Multichannel Messaging Platform

Whitepaper

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Executive summary

Modern economic markets are competitive; thus, businesses must promote their products to compete. Communication marketing is one of the common global strategies that modern companies use to attract, engage, and retain customers. In addition to social networks, billions of people use instant messengers, where brands can also have their own business accounts. Messaggio provides a multichannel platform for enterprises, combining the business tools of OTT messengers, such as Viber, WhatsApp, RCS, and SMS for customer communications. A modern platform helps businesses optimize the costs of marketing campaigns, as well as mandatory OTP messages and customer notifications.

Introduction

The contemporary business environment is saturated with many ventures competing for the same customers. Surviving such economic conditions oblige businesses to devise innovative mechanisms to expand their markets, provide customer care in a modern way and grow upsales. Reports indicate that firms that lag in adoption of emerging business-customer technological tools often lose the competitive edge and grow slowly. Customer support through OTT messengers, instant answers to simple questions through a chat-bot and customer notifications in Viber or WhatsApp are the common courtesy today. Experts assert that sturdy marketing is the only known authentic approach in maintaining a robust business-customer relationship.

Marketing is a set of activities a business venture undertakes to promote selling or buying of goods and services over those of competitors. Marketing primarily involves identifying the target audience and persuasively communicating with them to buy the product or service. Though marketing avenues include print media, television, and radio, a majority of businesses today rely on modern communication channels such as direct mails, emails, social media platforms, and chat apps like SMS, Viber, WhatsApp, RCS, etc. These tools are instrumental in marketing because of their affordability and tend to have readily available audiences for businesses. Besides, compared to traditional mediums, they offer more flexible features for brand-customer interaction.

The proliferation of digital devices across the globe and the increasing convenience of creating mobile applications have motivated developers to build chat applications with different capabilities. The increase in chat applications has compelled many entrepreneurs to avail their businesses on multiple platforms hence curtailing efforts to monitor interactions. To mitigate this

emerging challenge, Messaggio has developed a sophisticated platform that enables business ventures to run all their chat accounts from one place, manage brand-customer interactions, and broadcast communication to all channels without necessarily accessing individual accounts. This white paper highlights the importance of marketing communication, and some of the critical challenges entrepreneurs experience when using modern communication tools. Furthermore, it highlights how Messaggio is stepping in to provide solutions to some of the problems discussed in the paper.

Importance of marketing communication

Marketing communication can be defined as tactics and methodologies employed by companies to convey messages about their goods and services uniquely and creatively to their prospects or existing customers. The messaging communication is usually done directly or indirectly with the core objective being to persuade the target audience to develop brand loyalty and to provide feedback. Marketing communication is essential to business in various ways like creating brand awareness, developing a strategic vision, fostering goodwill, creating competitive advantage, enlightening investors, attracting talent, keeping customers informed, and increasing profit margins. Let's expound on these benefits.

Create brand awareness

Customers often attribute their loyalty to business brands. Effective business branding not only helps a business to distinguish itself from the rest but also assists customers to know what to expect from the business. Humans are stereotypical; once they associate a business to a specific quality standard, they will always believe all products and service offered by that company are of that standard. Branding involves creating business objectives, vision, logos, and other aesthetics that may give a business uniqueness. Once a business has determined how it wants to be perceived, the brand must be communicated to the customers. Marketing communication plays a fundamental role in creating and providing the needed impetus to brand awareness. The brand can be communicated by sending tailored appealing messages to clients, informing them of the benefits

of buying goods and services offered by the brand, as well as keeping chat communication for customer care and support.

Developing a strategic vision

Businesses make a profit by fulfilling specific needs in the market. Understanding market deficiencies and gaps is vital for curating business strategies to address those missing services or products. Affordability of products or services can be improved by eliminating some items in the package. To develop a new packaging mechanism, one must communicate with the customers to understand the package essential and those that can be extricated. In this sense, marketing communication is a crucial tool for collecting feedback from customers and using it to adapt business operations to changing economic environment and reshape strategic vision.

Fostering goodwill

It is the dream of any company to have goodwill amongst the population it serves. Goodwill is created by consistently communicating the intentions of the business and its positive impact on society. Persistent communication of business objectives enables facets of trust to get ingrained in the minds of prospective and existing customers since they continually witness the communication from the company about its offerings and creates a notion that the business is genuine and authentic in its offerings. Such messages are vital in fostering goodwill of the business in the market.

Express competitive advantage

Conventional markets are composed of many sellers offering similar products and service, thus giving buyers multiple alternatives to select from. Studies on customer behavior suggest that customers prefer going for products from well-known, trusted vendors and manufactures. Marketing communication with existent customers popularizes brand new products of a business, hence boosting the chances of customers selecting them. Business messages designed to announce the benefits of products, offer additional options during the purchase, thereby increase upsales and average bill amount. Unlike television and radio advertising, messages sent to customers via messaging apps have a personal touch hence better chances of reaction of the loyal audience.

Attract and retain talent

The human resources are the most valuable assets in a business. Installing mechanisms in place to keep the turnover rate low can save the business from unnecessary employee replacement expenditures. As a business grows, it must be able to attract new talent to offset the increasing market demands. Business messaging tools are useful in showing potential employees that the company is an excellent place to work and develop a career. Business publications annually ask the public to nominate the best companies to work at. Businesses that continually remind its employees and the public benefits of associating with it stand a better chance of being listed among best places to work.

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Improved communication with customers

Customer relations should have been the first point since the fundamental objective of messaging tools in business is to enhance communication with the customers. To maintain the market base and acquire a new one, businesses must maintain a transparent, consistent, crisp, valuable, and solution-oriented marketing communication. These qualities are essential for boosting customers' level of trust in the brand and setting the business on a trajectory for long term positive relationship with clients. Furthermore, messaging apps offer two-way communication, thus enabling customers to communicate their complains, suggestions, and compliments with the enterprise. Improved communication enhances business response to changing consumer needs and emerging market trends.

Increase profit margins

This segment wouldn't be complete without mention how marketing communication impacts profits margins. Afterall all businesses are chasing after profits, and if the rewards are not motivating, then the hustle is not worth it. It is a rule thumb for the marketing and sales departments to work jointly in developing marketing and sales strategies. Working together provides an ample atmosphere for the development of marketing communication that is innovative, creative, and well-aligned with the overall business goals and objectives. Well curated messages and communication strategy attracts more sales hence increasing profit margins and reward customers loyalty.

Business managements understand the importance of having a robust marketing communication strategy. They have experience in creating innovative and engaging promotional

ideas that not only convey the intended brand messages but also give the brand an edge of creativity to dwarf competitors. However, despite the capability to create strong messaging contents and investing enormously in human resources to sustain interchange with customers, many ventures are finding it challenging to manage business-customer interaction effectively. The next section discusses some of the key problems businesses are encountering while using messaging applications to communicate with clients.

Key challenges with messaging tools

Just a few years ago, it was predicted the social media channels would become dominant forms of communication and bypass direct messaging. With social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter creating shockwaves in the communication industry and how people interact, it was not difficult to predict a feature in which younger generations eschewed traditional forms of communication like voice calls, messaging apps, and emails. Contrary to many predictions, regardless of social media platforms continuing to soar, the world has experienced the rise of one-on-one messaging apps with user numbers surging yearly. According to a report by Juniper Research, OTT business messaging platforms, such as WhatsApp for Business, will deliver 236 billion messages by 2023.

Modernized messaging applications have been equipped with sophisticated features like money transfer features and in-app ordering capabilities. For example, the WeChat app, which is quite popular in China, allows its users to conduct in-app money transactions like buying goods and services. Line, a popular messaging app in South Korea, generated revenues of over $220 million quarterly. The trends in messaging apps insinuate that though social media has become a

popular means for interactions; direct messaging apps are redefining their role not only as a means of communications but also as a vital platform for business transactions. Social media and messaging apps are no longer competing entities.

Though these apps have made tremendous headways as critical business tools, there are still various barriers hindering business from reaching their potential effectiveness in customer communication via messengers. Based on various researches conducted in North America, Europe, and Asia, it is evident many businesses experience some deficiencies on how most of these apps operate. This section aims to highlight some of the key challenges businesses and regular user face when using messaging apps.

Messaging apps lack interoperability

Messaging apps are commonly regarded as a replacement for traditional forms of communication such as SMS and voice calls which are expensive, especially when communicating internationally. However, according to Jean Shin, these conventional forms of communication are universal. For example, email and traditional SMS users can chat with anyone as long as they have their email address or phone number. The rise of messaging apps has seen an emergence of a fragmented mobile chat ecosystem where only people with similar apps can talk to each other. For example, WhatsApp users cannot chat with Viber users. This implies businesses that rely on WhatsApp as a primary means of communication can only contact customers with WhatsApp.

Keith Teare, a partner at Archimedes Labs, propounds that due to lack of interoperability, businesses must first know which app most of their customers have, search for their identity on the app, send an invitation and wait for approval before a chat is initiated. She goes further to state that a majority of people tend to decline chat invitations from strangers. Going through all this

process with meagre chances of creating a connection is cumbersome for most businesses. A survey by Tyntec shows that about 36 percent of Americans are disappointed by the fact that they cannot message all their contacts from a single platform. A similar study in Russia and China reveal the same frustration of using multiple apps.

Unreliable security

Security is one of the essential features of business communication systems. With the number of cybersecurity threats steadily rising, business owners are more interested in systems with powerful countermeasure capabilities to avert and withstand intrusions and other forms of attacks. Most countries have laws and regulations that compel businesses to protect and guarantee the privacy of user data such as contacts, identity numbers, and even names. A bridge of these regulations can attract lawsuits. Besides, a weak system can be exploited by competitors and contacts of important customers retrieved. This can cost a business potential sales.

In China, about 40 percent of messaging apps users are worried about the safety of the applications they use. These worries reflect concerns about internet surveillance by government and private agencies. Shin also attributes these concerns to in-app transactions technology which is common in China. Compared to the United States, only 15 percent of American respondents expressed concerns about the safety of messaging platforms. Security concerns are not alien to Russians, in 2018, Telegram, a Russian messaging app, was banned after the management declined to hand over encryption keys to the authorities. Measures adopted by the government to combat anonymity messaging have been described by many as a threat to internet freedom. The security concerns in messaging apps are real, and businesses have a duty to come up with plans to secure their messaging platforms for safe communication with customers.

Hard to measure results

Marketing performance can only be evaluated based on the number of sales. And, it is hard to identify performing marketing channels and invest more in them if results cannot be measured. Most of the messaging apps do not have features to track how many sales they are generating and the location of customers. Lack of this information is detrimental to marketing campaigns, especially in instances when the business wishes to focus marketing on high performing markets. Besides, Lauren Leonardi writes that messaging apps often generate too much data. She asserts that the time needed to analyze the data can be a hindrance to achieving the end game, which is to convert sales. As entrepreneurs deploy messaging apps in business communication, they need to employ systems to help them analyze data generated by the apps.

SMS capabilities are limited

At the beginning of the past decade, social media experts predicted the death of SMS before the decade ended. Various reports from the Pew Institute indicated that the growth of SMS was levelling off. Ten years later, in countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, the frequency of SMS use has surpassed voice calls. It is apparent the predictions regarding SMS use were exaggerated. Firms like Portio Research are predicting a bright future for SMS. Tyntec and Messaggio are now offering products and services aimed at revolutionizing the SMS app experience.

As the prevalence of SMS technology persists in the market, it presents significant challenges to mobile marketers. Most businesses are compelled to continue sending notification messages to customers using the service despite its ineffectiveness. The SMS channel is outdated

and cannot reach the capabilities of smartphones to the fullest. Furthermore, compared to other forms of messaging, SMS is relatively expensive. Most people still have SMS applications, but they barely use them; instead, they engage family and friends on more convenient apps. The challenge is how entrepreneurs can find a way to continue using SMS but as a supplement to other convenient channels of communication.

Solution to challenges

To curb the challenges highlighted above, various tech firms have developed platforms that offer to help businesses manage communication with clients. Messaggio is one of the companies that have specialized in providing on-demand messaging services to businesses across Europe and Asia. The company boasts of a secure multichannel system that fosters long-term relationships between system users and their customers. This section highlights how companies can leverage Messaggio to enhance customer interaction and communication.

Messaggio Company is a technology and B2B supplier for promotional and transactional business messaging. The company is headquartered in Malta with subsidiaries and representatives in Switzerland, United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Italy, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Slovakia, Moldova, UAE, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Messaggio is an industry leader in offering dashboard and API to send business messages to customers across all channels, with direct connections to more than five hundred carriers worldwide and numerous messaging apps. Some of the services offered by the firm include bulk SMS messaging, Viber for business, messaging in vk.com, WhatsApp business API,

multichannel routing, mobile identity and OTP verification, RCS Google RBM messaging, Zero-hop connections, and short numbers.

#solution 1

The first issue raised in this article emphasizes the lack of interaction between messaging applications. Companies must determine the messenger that their customers use before contacting them. Messaggio is a multi-channel platform that allows brands to connect with their customers using their preferred communication method. The platform allows brands to send messages to their customers - users of Viber, WhatsApp, or SMS, using one account for sending business messages. Using Messaggio as a communications platform eliminates the need to support multiple corporate messaging applications.

#solution 2

As aforementioned, security is one of the requisite components of messaging apps, especially when business sensitive data is involved. Messaggio offers various options for business to verify the identity of their customers. The mobile identity feature provides an unobtrusive way of confirming the real identity of customers before the exchange of valuable information or transaction. The One-Time-Passcode (OTP) offers a convenient and secure way for customers to authorize transactions. Moreover, the Messaggio multichannel platform is built on a modern reliable API that is secured by SSL encryption. To guarantee its users tight security, the company stringently complies with GDPR requirements. Messaggio understands the security concerns of business owners and their customers; as a result, the Messaggio system is built with security at its core.

#solution 3

Sales growth can only be achieved by determining the effectiveness of various distribution channels and developing mechanisms to improve lagging paths. The key indicators in measuring productivity are the conversion rate and tracking of the regions that provide the largest number of sales. Modern messaging applications have features that are useful to brands in their marketing campaigns. For example, Viber allows to send promotional messages with an image and a CTA button, and WhatsApp Business API allows to send geolocation data. Messaggio combines all these business tools into one system for direct and two-way direct communication with its customers.

#solution 4

The SMS still plays an essential role in mobile communication like the provision of OTP services and while RCS messaging is still in development. However, when compared to other forms of messaging, SMS technology is outdated. Businesses should switch to modern forms of messaging to enjoy the full mobile marketing capabilities offered by smartphones. Messaggio is a market leader in implementing features like push notifications and up sales which can only be found in messenger apps. Besides, Messaggio provides services like chatbots API which are essential in creating 24/7 active interactions with customers.

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Conclusion

With the rising need for customers to interact with businesses on multiple messenger apps seamlessly, various organizations have invested in multichannel technologies to meet this standard. Companies using this approach align their messaging, goals, objectives, and design across all the communication platforms. Virgin Atlantic is one of the companies with reputable multichannel experience. According to Clint Fontanilla, the company's marketing channels are designed to offer personalized experiences to customers. He reports that customers are not directed to call customer services; instead, they are told something like this, 'In case you need any further help contact me via this platform.'

Starbucks is another transcendent company leveraging benefits of multichannel. The company's system is designed to support customer interaction via multiple messenger channels, including social media sites. Customers can order food and drinks via WhatsApp, SMS, Telegram, Viber, Facebook messenger, and even twitter. Besides, the system allows their clients to reload their reward cards using company websites, mobile app, in-store, and messenger apps that support money transactions like WeChat. Timberland is another company reaping from multichannel technology. Using near field communication technology, the company can conveniently relay information about their products in customers' phones by merely tapping against a special chip. The VIP.com is another popular B2B company in china transforming how businesses interact with customers using multichannel technology.

The ability to reach customers independent of messaging apps they use is instrumental in reaching a broader audience. Businesses can enhance their customer interaction capabilities by

creating multiple communication channels that seamlessly work together. Implementing this technology can be expensive, particularly for small and medium scale businesses. That is why Messaggio has developed a ready to use system that avails the technology to your business at an affordable fee. Our system not only enables your business to interact with customers on multiple channels but also provides a secure infrastructure for safe communication.