**BotsCrew**

# WhatsApp Cloud API Guide

Power your messaging with the new
API for businesses of all sizes

**BotsCrew**

# Contents

# Welcome to WhatsApp Cloud API

## Now, with a few-click reach

WhatsApp is used by businesses globally as a fast, convenient and reliable way to communicate with their customers. Up until recently, the advanced features of WhatsApp were available only via On-Premises API, accessing which was a matter of months and rounds of approval.

Today, WhatsApp API is open for businesses of all sizes, meaning that any small local shop or a larger regional business can sign up directly. The new WhatsApp Cloud Business API provides the whole range of automation potential, and what's even better, eliminates the costly server expenses and gives instant access to new features.

*As WhatsApp explains the main Cloud API benefit,*

> *"no more waiting on hold, getting stuck on a broken website, or sending an email into a black box wondering if it will ever be read"*

In this guide, we dive into the WhatsApp Businesses messages, the difference in features of the WhatsApp Business App and WhatsApp Platform, and steps to set up API for your business.

# WhatsApp Business App vs WhatsApp API

WhatsApp provides two main solutions for businesses: WhatsApp Business App and WhatsApp Business Platform. Both of them introduce features to provide better customer support and communication. The key difference between them is in the scale and complexity of automation.

> ⓘ WhatsApp recommends Business App for small businesses and a Business Platform for mid & large businesses.

The WhatsApp Business API allows businesses to communicate with their customers at scale. You can integrate numerous tools and backend systems, such as CRM, which will give a vast range of personalization options. With the API, you can set the perfect balance between automation and human-to-human communication.

Using the API, businesses can also build more advanced systems that connect thousands of users with bots. A chatbot can be your digital assistant to answer questions about the business, help customers choose while recommending products, remind them about events and lots of other user experience boosters. Both support agents & customers will benefit from faster responses and fewer chat wait times.

# Do you need an API if you run a small business? Check out the key differences between the two options:

## WhatsApp Business App

For small businesses who personally manage conversations with customers

**Business profile**

- Business categories
- Business hours
- Business address
- A link to your website
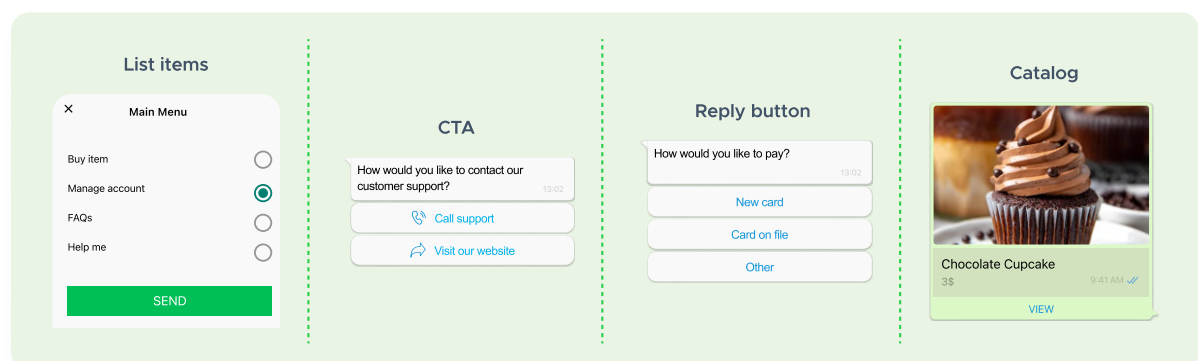
**Catalog with products**

**Messaging features**

- Labels to mark conversations
- Greeting message/away message
- Quick replies
- Advertising on Facebook by creating ads that lead to WhatsApp
- Promotion opportunities
- Adding WhatsApp to your business page or profile on Facebook or Instagram
- Sharing your WhatsApp Business messaging link

## WhatsApp Business Platform

For medium to large businesses communicating with customers at scale

**All features of WhatsApp Business App, plus automation opportunities for high volume inbound messages**

- **Triggered messages:** order confirmations, reminders, shipment updates
- **Automated replies:** e.g. appointment availability, FAQs, etc.
- **Integrations**: CRMs, marketing & customer support tools
- **Account assets:** multi-factor authentication or one-time passwords to verify accounts
- **Personalized promotions**: custom texts for upselling and cross-selling

### List items

Main Menu

Buy item

Manage account

FAQs

Help me

SEND

### CTA

How would you like to contact our customer support?
13:02

Call support

Visit our website

### Reply button

How would you like to pay?
13:02

New card

Card on file

Other

### Catalog

Chocolate Cupcake
3$
9:41 AM

VIEW

## So, why choose a business app if the API is open to everyone?

WhatsApp Business App is the best choice if you value personal relationships with customers and most importantly – **you are able to fully cover them.** It is certainly worth of attention as its features are easy to set up, do not require additional programming, and involve developers.

An Indian company Omay Foods set up a WhatsApp Business Profile and added a WhatsApp button to its website, Facebook Page, and Instagram profile, making it easy for potential customers to ask questions and start conversations in just a few clicks. The team used WhatsApp Business features like catalog, business profile, and quick replies to help set expectations and turn questions into purchases.

## What were the results?

From when the company launched WhatsApp, in March 2020, to April 2021, it saw:

- 5X increase in customer inquiries via WhatsApp compared to the previous email contact channel
- 3X increase in repeat customers via WhatsApp in April 2021 compared to March 2020
- 5X increase in sales for retail channels in April 2021 compared to March 2020
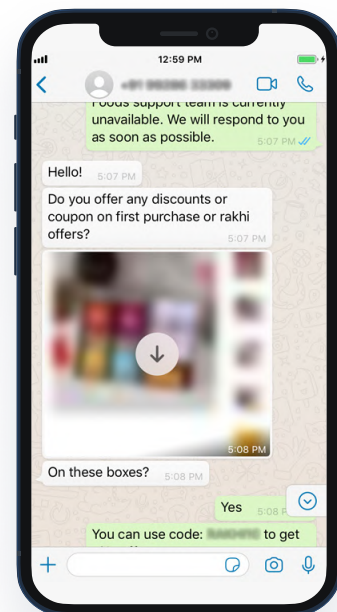


## Yet, all conversations were covered by humans.

For businesses running on a larger scale, personal communication can cost a fortune. To help support agents focus on complex questions, spend less time with FAQs and remove the work routine, WhatsApp offers an API for the time-saving automation. Powered by integrations, a chatbot will answer thousands of frequently asked questions, guide customers through products or services, re-engage users with abandoned carts, cross-sell, upsell, inform, and so on.

Do you really need a WhatsApp Platform? Make a data-driven decision knowing the customer support savings with a Chatbot ROI calculator.

[Calculate profit with ROI calculator]

Now, let's take a closer look at WhatsApp Business Platform.

# Meet the WhatsApp Business Platform

Businesses looking to use the API have two hosting options: On-Premises and Cloud API. The new Cloud API has also the option for Business Solution Providers, which is slightly different – WhatsApp Business API. Overall, it has the same features with a few differences.

In general, WhatsApp recommends that the majority of businesses use the Cloud API due to ease of implementation and maintenance.

# The New Cloud-Based API Features

- **Businesses can sign up directly.** With a few simple steps, any business can set up the API and start sending automated messages as soon as they meet WhatsApp's Commerce Policy. Such include limitations on certain business categories. Make sure to check them before setting up an account.

- **Meta hosts the API, and pays for the hosting costs.** Businesses only pay per message sent or conversation, while previously, all setup & maintenance costs were on them.

- **Developers no longer need to do setup, maintenance, or scaling work**. There are minimal code changes required to adapt to longer-term API changes.

- **API software upgrades are performed by Meta** and new features and security updates are available automatically on the Cloud API.

- **New API Protocol:** Graph API (contrary to the previous REST API).

- **Meta manages the CA certificates.** For a Webhook CA certificate, your Webhooks server needs to support HTTPS and have a valid CA-chained TLS/SSL certificate installed. Self-signed certificates are not supported.

- **Multiple phone numbers can be registered on Cloud API.** Previously, API was single-tenant, which means a single phone number per deployment was allowed.

- **Higher Message Throughput (Per Second):** Up to 80 messages per second of combined sending and receiving (inclusive of text and media messages) between one business number and many consumer numbers. Meta plans to expand these numbers to 250 messages per second.
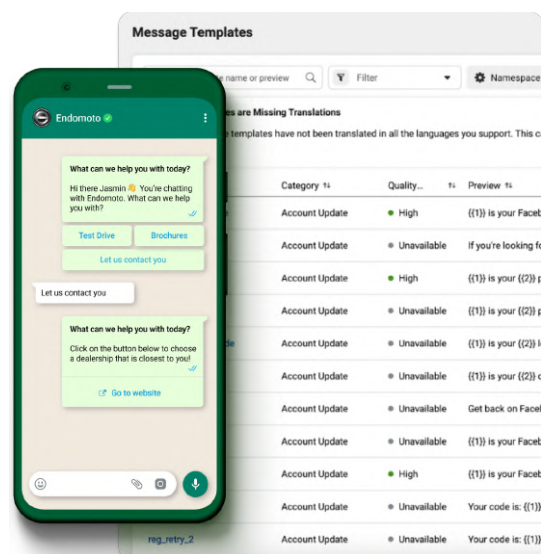
> The New WhatsApp Business Platform makes it cheaper, faster, and easier to get started with automation. With 80 messages per second, any business can manage large scales of conversations.

Currently, the WhatsApp Business Platform is not open for developers who want direct access to the Cloud API to build on behalf of a client's business. If you qualify as this type of developer, fill out this form and receive a notification when the platform becomes available for this type of integration.

## Messaging Pricing

As Cloud API is free, the only cost for usage comes with messages. Businesses are charged per conversation, which includes all messages delivered in a 24-hour session.

There are two conversation scenarios that will come in charge:

**Initiated by user:** any kind of customer query sent to your business. The conversation starts once a business replies to it and closes in a day. Businesses pay once for a 24-hour chat, and all the messages sent within this time frame will not come with additional charges.

**Initiated by business:** such are considered as message templates sent to users (e.g. post-purchase notifications) or any regular message sent outside the 24-hour support window. The session in this case begins once the message is delivered, regardless of whether the customer replied.
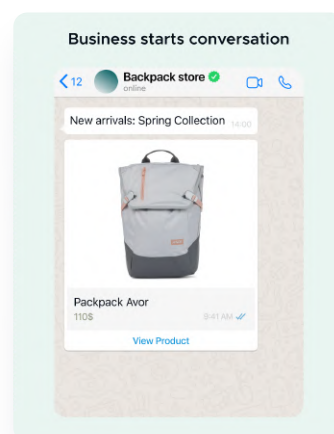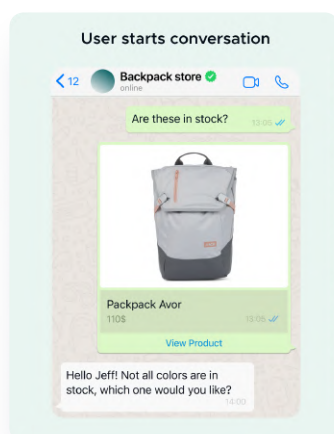
The first 1,000 conversations each month are free. If you want to send more than 1,000 conversations, you need to add a credit card to your account and pay for them.

To set up a payment method, go to **App Dashboard > WhatsApp > Configuration**. Under **Phone numbers**, click **Manage phone numbers**. This leads you to your Business Manager account, where you can click Add Payment Method to add your credit card.

Credit card billing via Visa or Mastercard is the only available payment method. There are six currencies available for payment: USD, AUD, EUR, GBP, IDR, INR. Currently, payment by credit card is available if you are located in certain countries.

## Getting started with WhatsApp Cloud API

To use a WhatsApp Cloud API, make sure to set up developer assets first. They include:

### 1. Business Manager
You can use an existing, or set up a new one. Save the Business Manager ID.

### 2. WhatsApp Business Account (WABA)
It must be connected to the Business Manager that you use.  If you haven't connected it yet, check out these instructions from Facebook.

### 3. Developer Account & Meta App
If you don't have an app, you need to create one with the "Business" type. Here's a guide on how to do it.  Make sure you set the developer account, and enable a two-factor authentication for your account. Remember to add a display name and a contact email to your app.

### 4. Business Phone Number
You'll need a phone number to send messages. Make sure to use unique phone number as only one phone number per WhatsApp account is permitted.
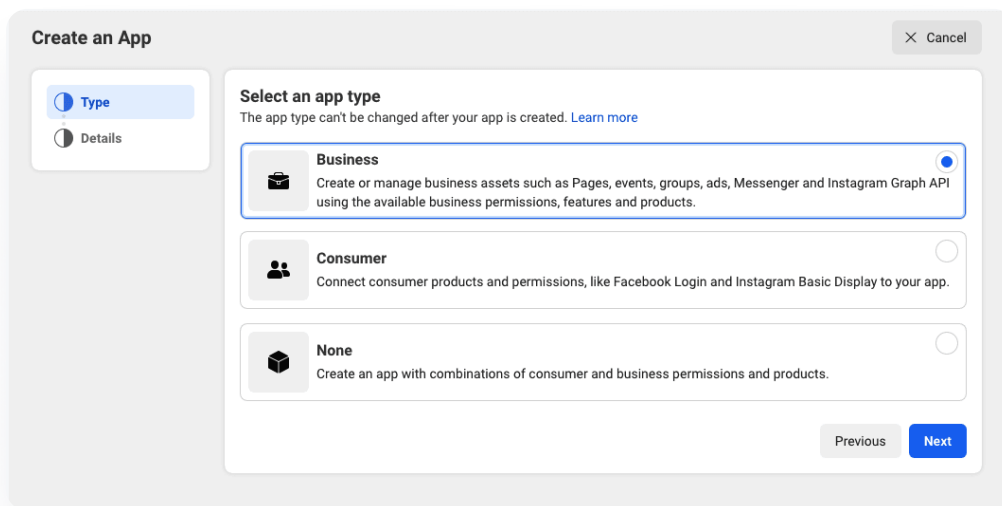
# How to Set up Cloud API

## Create a WhatsApp App or choose the existing one

To create a business account, visit the link to set it up.
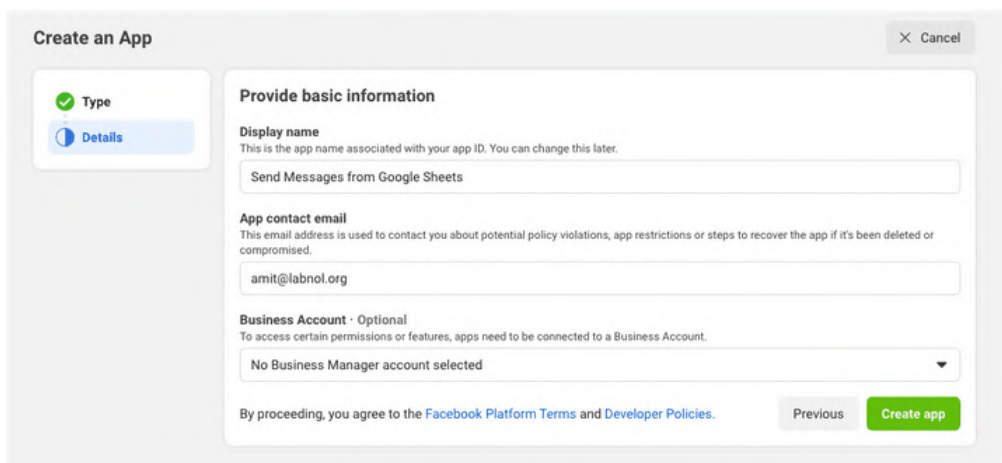
Then, navigate to developers.facebook.com and "Create App".



Select "Business Type" as the app type and proceed.

Provide a name for your app (Avoid using trademarked names such as "WhatsApp" or "Facebook".

Once the app has been created, click the WhatsApp button on the next screen to add WhatsApp sending capabilities to your app.

On the next screen, you will be required to link your WhatsApp app to your Meta business account. You will also have the option to create a new business account if you don't have one yet.
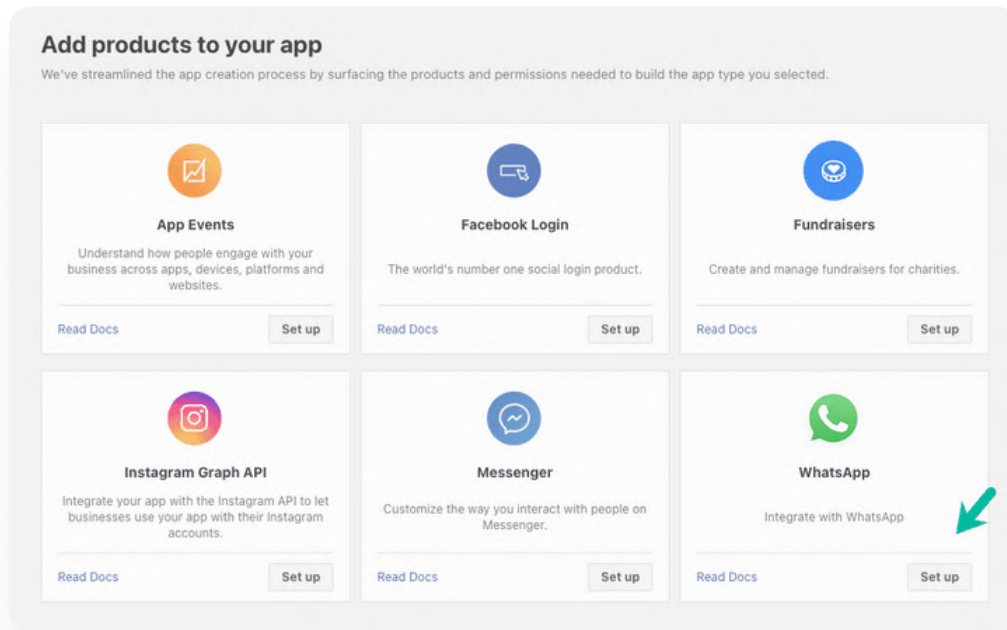
## Add Recipient's Phone Number

Facebook will provide you with a test WhatsApp phone number. For recipients, you'll have the option to add a maximum of 5 phone numbers during the development phase without having to make any payment.

Your WhatsApp app will provide you with a temporary access token that will be valid for 24 hours.

Next, click the Recipient Phone Number dropdown to add up to 5 different WhatsApp phone numbers to your app. You'll receive a verification code on the added numbers and you'll be able to send WhatsApp messages to only numbers that have been verified with the code.



Send a test message to check if everything works. You should receive a WhatsApp message to the number you entered.

# Create WhatsApp Message Template

Switch to the template manager and create a new WhatsApp message template.

There are multiple categories available for getting started. Choose the one you need, give it a name and choose a language.



# Message options

First, you'll need to choose the *"Header"* of the message. It will be sent along with the text as an attachment. You may skip this step if you're adding just a text message. WhatsApp allows you to add three options of media: document, image or video.
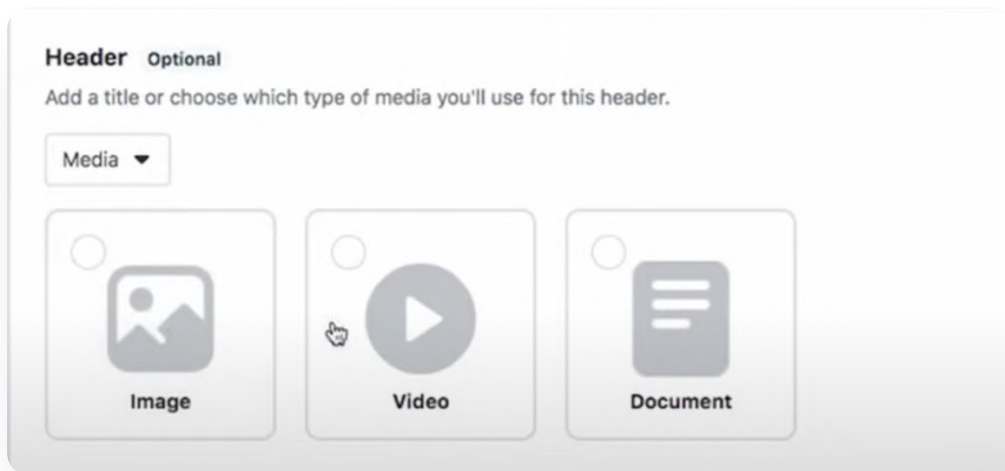
Note that any template needs to go through verification before you will be able to send it to users. For the WhatsApp team to verify your message, you need to provide a sample of the media that you're going to use in a send-out. Click the button "Add sample" and upload the image/video/document for a review.

Then, configure the main text of a message in the *"Body"* section. You can add custom variables like names and a few more from the list.

*"Footer"* will show a small line of text below the message.

You can also add a CTA in the *"Buttons"* section. WhatsApp allows you to insert up to 2 buttons per message.

After a while, your template may be approved or rejected. Once approved, you are ready to send the message using the Cloud API.

**STEP 4:**

## Configure a Webhook

To get alerted when you receive a message or when a message's status has changed, you need to set up a Webhooks endpoint for your app.

To get started, first you need to create the endpoint. You can create a custom Webhook URL running on a web server, or use services that help you set up an endpoint, such as Glitch.

Once your endpoint is ready, go to your App Dashboard.

In your App Dashboard, find the WhatsApp product and click Configuration. Then, find the webhooks section and click Configure a webhook. After the click, a dialog appears on your screen and asks you for two items:

**Callback URL:** this is the URL Meta will be sending the events to.

**Verify Token:** this string is set up by you, when you create your webhook endpoint.

After adding the information, click Verify and Save.

Back in the App Dashboard, click WhatsApp > Configuration in the left-side panel. Under Webhooks, click Manage. A dialog box will open with all the objects you can get notified about. To receive messages from your users, click Subscribe for messages.

And you are ready to send automated messages!

## Power up the messaging

The one major limitation that comes with Cloud WhatsApp API is that **it doesn't come with an AI-powered messaging platform** to leverage the potential of WhatsApp Business messaging.

This means that to connect CRM or to develop a smart chatbot that will talk to users, you either need to integrate the cloud APIs with your own systems for automated messaging or go through BSPs to integrate the Cloud APIs.

Here are a few examples of what WhatsApp communication can look like **with a conversational AI platform.**

Let's say the visitor wants to learn the status of the order, and starts the chat with a line "order status". You can develop a conversational flow so that a chatbot will answer the question on spot instead of a customer agent. How does that work? With integrations, chatbot can send requests for account data once the user provides essential details to process the query. Result: customer receives the information in seconds. No human interaction is involved in this communication.

In this example, chatbot also offers to send notifications when the order status changes. And a quick reminder – it's still happening inside the WhatsApp chat!
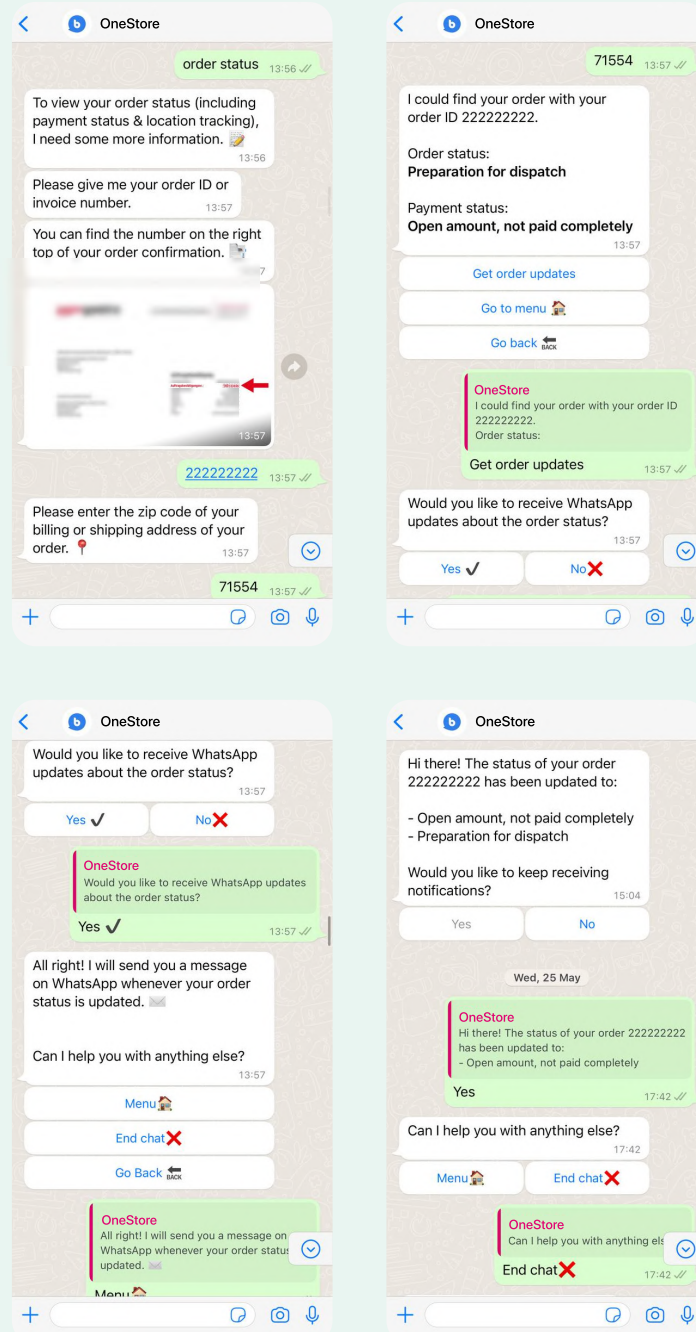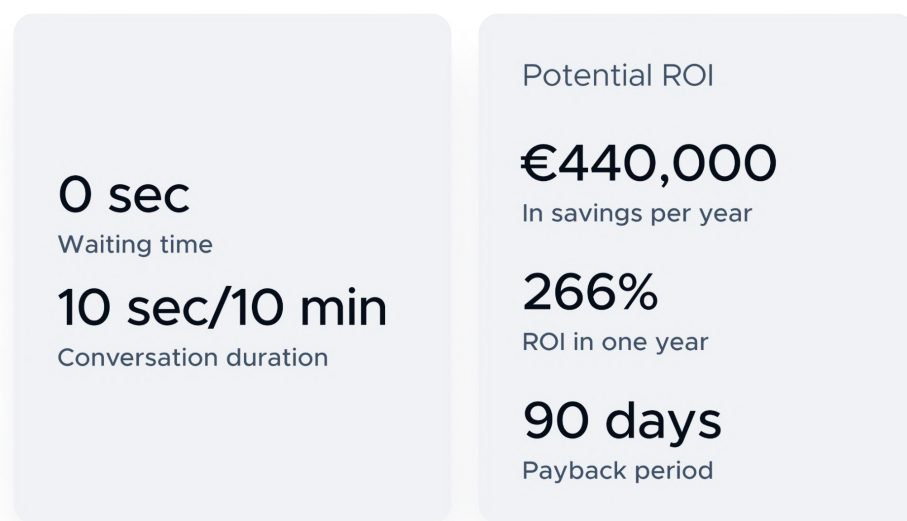
Can the user make an order via WhatsApp chat? Sure thing. For example, the visitor enters the chat and sees the button-based options for quick choice. One of them is "order placement". How can automation help? A chatbot can check the stock, guide the user through the buying journey, use the account data to fill in the missing fields and help complete the cart in easy steps.
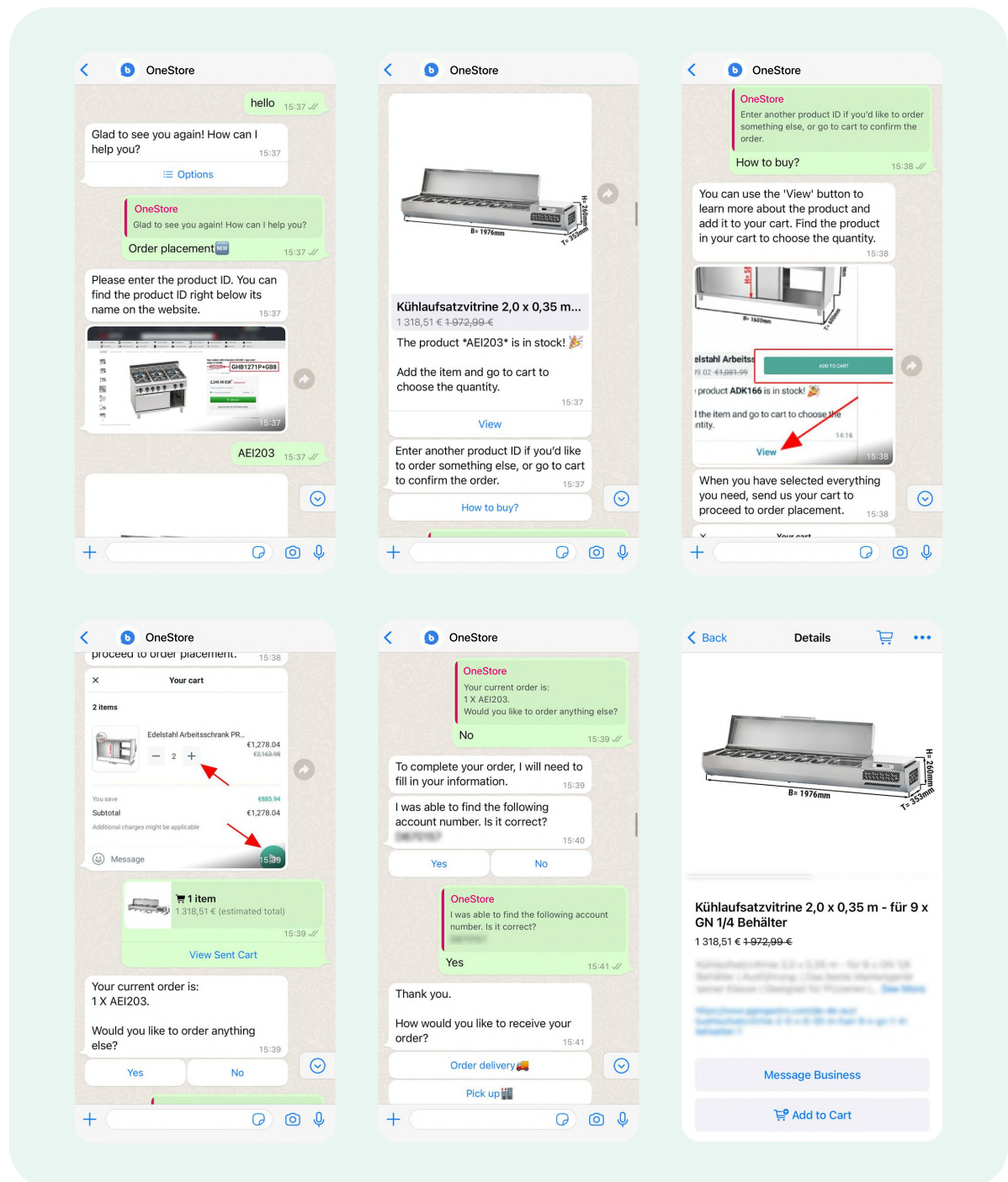
These two examples were actually taken from a real-world example. One of our eCommerce clients implemented a WhatsApp chatbot. The team was facing the call support resolution time from 4 to 10 minutes, had support in 4 languages, and tracked records in CRM from WhatsApp, Web, FB Messenger platforms manually. A chatbot helped them deal with these challenges that were seriously affecting the customer satisfaction.

The results were the following:

**0 sec**
Waiting time

**10 sec/10 min**
Conversation duration

Potential ROI

**€440,000**
In savings per year

**266%**
ROI in one year

**90 days**
Payback period

With **BotsCrew**, you can build an AI-powered chatbot that will go beyond the one-time messages and will interact with your users.

# With a [flexible chatbot platform](#), you can:
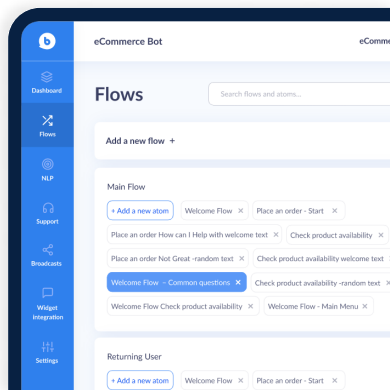


- Easily **integrate any software** you use: SalesForce, Zendesk, Shopify, and even your custom solutions;
- Build one chatbot and **connect multiple channels** like WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook Messenger, etc. in a single inbox;
- **Create flows to send on-demand messages** with shipping updates, payment notifications, and personalized promotions at scale;
- Automate responses and **provide 24/7 sales & support**;
- **Train your bot** to reach conversational AI excellence.

> *"BotsCrew was an incredible partner from inception to launch. The team was proactive, well-organized, and flexible. It's clear that **they are deeply committed to achieving successful outcomes for their customers and go the extra mile to exceed expectations.** We're delighted to have found such a dedicated partner and would recommend them to anyone looking for voice assistant experts."*
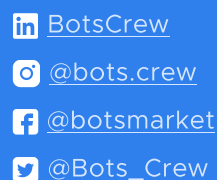
Jacklyn Trejo
Product Manager, Samsung NEXT

SAMSUNG
NEXT

# Power-up the WhatsApp messaging today

Drop us a line with your chatbot idea. Let us do the rest for you.
[christina.vergelets@botscrew.com](mailto:christina.vergelets@botscrew.com)

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**BotsCrew**

548 Market St #39969, San Francisco, California 94104, USA,
+1(415) 941-0077

BotsCrew
@bots.crew
@botsmarket
@Bots_Crew

botscrew.com