

# How to connect with your customers through social messaging

**Author** : Nick Fletcher

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Last month, Instagram announced that [it will now start counting video views](#).

By making it easier for marketers to measure who's watched their clips, Instagram has shown how easily **brands** can connect with their customers and measure their response.

With [over half of online sales now being made through mobile devices](#), according to the IMRG Capgemini Quarterly Benchmarking report, **brands** will need to use this information to their advantage in order to get ahead.

For **brands** which are already seeing success across **social** networks, it's likely that messaging apps will be incorporated into their strategies as a means for supporting and engaging with customers with targeted products and offers more and more.

With so many **social** media platforms to choose from, **brands** can easily pick the most relevant option to match their needs and, more importantly, the needs of their customers.

However, some platforms such as Telegram, have made a point of avoiding **advertising** to generate revenue, and in the face of greater use of ad-blocking technology online, **social** channels offer an interesting option to explore.

**Social** messaging forms part of the daily life of many Brits, in fact [a recent study of 2,000 Brits found half would prefer to speak with friends and family virtually rather than seeing them face to face](#), and YouGov found that [61% of customers aged 18-30 would prefer to communicate with their bank through WhatsApp](#), so it's likely that most consumers who use **social** platforms in their everyday life would want to speak to **brands** using the same **social** platforms which they know, like and trust.

## Pizza to pounds

When executed correctly, **brands** which use **social** messaging apps to build personal and targeted relationships with customers have seen massive success. Earlier this year, **Domino's** Pizza revealed that over [30 per cent of online orders now come through mobile devices](#).

By taking advantage of this knowledge, the company was able to transform data into sales through a range of creative **social** campaigns. This year, **Domino's** launched its own Snapchat channel and promoted the debut with the [‘Dough to Door’ campaign](#), a Snapchat Story where random letters appeared to form a unique discount code for online orders.

**Domino's** has previously engaged with fans on **social** media in its ‘Tweet to Eat’ campaign, allowing users to place an order by sending an emoji to the **@Dominos** Twitter feed and it was also the first **brand** to use Tinder as part of its Valentine's Day promotion in 2014.

## Supporting the customer

The next phase of this is undoubtedly using **social** messaging to provide customer support. If it's more convenient for the customer and likely to get a faster response, it's understandable that consumers will want to use it, especially if it's a platform they're already comfortable using.

Already, **Facebook** is testing “M,” a personal assistant in Messenger, as well as providing payment capabilities and customer service feedback via the messaging app and it is likely to expand this service to **WhatsApp** in 2016.

As **social** messaging apps continue to grow in popularity amongst consumers, marketers will use data in increasingly sophisticated ways to develop tailored content and target customers in the right time and place based on their online behaviour.

However, in order to do this, advertisers need the ability to automate and optimise **social advertising** campaigns in real-time. To help advertisers address this challenge, Rakuten **Marketing** has recently acquired Manifest Commerce, a product intelligence company with a unique solution for automating and optimising **social advertising**.

As more advertisers turn to **social** messaging and in-app ads to communicate with consumers, it is important that communications are relevant and targeted, otherwise consumers could quickly become irritated by too much **brand** content.

With consumers now able to interact with **brands** on a variety of different devices, and ignore them if they choose through use of ad blocking technology, it's now more important than ever that **brands** take time to really understand their customers and be more personal.

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