

# The rise of the WhatsApp economy

 By [Joseph Neusu](#)

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Conversational marketing, driven by WhatsApp, is going to be one of the hottest digital marketing trends to watch and take advantage of in 2023.



Joseph Neusu says WhatsApp is going to be one of the hottest digital marketing trends in 2023

The messaging app is overtaking native channels (websites and apps) to become the most effective direct marketing channel, eating other channels for breakfast, Conversations are the new user interface.

## A direct channel to communicate with brands

The modern digitally-savvy customers simply love WhatsApp as they have always sought a direct channel to communicate with brands.

According to the Business of Apps website, over 1 billion users globally message businesses every week.

“Business messaging is an area with real momentum and chat-based experiences will be the go-to way people and businesses communicate in the years to come,” says Mark Zuckerberg, founder and CEO of Meta.

In one of his most widely quoted gems, Bill Gates famously says: “If your business is not online then soon you will not have a business.”

I will go further and assert that if your brand does not have a conversational strategy firmly in place, then very soon your bottom line will be affected.



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## Enormous potential for personalisation

Context helps us to fully grasp WhatsApp’s growing role in conversational marketing. Thanks to the Covid-19 induced

acceleration of digitalisation, we are now living in a convenience economy in which customers are brand agnostic and are only loyal to experience.

Marketing is caught right in the middle trying to adapt to radically changing consumer demands and a fragmented digital landscape.

WhatsApp's efficacy stems from the fact that not only does it provide an opportunity for brands to connect with customers on a one-to-one basis, but it also offers enormous potential for personalisation - something that customers love.

Let me quickly point out that the WhatsApp Business API = not to be confused with its cousins, WhatsApp Messenger and WhatsApp Business App - is the main focus of this article.

So, what value does it unlock for brands?

## Chatbot integration

The WhatsApp Business API enables brands to have an engaging presence on WhatsApp and also to have a verified WhatsApp Business account.

With WhatsApp APIs, brands can integrate their systems such as WhatsApp bot, CRM, chat agent dashboard, to automate sales and customer support.



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## A gold mine for brands

Personalisation is a fundamental aspect of branding, and no company can succeed in today's highly connected, equally competitive marketplace without it.

According to a Forbes article titled *50 Stats Showing The Power Of Personalization* 72% of consumers say that they'll only engage with personalised messaging.

WhatsApp is a gold mine for brands that nail their personalisation strategy. According to research, WhatsApp messages are read within three seconds, have an open rate of 98%, and a CTR of 45%.

Inevitably, if your offers are personalised and speak to the pain point of your customers, they are going to engage with

your messages, make purchases, and become your brand ambassadors.

Personalised shopping via WhatsApp is on the rise and some retailers are already exploiting the enormous potential for improved customer experiences.

This trend is aligned to the buying behaviour of customers who like to shop on the go - think Generation Z and Millennials - and who are no longer comfortable with traditional touchpoints such as websites and emails.

## Proactive engagement

Proactive engagement helps brands to influence consumer interest and lead the conversation.

What's more, it shows that your brand cares about your customers' well-being and that you are proactively looking to enrich their lives with high-quality service and buying experiences.

Proactive engagement is industry-agnostic and allows brands to drive use cases across the customer lifecycle. These include personalised offers and alerts, product recommendations, cart abandonment reminders, back-in-stock alerts, upsell and cross-sell options, pricing updates, and so on.

WhatsApp business features allow your brand to be proactive in your communications with customers to achieve higher conversions, drive customer satisfaction, and improve retention.



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## Lead generation

While 85% of consumers are interested in receiving proactive notifications, according to HubSpot, 61% of marketing professionals say generating leads is their top challenge. To make matters worse, hardly any of those leads turn into sales. In fact, sales representatives spend their time chasing low quality leads that almost never convert.

Rather than using mass marketing methods to attract prospects, lead-generation chatbots built on WhatsApp use personalised notifications and prompts to start conversations and engage prospects at the right time in their journey.

A WhatsApp chatbot can help brands automate the lead generation and qualification process by interacting with customers to understand their most pressing needs. It can also collect preliminary details during this process to qualify the leads.

All this makes WhatsApp an effective channel and platform to engage customers in conversations to increase purchases and loyalty.

## ABOUT JOSEPH NEUSU

Joseph Neusu is the founder and CEO of Sales Qualified Leads Inc, Africa's leading digital agency specialising in WhatsApp Business API marketing and conversational marketing in the Programmatic and DOOH spaces. Joseph is a top conference speaker, thought leader and trainer.

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