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Userlike Realizes 'Dream for B2C Communication' with WhatsApp Connect

The German live chat business software provider Userlike launches the Beta version of WhatsApp Connect, a new channel for instant B2C communication and customer support built on the world's most popular messaging application. This Beta marks the Cologne-based company's first step towards a multi-channel communication solution.

Cologne, January 11th 2016. During the weekend of the second week of January 2016, Userlike performed a major software update that included the new feature *WhatsApp Connect*. This feature makes it possible for consumers to add businesses on WhatsApp and reach out to them inside the instant messenger, with the service team answering via the Userlike Chat Panel. German businesses are invited to join the Beta phase, which will run the following weeks.

Timoor Taufig, Co-Founder and CEO of Userlike: "So far, our main channel has been live chat for websites. The website has been a good place to start, but we've got bigger plans. We're on a mission to break down the communication barriers between business and customer. *WhatsApp Connect* is an entirely new frontier on this quest. It's a dream come true for B2C communication."

When registered for Userlike's *WhatsApp Connect*, a company can offer a phone number to its customers to be added as a WhatsApp contact. When a customer then sends a WhatsApp message to the company, it arrives in the Userlike Chat Panel. From here, the company's support team can respond to it like any other Userlike chat.

WhatsApp Connect joins in on the rapidly unfolding e-commerce trend of WhatsApp support. In September 2015, WhatsApp counted a user base of 900 million worldwide, with over 35 million users in Germany alone. A number of prominent e-commerce companies have already started experimenting with this channel for support purposes. Examples in Germany are the cross-platform online store Zalando and the personal shopping service OUTFITTERY. Julia Bösch, founder and CEO of OUTFITTERY: "We want to offer our customers the best possible service. For a large part, that means having a presence on all relevant channels. With WhatsApp our service has become a lot more personal and it travels with our customers wherever they go."

The pioneering companies in WhatsApp support have however been forced to offer it using the web or phone application. WhatsApp was built for private communication between individuals, not support purposes, and this has prevented large scale deployments. Timoor Taufig: "WhatsApp hasn't been built for service purposes – it's like using Excel for Customer Relationship Management. It simply wasn't built for that purpose. Userlike is the first multi-channel solution to cover both website chat and WhatsApp, and its interface now allows companies to combine support on these channels efficiently and on a large scale."

Being a new channel, WhatsApp support's exact applications are largely unknown. Taufig: "The first-movers in WhatsApp support are currently using it for pre-sales. OUTFITTERY, for example, is using it to advise men on their clothing styles. But I imagine it'll also be a great channel for after-sales, follow-up questions, as a hook for marketing campaigns, or even for physical shop support. Imagine you're walking through IKEA and – instead of having to search for a yellow-blue employee – you can simply send your question to IKEA's WhatsApp team. We're excited to see the applications that our users will come up with."

David Voswinkel, co-founder and CTO of Userlike: "We expect other major platforms to open up for service purposes soon as well. Facebook, for example, has already announced this with its Businesses on Messenger. These are exciting times for B2C communication. The world is moving from fragmented conversations to long-term connections and we're thrilled to be part of that."

About Userlike

Userlike is live chat software that allows your users to connect to your support operators in the moment of greatest need - when they browse your product pages and have a question. Userlike drives customer satisfaction and raises conversion by enabling a faster and more personal way to connect with your customers.

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