

imi mobile



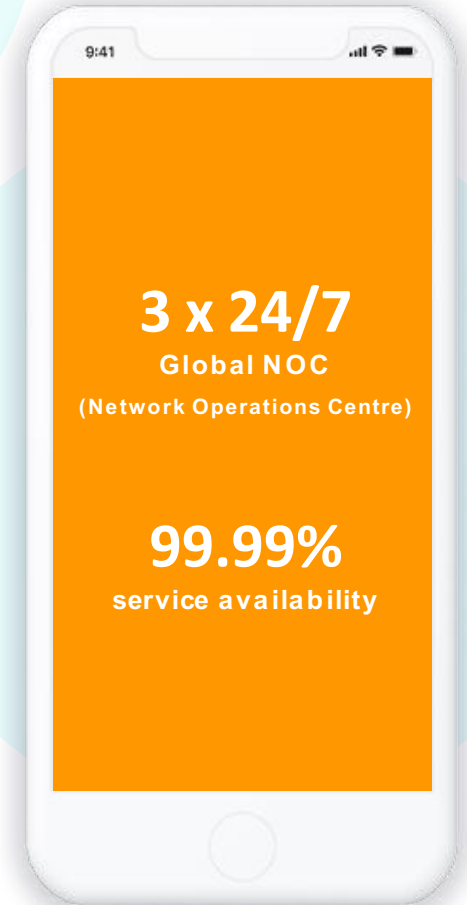
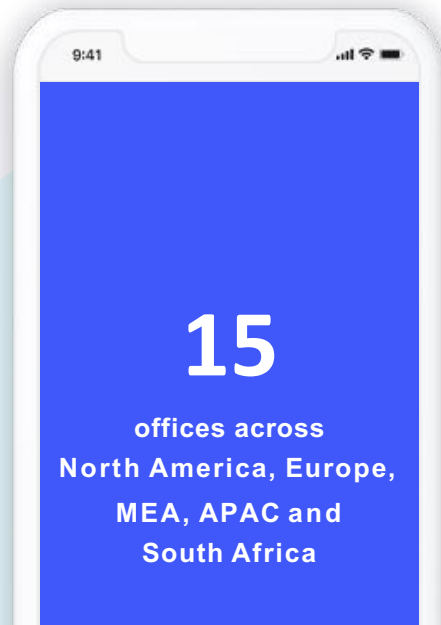
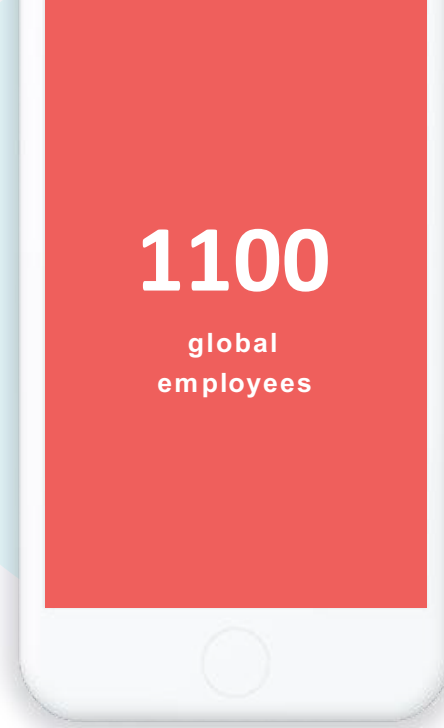
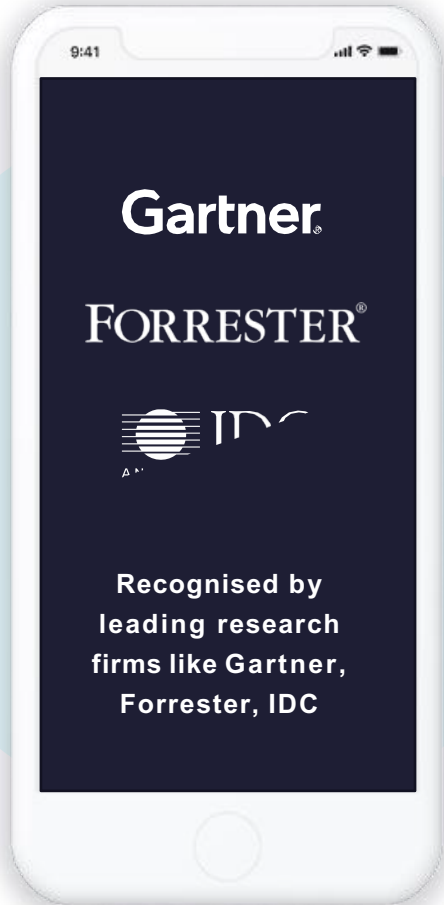
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A guide to conversational messaging

The rich messaging channels helping brands to
create meaningful two-way interactions.



imimobile helps businesses manage customer interactions at scale



Trusted by a global blue-chip customer base



A new generation

Our increasingly digital, always-on world is transforming the way companies connect with consumers on a daily basis.

Leading the charge is a new generation of rich messaging channels. Owned and championed by leading technology players like Google and Apple, these channels have emerged as a platform for orchestrating digital interactions that inspire and maintain conversations with customers.

While many brands already use SMS and email, channels like Apple Business Chat and RCS represent the next step in mobile-optimized engagement. They offer brands an opportunity to be where their customers are, on highly visible channels, delivering an anytime, anywhere experience.

Through a combination of rich media capabilities, AI technology, and an asynchronous approach to implementation, these channels enable brands to lead with app-like, two-way conversational interactions for everything from proactive notifications to solving FAQs. Ultimately, there are hundreds of use cases to engage and support throughout the customer lifecycle.

In this guide, you will learn about the different channels, understanding their capabilities and why they are essential to delivering an experience that will win and retain customers.



Meeting the needs of today's consumer

Customer experience is a key competitive advantage for consumer businesses. Consumers have more choice than ever before, and they know it. This means that they have high expectations when it comes to interacting with any brand.

It's widely known that consumers are increasingly mobile-first and digitally savvy - only 12%¹ of millennials cite the telephone as their favorite communication channel. These 'connected' consumers have reshaped what is expected when it comes to customer experience. They want to be able to use the channels they prefer, for brands to proactively engage and address their requirements, to self-serve and solve simple queries quickly, and for every interaction to be personalized to them.

Meeting and exceeding these expectations is a strategic priority and will determine a brand's success in an increasingly competitive market. As a result, meeting the needs of the 'connected' consumer is top of the agenda for many digital transformation initiatives.

Investing in mobile experiences — and the wide range of new channels and formats — is a way of improving customer experience, driving higher customer loyalty, and future-proofing your brand during a time of rapid digital change.

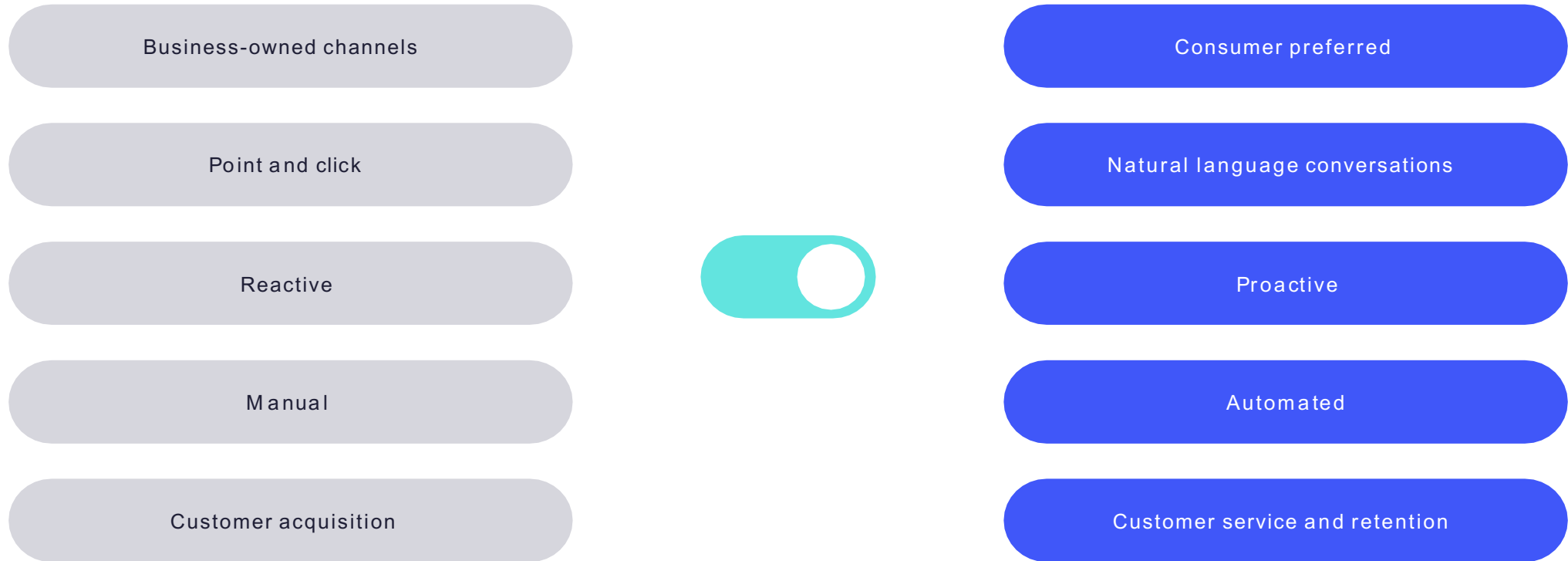


¹ www.commsbusiness.co.uk

^{2, 3} www.salesforce.com

⁴ www.superoffice.com

Digital natives have reshaped consumer CX expectations



Why conversational messaging matters

Conversational messaging refers to a brand's use of digital channels to provide meaningful two-way engagement at scale. It's about delivering more personalized interactions that create a better experience on the channels that consumers want to use.

Brands are already successfully using new rich messaging channels for a wide range of use cases. Best Buy customers are using RCS to shop daily deals, view weekly promotions, and manage curbside pickup. T-mobile enable Apple users to rate plans, buy a new phone, pay their bills, and send screenshots to resolve an issue through Apple Business Chat. Barclays bank uses the WhatsApp Business API to provide customer support for a variety of queries.

Conversational messaging channels are essential to the omnichannel communication approach, offering consumers a choice in how they want to engage. Through a range of touchpoints, they gain access to 24/7 customer service and valuable proactive updates. They can type and tap to conveniently make purchases and get the information they need.

For brands, conversational messaging channels offer a way to increase automation and scale customer journeys. They are becoming the foremost digital medium for growing and maintaining relationships with new and existing customers to drive sales and increase retention.



59%

of consumers want to use messaging more to make purchases¹



75%

prefer to use messaging channels for customer service²



41%

of millennials use chatbots on a daily basis³

¹ www.facebook.com

² www.customerthink.com

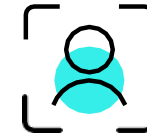
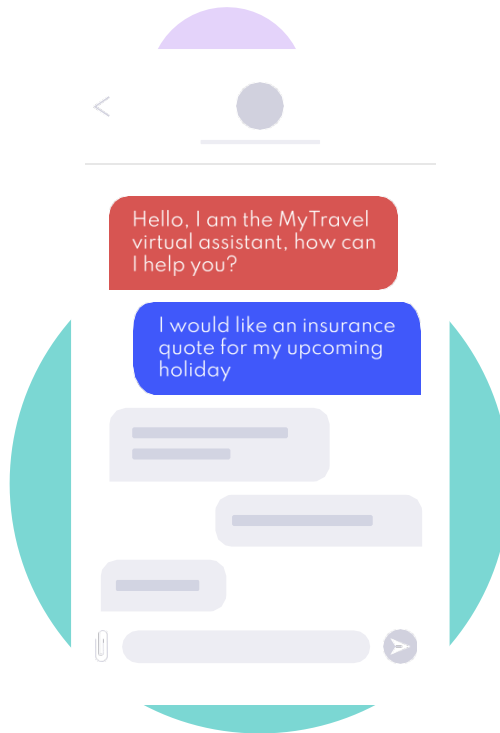
³ www.acquire.io

Conversational messaging delivers on both strategic and CX objectives



Brand objectives

- Achieve CX differentiation
- Accelerate the launch of new services
- Reduce contact center load
- Increase automation
- Increase reach and accessibility
- Data utilization and personalization



Customer expectations

- 24/7 service availability
- The ability to self-serve
- Quick service and instant responses
- Individual personalization
- The ability to choose from multiple business touchpoints
- In-channel fulfillment



The channels

Brands are already reaping the benefits of conversational messaging. In the next part of the guide, we look at the rich messaging channels that we believe are a priority for brands to integrate into their customer experience strategy.



RCS Business Messages

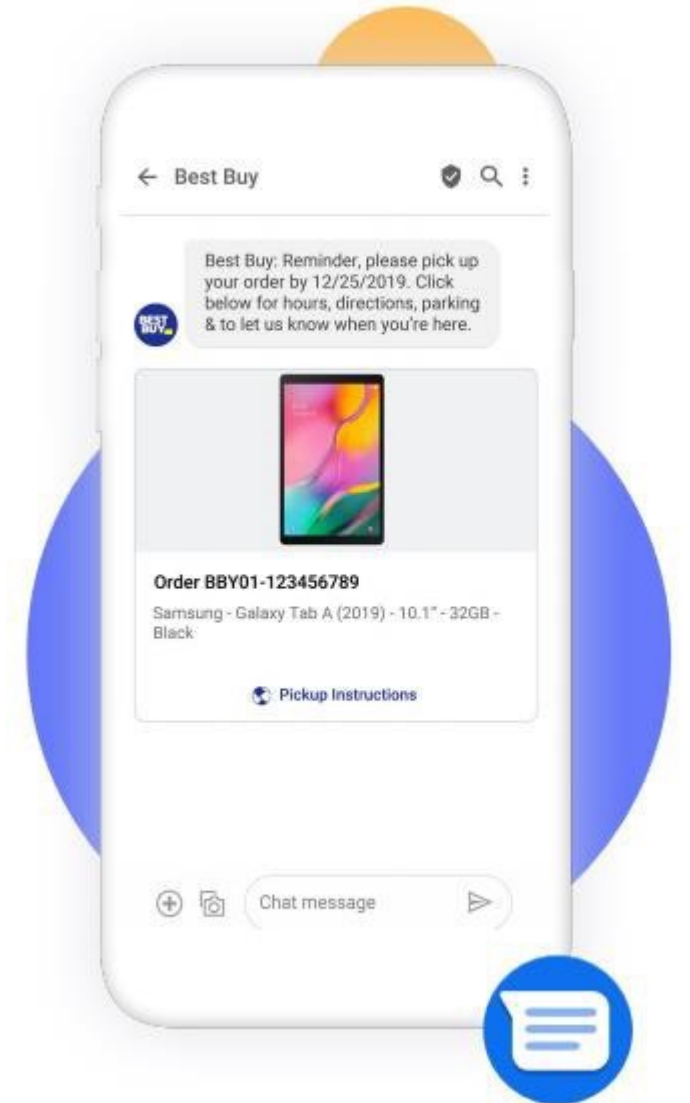
RCS stands for Rich Communication Services. An evolution of SMS, RCS is a GSMA defined standard of messaging that is championed by Google and several key operator groups globally.

RCS provides a native and secure environment on android devices that transforms P2P and A2P messaging into an app-like, feature-rich experience. Brands can craft engaging rich media messages that make use of buttons, carousels, suggested replies, and much more. One of the channel's unique selling points is that it can be used for proactive outreach, as all brands need to initiate contact with a customer for marketing or customer service is a mobile number.

Greater collaboration between operators, MaaP providers, and device manufacturers is speeding up the adoption of RCS.

According to the GSMA, the global audience of monthly active users for RCS grew to 473 million in 2021 — across 90 global operator deployments. With the channel showing great promise, it is predicted that users of RCS will increase to 3.9 billion by 2025.

The need for brands to start using RCS continues to grow. In-market campaigns of RCS are showing read rates anywhere from 73% to 92%, highlighting RCS's tremendous ability to reach customers on the app they use most frequently: the native messaging client. These campaigns are also delivering click-through rates (CTR) higher than both SMS and email, demonstrating RCS's potential for driving meaningful engagement.



Feature overview:

Verified business profiles display brand name, logo, and a verification badge. UI components can be stylized and colored in line with a brand's visual identity.

Rich media such as high-resolution images, videos, GIFs, and file transfers.

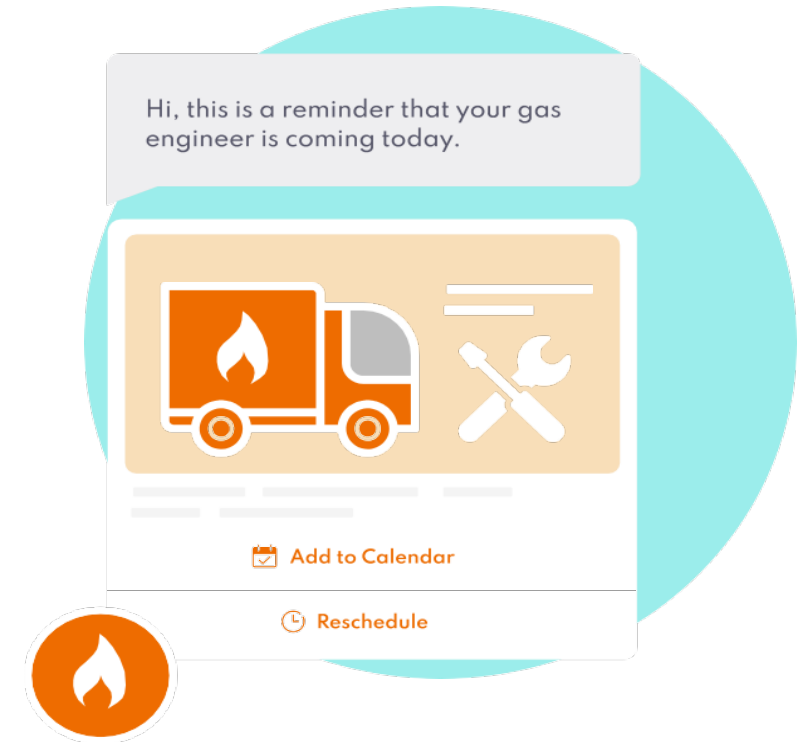
Rich cards that include images, titles, and description text.

Carousels display multiple rich cards that allow users to scroll through options like a list.

Suggested actions guide users and simplify calls to action. RCS examples include dial a number, view a location in Maps, share a location, create a calendar event, and open a link.

Metrics that include when the message was read, how long the user spent on the message, as well as any interactions with content.

Deep-link capability means that a conversation can move from RCS straight into an app or open a website URL – and back again.



WhatsApp Business API

One of the most popular messaging apps in the world, WhatsApp, has 2 billion monthly users and sees 60 billion messages sent every day.

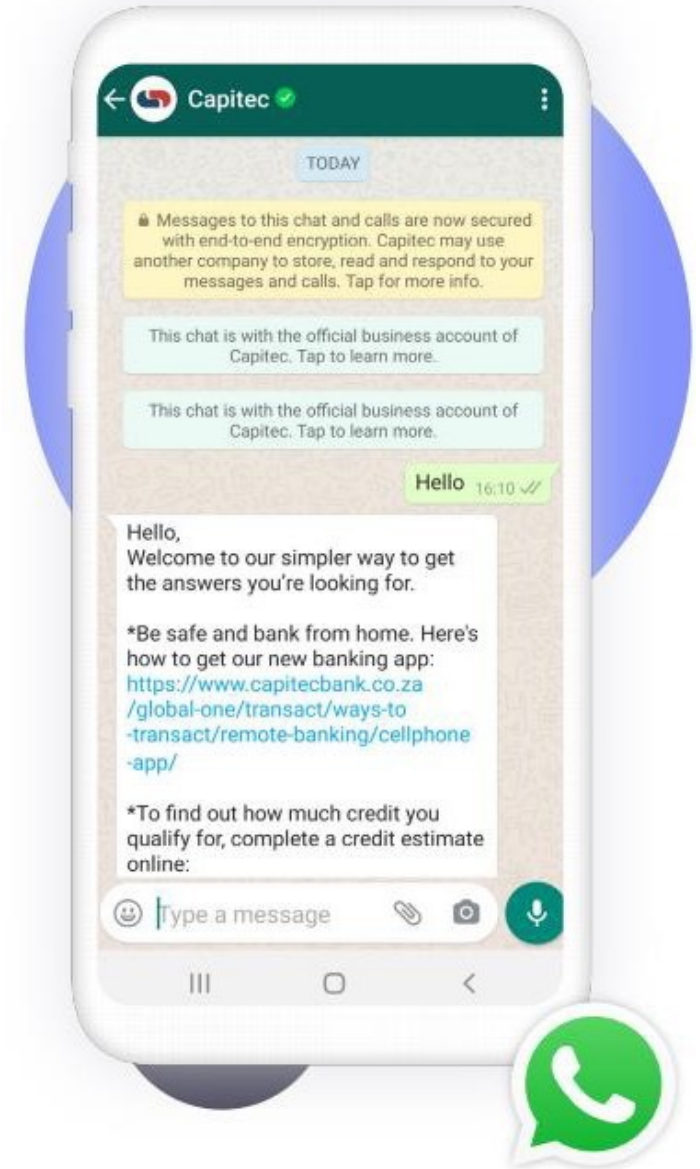
Since early 2018, brands have been using the WhatsApp Business API to engage and automate interactions with users. Automotive leaders such as Mercedes-Benz provide pre-sales and post-sales support through the channel, such as booking test drives and services. In other sectors, British Gas uses WhatsApp to provide customer support and npower provides information on smart meter installation.

The WhatsApp Business API offers several features, from quick replies to action buttons, that makes it a powerful rich messaging channel. A key USP is that, brands can proactively reach users once consent has been gained. The two conditions of gaining customer consent are that

the user must trigger the opt-in and clear messaging of what they are signing up to receive.

The first type of message the API supports is a Highly Structured Message (HSM), which is typically used for alerts and transactional notifications. These communications are based on a defined template approved by WhatsApp, such as an account update or payment update, and can include dynamic parameters to personalize the interaction. The second type of message sent through the API is a Session Message. These messages are used to respond to customer-initiated conversations – this includes NLP, hybrid chatbot interactions, and live agent chat.

The WhatsApp Business API doesn't provide a user interface and brands are required to host and maintain API clients themselves. However, brands can avoid this hassle and accelerate deployment by working with one of the official WhatsApp Business solution providers.



Feature overview:

Verified business profiles that display brand name, logo, address, and a green checkmark badge.

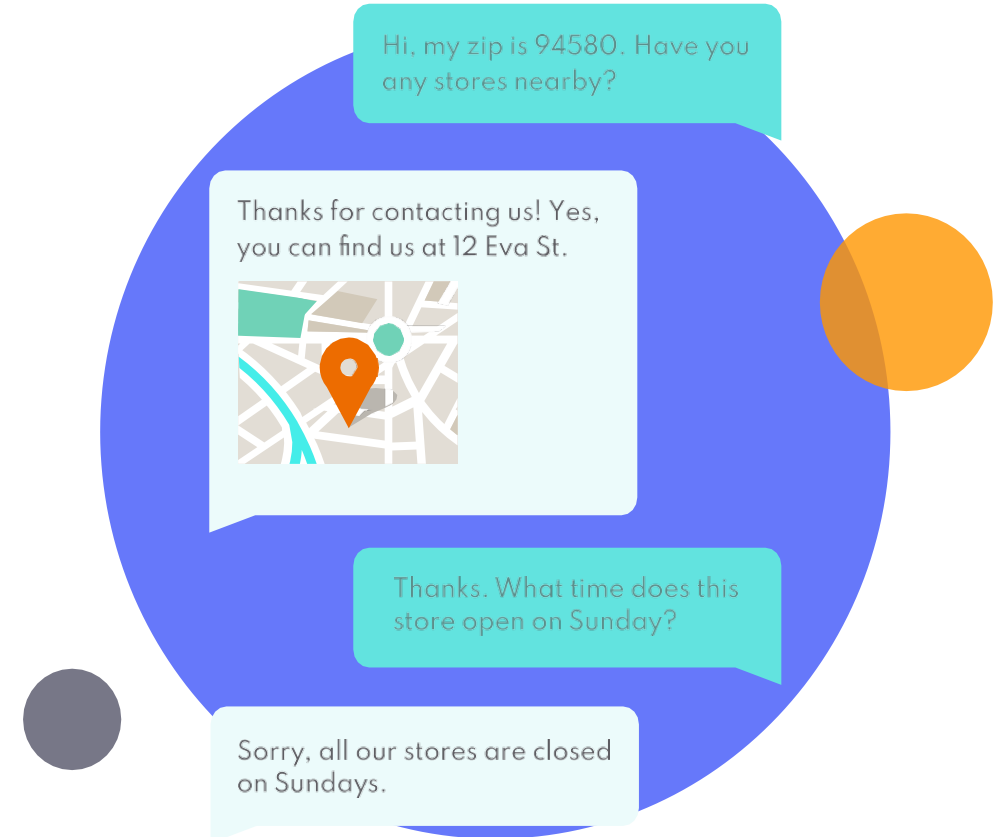
Read receipts to monitor whether a customer has read sent messages.

Stickers are animated emojis that can be personalized to a brand's style to convey emotions and reactions.

Call-to-action and quick reply buttons can be placed within message templates to drive customer action.

Expected response times help to set customer expectations.

Rich media that includes the ability to send and receive emojis, images, geolocation, and videos.



Thank you

Contact Us

Plot No. 770, Road No 44
Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad 500 033
India

Phone: +91 95021 95021

Email: sales@textlocal.in