brands and customers.



b. The role of AI chatbot

As brands navigate through this digital-first 4.0 era, keeping up with ever-evolving consumer demands is becoming increasingly difficult. According to a recent study⁹ by McKinsey, customers expect a prompt reaction to their questions and grievances on social media. Users expect brands to respond within the first hour in 40% of cases, and within the first 24 hours in 79% of cases. Another study found that 91 percent¹⁰ of customers immediately leave after a poor customer experience, and 47 percent¹¹ choose a different brand.



It appears humanly impossible to catch up with the ever-evolving consumer trends and demands but this is exactly where chatbot-enabled WhatsApp automation can help. Gartner¹² predicts that by 2027, chatbots will become the primary customer service channel for roughly a quarter of organisations.

“

When designed correctly, chatbots can improve customer experience and drive positive customer emotion at a lower cost than live interactions.

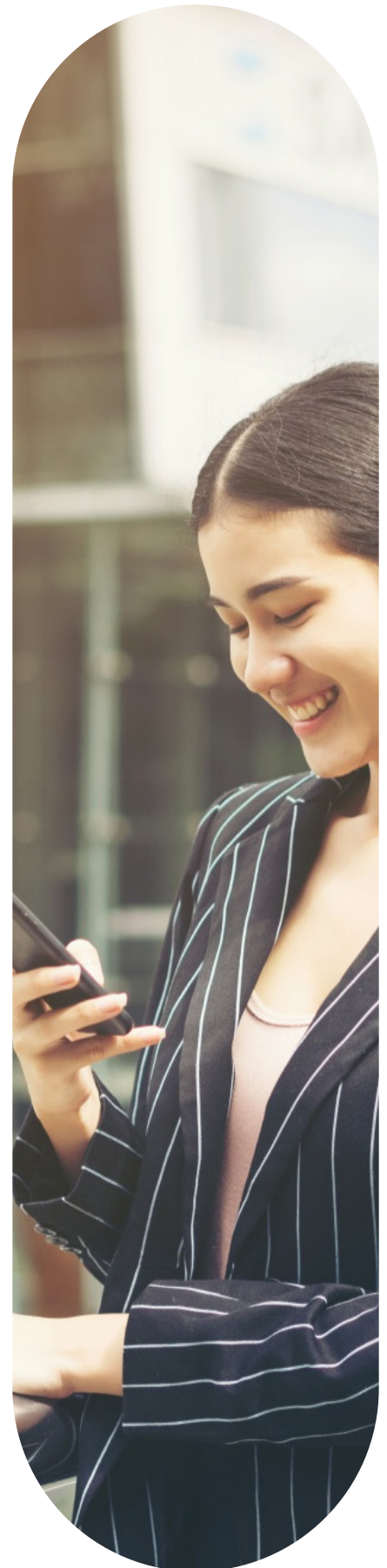
”

UMA CHALLA, SENIOR DIRECTOR ANALYST, GARTNER

WhatsApp automation is the process of automating communications with clients using the WhatsApp Business Platform. Automated messages on WhatsApp are pre-written responses to communications from new or existing users. Automation in WhatsApp is a low-cost marketing strategy that enables businesses to interact with clients 24/7 and provide real-time responses to their questions.

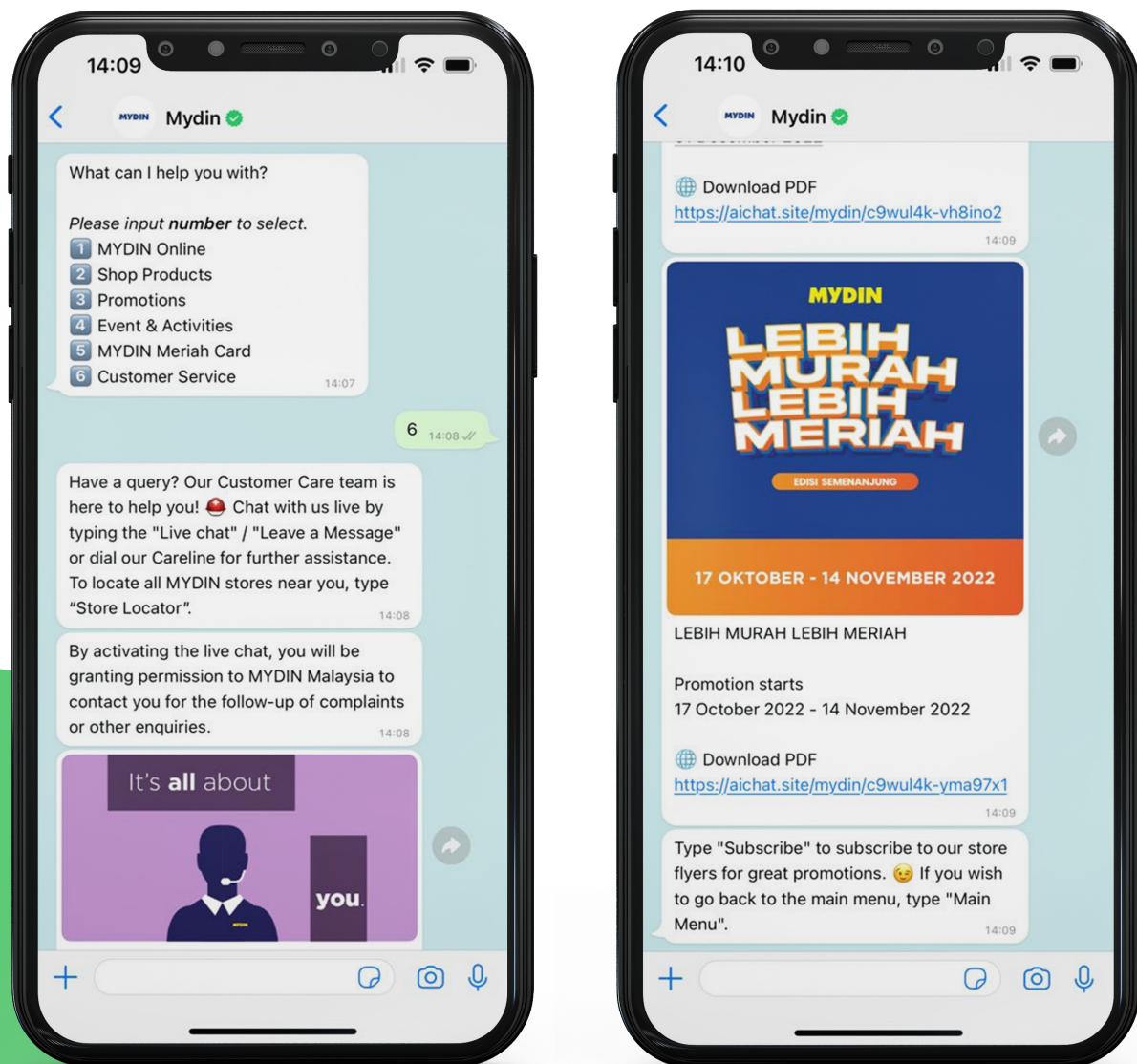
The use of automation in WhatsApp marketing has a variety of advantages. It enables companies to succeed in the fierce rivalry of today, where immediate replies are more and more expected because automation drastically cuts down on reaction times. Automated chatbots also assist organisations to increase conversion rates by leading customers down the sales funnel.

Automation enables brands to increase the effectiveness of WhatsApp marketing through automated welcome messages, reminders that go out on time, purchase updates, and frequently asked questions. Additionally, it frees up the team's time so they can concentrate on finishing up more difficult and significant duties.



WhatsApp advertising and campaigns powered by chatbots are also quite successful and well-liked. With AI handling everything, these automated contests are simple to manage and can be of any kind, from product launches to opt-ins via landing pages, one-chat competitions, and "caption this" games.

One great example of WhatsApp marketing is MYDIN Malaysia's chat experience that allows consumers to get quick access to information on MYDIN Express, their contactless grocery drive-thru service, shop products, subscribe to store flyers, promotions and more. The chat platform is available in either English or Bahasa Melayu.



In the recent Mydin x OPPO World Cup Spend & Win 2022 campaign where shoppers can enter to win an OPPO smart device with a minimum spend of RM150 in a single receipt, the brand achieved:

3X

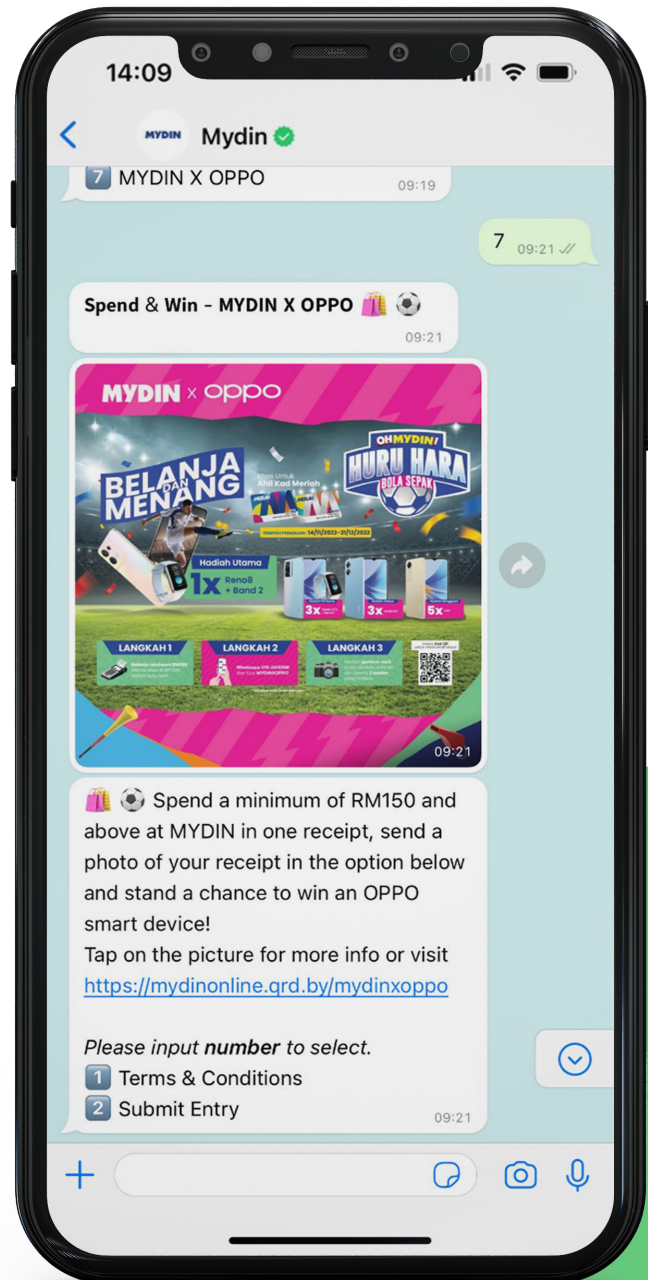
WhatsApp chatbot usage -
compared to pre-launch

39%

Uplift for WhatsApp chatbot
usage - Q3 2022/Q4 2022

73%

of customers interacting
with WhatsApp chatbot
versus 27% of customers
interacting with Facebook
Messenger chatbot

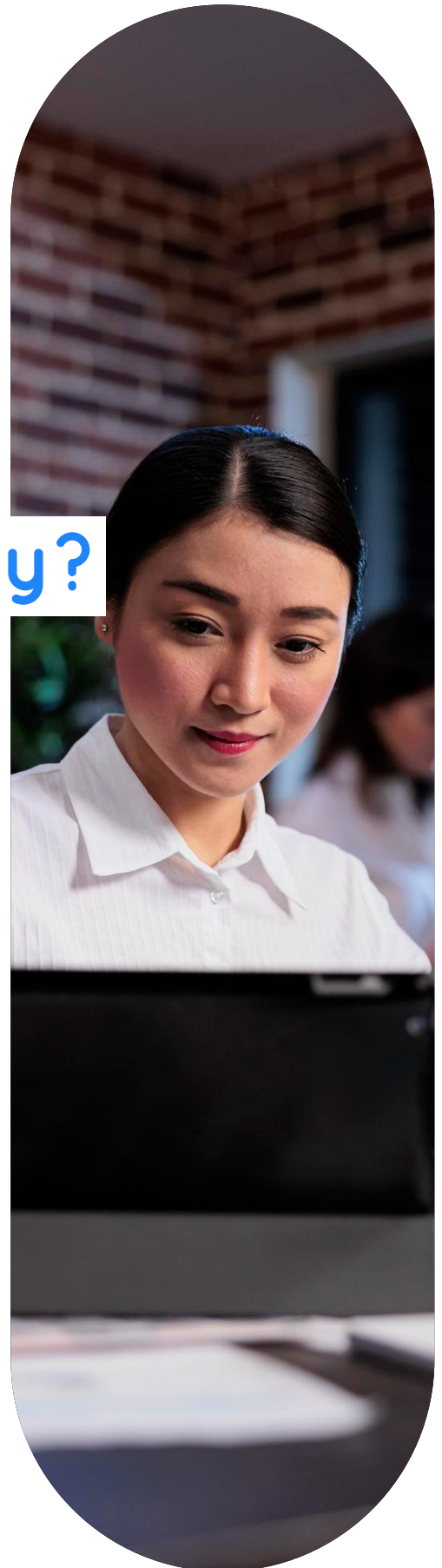


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Why choose AiChat to launch your WhatsApp Marketing journey?

AiChat's WhatsApp Business Platform is one of the best solutions for SMEs and enterprises in Southeast Asia. We can help you create a seamless customer experience and grow your business exponentially. Here are some key roles we play:

- Create and manage your official WhatsApp Business account.
- Offer automated round-the-clock customer service to your user base.
- Leverage our AI-assisted live chat to reduce the cost of human resources.



- With our Drag-and-Drop Bot Builder, bot building is easy and quick.
- Get access to a shared team inbox for efficient collaboration in a large team.
- Earn more leads with smart routing to agents.
- Re-engage, cross-sell and upsell with broadcast messages and automated follow-up sequences.
- Offer features like appointment booking for a better customer experience.
- Utilise our survey builder and chat analytics to get deeper insights and a 360-view of your customers.





What's next?

On one hand, the world seems to be emerging clean out of the prolonged pandemic but on the other hand, the business landscape is still plagued with concerns of inflation, an impending recession, disrupted supply chains, political unrest, wars and trade conflicts to name a few. 2023 will prove to be a make-or-break year for enterprises, big or small alike. In such a volatile economy, brands need to go the extra mile to engage existing users and attract new ones.

With the capacity of customers to interact with brands around-the-clock, pull marketing has replaced push marketing techniques like email, paid channels, SMS, and social media, and WhatsApp Marketing is a significant step in this direction. With its simple interface, high reach and increasing usage, WhatsApp for Business is clearly the future of marketing; and this will be an upward trend in the years to come.



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About AiChat

AiChat is a leading A.I-Powered Conversational Customer Experience platform designed to help brands automate business processes in customer service, marketing and commerce via popular social messaging apps such as Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, Instagram and Google Business Messages etc.

The company is based in Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia with a diverse team of experienced digital marketers, user experience designers and A.I experts who help brands to develop effective messaging and A.I strategies that improve customer experience and drive business ROI. Some of AiChat's clients include Bayer, TESCO, Marina Bay Sands, MR D.I.Y, Mondelēz, Petron, Unilever and many other enterprises across South East Asia.

Visit www.aichat.com for more information.

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