



**THE ULTIMATE  
GUIDE FOR  
PERSONAL  
CUSTOMER  
CONTACT VIA  
MESSAGING AND  
LIVE CHAT**

**OBI4WAN**



**The development of webcare (online customer support) has really taken off in recent years. With the shift of customer contact from public social media channels to closed 1-to-1 channels, webcare departments are faced with a new challenge: how do you, as an organisation, deal with messaging channels and live chat? What volumes can be expected? How are messaging channels different from public channels? And above all: how do you prepare for increasing volumes that result from lowering the threshold for customers?**

**In this white paper, we will cover important trends and developments, look at the impact on customer service and offer you a number of dos and don'ts for messaging and live chat, so you can get the most out of messaging channels and live chat and grow towards an optimal use of webcare and online customer service. ■■■■■■**



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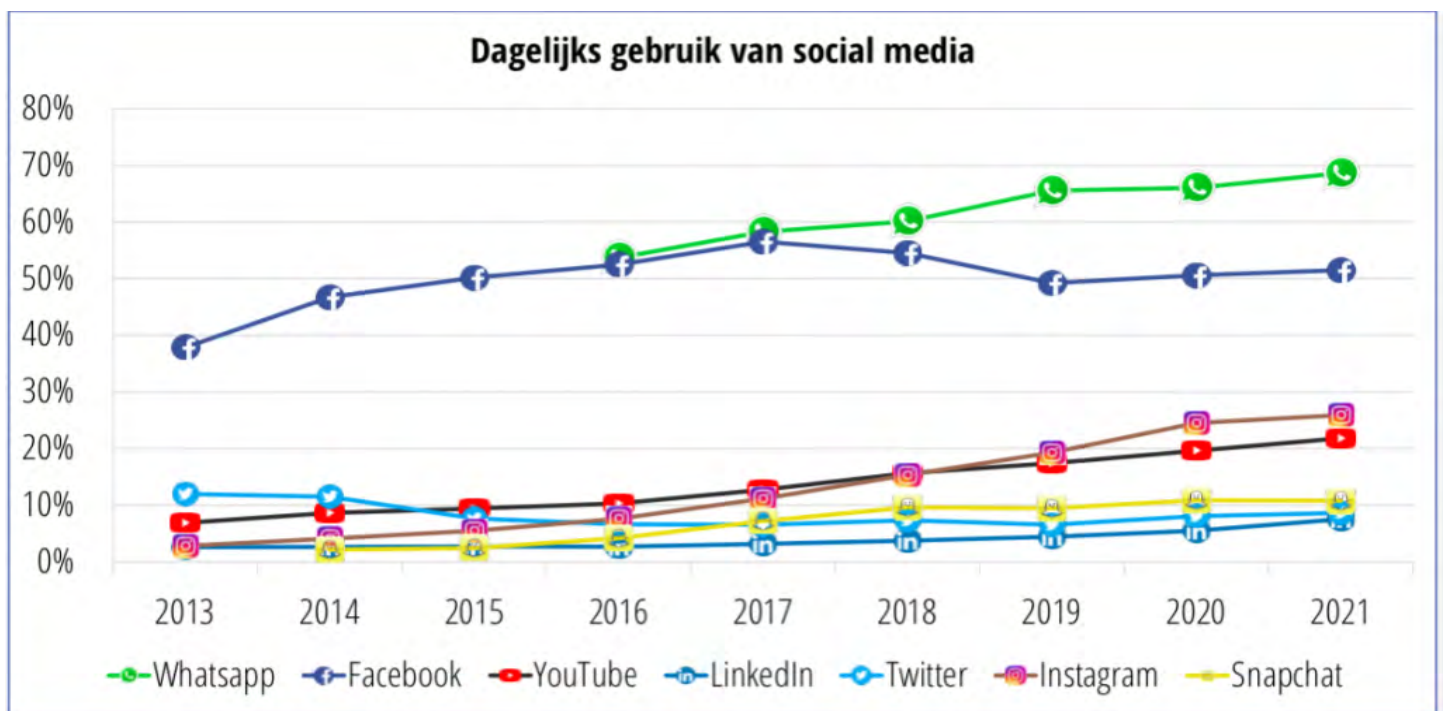
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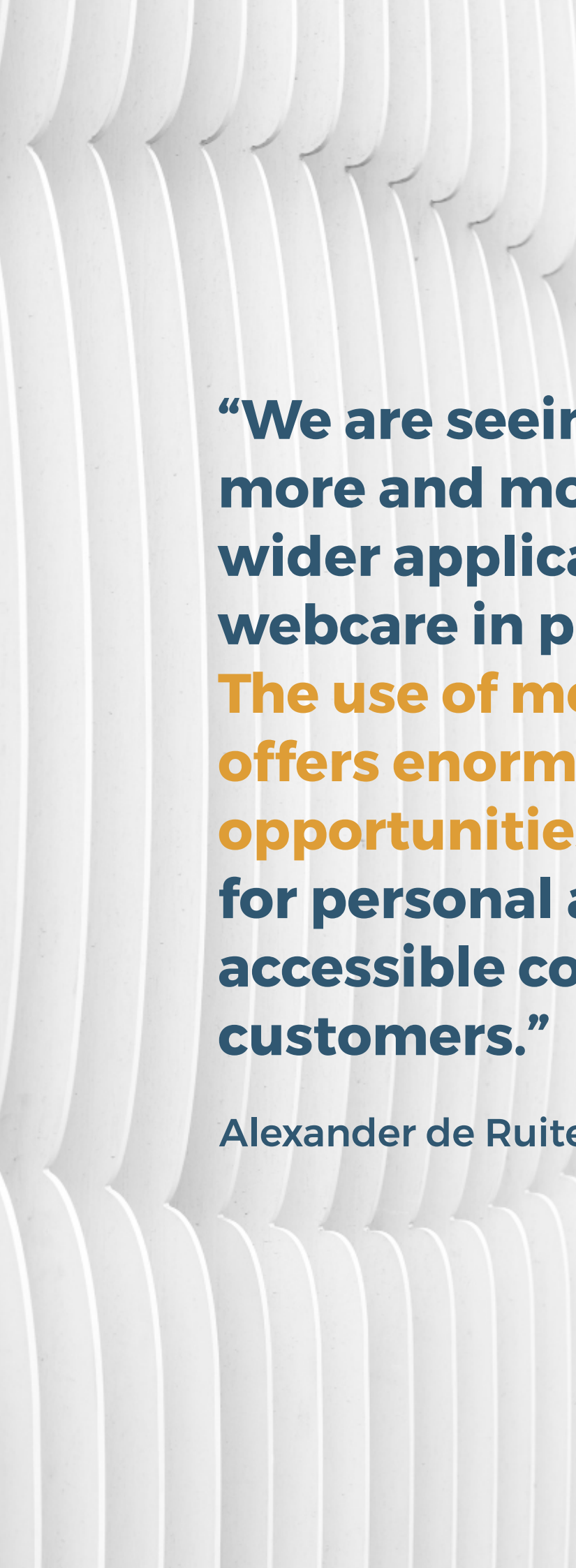


# 1. THE FUTURE OF MESSAGING CHANNELS FOR CUSTOMER CONTACT

Newcom research shows that in 2021 no fewer than 12.4 million people will use WhatsApp, of which 9.8 million people daily -- an increase of 5% in daily use compared to 2020. This makes WhatsApp the most-used communication platform in the Netherlands.



But it's not only the use of WhatsApp that is increasing. Organisations are also increasingly seeing a shift in customer contact from public channels to more closed channels. Channels such as Facebook Messenger and live chat are becoming increasingly important in this regard. These developments clearly show that messaging offers your organisation opportunities to provide direct and personal customer contact to customers. The large reach and ease of use are important reasons for why an organisation should be accessible via WhatsApp, Messenger and live chat. ■■■■■■



**“We are seeing more and more a wider application of webcare in practice. The use of messaging offers enormous opportunities for personal and accessible contact with customers.”**

Alexander de Ruiter, CEO at OBI4wan

## 2. THE ADDED VALUE OF WEBCARE VIA MESSAGING AND LIVE CHAT



Before you start introducing or expanding your customer service with messaging channels or live chat, it is important to consider what this will deliver for your organisation. Do you want to help customers faster? Be more accessible? Generate more leads and sales? WhatsApp, Messenger and live chat are ideally suited for fast and accessible service, 24/7 accessibility and the development of customer relationships. Make sure that you can actually offer added value for your customers through these channels. In other words, don't add channels to your strategy if you can't deliver on your service promises.

### “Think big, act small”

Start with small steps, but make sure you're future-proof and can fully develop your service offerings. For example, customers generally want a quick answer, and contact via messaging isn't limited to office hours. Also, it's important to be able to recognise the customer, regardless of the channel they choose for contact. A good CRM system in your webcare tool provides this overview. By storing the complete history with the customer, you can quickly see through which channel and on what subject contact was previously made. This way you can help the customer quickly via any channel, without having to request information twice. Take these factors into account, as they determine the success of webcare offerings via messaging.

Where previously telephone and email were often the preferred channel, WhatsApp, Messenger and live chat are gaining ground. In fact, [research from Zendesk](#) shows that consumers prefer live chat over other channels when offered on a website. Offering messaging channels and live chat can directly lead to a decrease in contact via expensive channels, such as by telephone. Maike Kanen of Dorel Juvenile tells us:

*“Live chat has resulted in a reduction in contact. We get far fewer emails, but don't necessarily get more chats in return. With live chat we can help customers much better and more directly. It is direct, fast, there are fewer misunderstandings and questions and answers are given at the customer's pace.”*



The convenience, short waiting times and the mobile aspect are attractive features for live chat. Good service starts with listening to the customer, taking the sting out of a negative conversation and then finding a solution, together. Messaging channels are ideal for good service, because any issue or misunderstanding can be tackled immediately. Due to the direct nature of the channel, you are able to speak to the customer in the emotion of the moment so you can work from there towards a solution. Something that is a lot more challenging with a channel like e-mail, which generally has a much longer turnaround time and is less personal. If you're still not fully able to figure out what the problem or issue may be, then it is advisable to pick up the phone and give the customer a call.

### Do's & Dont's

There are countless pieces of advice that apply to the use of messaging and chat channels for customer contact. The most important one is to use common sense and avoid spam. WhatsApp has a clear opt-in and is therefore not suitable for proactively approaching a (potential) customer. Contact with the customer is only possible after the person sends you a message first.

In addition, think carefully about the desired tone of voice. This depends on your organisation or industry, but generally speaking, contact via messaging and chat is as if it were between two friends. Mirror your conversation partner, but be aware of applicable standards of conduct and any internal agreements or regulations.

Also, start measuring and analysing customer contact through these channels from day one. Reporting is necessary because it gives you insight into whether the agreed KPIs are being achieved. In addition, you gain direct insight into the effectiveness of the communications and you can map out in real-time how service via messaging and live chat is being experienced by your customers. The insights below are in any case valuable to report on:

- Number of leads through these channels.
- Number of questions answered or complaints handled.
- Open, Completed, and Closed Cases.
- Response speed per employee.
- Positive/negative feedback.
- Sentiment surrounding your product or service.
- Ratio of volume per channel.
- New ideas for product development.
- Competitors' Online Activity.
- Activity within or outside of service level.



## Collect customer feedback and identify areas for improvement for your organisation

Messaging and live chat have developed into full-fledged customer contact channels in recent years. Due to the increasing importance of these channels, there is also a growing desire to know how customers experience contact through these channels.

By using a tool, such as [OBI Engage](#), the collection of customer feedback and the measurement of customer satisfaction via messaging and live chat are scalable and automated. Reports discussed earlier can be expanded in this way with a metric such as NPS (Net Promoter Score). In addition to insight into volume, sentiment, webcare activity and reaction speed, you also gain insight into the quality of the webcare service.

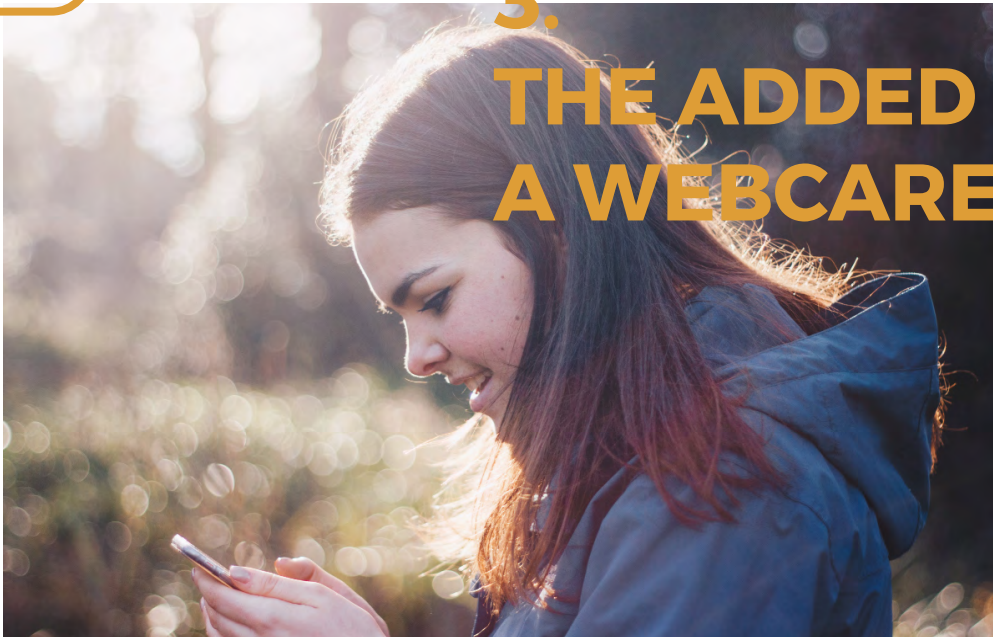
By collecting the requested customer feedback, you can immediately gain insight into (structural) points for improvement for your organisation. It makes sense to compare different contact channels, such as telephone, email, social media and live chat, in order to get one integrated customer view. ■■■■■■





### 3.

## THE ADDED VALUE OF A WEBCARE POLICY



A [webcare policy](#) has added value when you make agreements about the explicit way of communicating via webcare. This applies to public channels, but certainly also to messaging and live chat. After all, different answers to the same question creates confusion.

*“Service via messaging and live chat also often requires a different tone-of-voice and approach. In practice, we see that other skills are required for this as well. Fortunately, we often see that people who provide service over the telephone also have the right skills to handle channels such as messaging and live chat”, according to **Levi Witbaard, Marketing Director at OBI4wan***

With a good policy you determine when, where and whether to respond to questions. It describes the desired way of responding, tone of voice and action for every diverse situation, so that the team is not faced with any unpleasant surprises. Consider how you communicate during:

- crisis situations;
- regular questions;
- complaints;
- factual inaccuracies;
- compliments.

### Determine what you base agreements on

When you use webcare via messaging and live chat, it is important to agree on a number of things. How does your team respond to questions, complaints and compliments? In a sense, the industry in which you work also determines what will be included in your policy, because target groups vary. This includes determining a service level or defining the sentiment of a conversation.

Agreements that you make with the team or various departments can be quite diverse in terms of subject matter. It is important that you keep the agreements concise, but still with a clear overview.

Once you've made agreements within your team, it is good to check how they work in practice. You can check in various ways whether the agreements made are being complied with. By taking three conversations from each employee on a random basis, you can assess your employees on the 'hard' skills, such as knowledge and objectives. The 'soft' skills, such as analytical skills, tone of voice and humour can also be assessed. ■■■■■■





# 4.

## Growing volumes? Chatbots can help!



We've mentioned it before: by adding messaging channels and live chat to your customer service, you lower the threshold for (potential) customers to contact your organisation. This can result in increasing volumes. Guarantee the fast response time within these channels by adding **chatbots** to the process and thus automatically handling some of the (frequently asked) questions.

Every organisation has to deal with frequently asked questions. This includes questions about opening hours, the delivery of a package or questions about products and services. For these types of questions, a customer wants a correct answer as quickly as possible, whereby personal contact is not necessarily necessary. This is where chatbots come in. A chatbot is able to provide these answers quickly and accurately. The use of chatbots offers a number of attractive advantages:

- Chatbots increase customer satisfaction; after all, the customer is served well, and quickly.
- Chatbots make the work of service agents more fun, because they no longer have to answer mundane questions, so they have more time for the more complex cases.
- Chatbots ensure that your customer service remains scalable in the future, by increasing efficiency within existing processes, which saves time and costs.

Chatbots come in many shapes and sizes. We see chatbots that come onto the front screen and enter into conversations with the customer, starting conversations independently. But there are also successful applications in which chatbots optimise processes behind the scenes. Think of bots that do preparatory work for service agents or bots that lend a hand in completing or tagging messages. This lowers the overall workload of customer service and increases efficiency, saving organisations costs, and time. So this time can then be used for helping customers with the more complex questions.

The use of chatbots is relevant for any organisation with a focus on improving the online customer experience. Within both B2C and B2B organisations, bots are increasingly influencing customer service, marketing, sales and internal communication. ■■■■■■




## 5. OBI4WAN SUPPORTS THE USE OF MESSAGING



Whether it concerns software solutions for efficient webcare, reporting on KPIs, determining a policy for webcare or the use of chatbots: OBI4wan is the partner for you! Our mission is to bring your organisation into true contact with your customers. With our offer, we can make your organisation more efficient and future-proof in digital customer contact.

Our powerful all-in-one solution makes it possible to make your webcare scalable and set up optimally. From now on, you can use the [WhatsApp Business Solution](#), and integrate our own live chat application onto your website and, with our advanced webcare tooling, be able to respond directly and clearly to messages that come in. Ready for the next step? Then let chatbots do the work for you -- for more efficiency and cost reduction. They can easily be integrated into the online environment in which your service agents are already working.

Do you have any questions about the optimal use of webcare after having read this white paper? Then we would be happy to help. Feel free to contact us at (0) 85 210 50 60 or [info@obi4wan.com](mailto:info@obi4wan.com). You can of course also send us a WhatsApp via 06 - 30 58 42 28! 

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