

Transcript: WhatsApp for business 101

Welcome to another episode of the Digital Masterclass series, part of Glen Eira's digital Enablement Program. Today's topic is: WhatsApp for business 101. So, today we will be talking about WhatsApp and how it is used for business purposes.

For the agenda today we will go through: account creation, inputting graphics, creating a menu for your business using automation to respond to customers, talking also a bit about customer engagement (and how you can develop that network).

And finally: growing your customer base for growing your network.

So first of all, what is WhatsApp? Well it's a secure and simple reliable messaging tool that's available on your phone. It's compatible with Android, iPhone, Mac or Windows PC. Not only can you run this on your phone, but also your desktop.

So, a little bit about WhatsApp for business. It is essentially a simple tool for businesses to connect with your customers. You can use it to build a business profile, you can also input messaging tools, and you can use a landline or a fixed phone number to support all the contacts you have.

On the right we've got a graphic of a sample of what a business could look like. You've got the name, opening hours, the website, the industry (or specific area that it focuses on), brief description, and the business address.

Now, a little bit about the market for WhatsApp. Currently there are more than 2 billion users in 180 different countries, with daily active users of 1 billion.

India currently has the biggest share, with 200 million users, followed by Brazil, which is 120 million. Currently, 3 million businesses use WhatsApp. Another interesting fact is that WhatsApp Stories actually has 450 million users of the status. That is similar to what Snapchat is, but it has actually eclipsed Snapchat Stories.

Now, did you know that WhatsApp has the most monthly active users (in millions). On the top we've got WhatsApp, followed closely by Facebook Messenger. Then there's WeChat, QQ Mobile, Skype, Snapchat, Viber, Line and Telegram. As you can see, the most dominant ones are WhatsApp and Facebook messenger, both owned and operated by Facebook.

Now, let's go into a little bit about why should we use it for business. First of all, it's free. It's designed for the small to medium business owner in mind, so it takes into account your needs and all the things that you require to run and communicate your business to customers.

It's also the world's number one instant messaging app. You can support landline or a mobile number and there's also up to 256 contacts that you can store in your database. What's also great is that it functions on multiple languages, so you can capture more a diverse audience.

It encourages messaging and collecting. Because of COVID, there is click and collect option. Also, very similar, the same thing essentially, just message, collect, and support your local business using this function.

Finally, it's very easy to use for the business owner or the business manager, in that you can run all your business operations from your pocket. There are a few more reasons: it's essentially a low-cost

digital presence, which means it is a great alternative to third-party delivery apps such as Uber Eats, Deliveroo, which all charge quite a big proportion of commission, based on each transaction. Another low-cost element is that it doesn't require costly web development. All that time, effort, content creation, updating, and maintenance goes into building a website – and by the end of it, it also needs to fulfill its main objective. This is to get leads.

Another really good element is that there's no paid digital marketing. Google ads, Facebook ads, Instagram ads, LinkedIn and Twitter all require a significant amount of budget to actually collect leads and get results from that marketing – essentially this requires consistency, time and dedication, to really crafting a digital marketing campaign, which can be costly. And finally, there is no ongoing digital maintenance cost, so there's nothing that you need to do to update, or upgrade, or even pay for any sort of similar maintenance in that area, as you would for a website or any other social medias.

Now: let's jump into it.

Step one: we're going to go into the app store. This is the Apple App Store on the right here. For Android, it would be on the Android app store (on Google Play) so essentially it's available on both. Type in “WhatsApp for business” and once you see the green icon with the big B in the in the middle, click download.

So, I've already downloaded this, so that's why mine says “open”. If it's your first time downloading it, it will say download. Once you've downloaded WhatsApp for business you want to go and create your profile. That would go under business profile. Here, you would put in your name on the top there is also a function to add in a graphic that summarizes what your business does. In this case it's Sandra's Cakes and there's a cake. There's an image of a cake over here, and we can see the business account, so it clearly states that it's a business account and you are available online. So, you are online at this present moment. Over here we have a short description, like a blurb of what you do, so in this case it's freshly baked breads, cakes, pastries, desserts, and custom cakes for all occasions. Over here you would enter your address; here you would enter your industry, or what your business does. You also have the option to enter your business hours Below, as well as input a website. Now, if you don't have a website, you can always come back to this later and fill it in once you've actually got your website up and running.

Now, number three: we're going to list our products and services. Under catalog, over here, you would click into it and it brings you over to a page where customers can browse what your product or service is. In this case you have the option to input a graphic. Also, give a short brief summary of what the product or service is. Include what goes into it and you've got the price over there, so you can rinse and repeat this this method and create your menu based on what your business offers. After this step, after we've created a menu, we want to use automation. This is actually a really simple and easy way to reply to your customers. Under the messaging tools you would have: “away message”, “greeting message” and “quick replies” so essentially your away message is what you would have when you are not available, but you would like to still connect with the customer, and take their order. By doing this you can choose and select what your away message is. It can be something like “sorry we're not available at the moment but we are open tomorrow”, “thanks for contacting us, we will get your order shortly”.

The second one is a greeting message, so this is something you can customise based on what your business is like. You can say something like “hi, welcome to my business, feel free to browse and have a look at the services or products on offer”.

Finally, you've got the quick replies. Essentially this is something that's already been crafted. You can create this based on your preference and also based on what your business does. You can have a response ready to go, especially when you come across very common or similar questions. It could be something like: can I have a look at your menu. Rather than typing your whole menu out you can send them a quick message that shows the menu straight away, and then they can start browsing. Or, it could be “could you send us some a video or show us a video of what your latest cake is?” And then you can have that video ready to go and send that to the customer.

Finally, after we've downloaded the app, set up the business profile, set up a menu, and also your response, we need to start raising awareness about WhatsApp. There are a few things that we can get started to raise awareness about this new channel that you've got for your business. Now: here are three tips that I would recommend. First, create a QR code, or a visual maybe, a decal poster or banner showing that you've got this channel available, and ready for customers to engage with. Second, I would also link to it if you've got a website or any social media presence, to really generate more following. Third, I would give some sort of offer to the customer, essentially like an asset incentive, to get people coming towards this channel, and start to get momentum and really start to use this. It could be so something like “use WhatsApp to connect with us and get five percent off your next order”. Essentially, driving that traffic towards you and building that momentum for your customer base and network. Now, here we go through the steps on how to create a QR code.

Once you are in WhatsApp for business, you want to go to your settings. WhatsApp automatically generates the QR code for you, so you don't have to go out and actually manually do this. It's automatically done for you already. Once you go into settings, you want to tap the QR code on the right top, right here, and you'll go to this page. WhatsApp will bring you to this QR code page where you can share or print out this this QR code image. If you click share, here are your options. You could share it to AirDrop, you could email it, you could print it if you have a printer over there and craft a physical copy if that suits your needs.

In terms of what a QR code looks like in action, this is a quick sample of a menu and ordering app. Here you've got “scan the QR code”. Order the food and pay for the counter. This is becoming really common these days with a lot of hospitality businesses that need to practice social distancing and keep COVID-safe by using masks, hand sanitiser and everything. It's essentially a new and safe way to order your food.

Thank you very much for listening to my presentation. I hope this has been helpful to you and delivers value to your business. Thank you and have a good day.