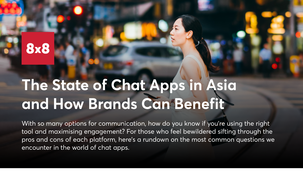


The State of Chat Apps in Asia and How Brands Can Benefit

With so many options for communication, how do you know if you're using the right tool and maximising engagement? For those who feel bewildered sifting through the pros and cons of each platform, here's a rundown on the most common questions we encounter in the world of chat apps.

Who uses chat apps?

Everyone. In fact, many have dubbed Asia the OTT (over-the-top) messaging market of the world.

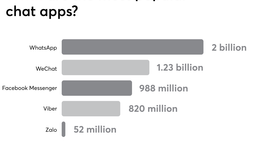
Did you know?

- East Asia and Southeast Asia are **#1 and #2 social markets worldwide** with 1 billion cumulative users
- The social media landscape is **dominated by messaging apps**
- Consumers in Asia spend more than **2 hours daily on messaging apps**
- APAC consumers use as many as **5 different chat apps every month**
- In six Asian countries, two of the top three social apps **are messaging-first platforms**
- Social media engagement in Asia has **increased by 61%** since COVID-19

Source: Google, We Are Social, Comscore, Kantar Intelligence

Messaging apps top the chart as users' favourite social media platform

What are the most popular chat apps?



*monthly active users

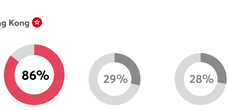
Sources: Statista, MPrime, We Are Social, Zalo.

Where are chat apps used in Southeast Asia?

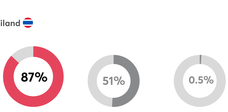
In Asia, chat apps are deeply ingrained in the social landscape and they're used for so much more than just chatting. Chat apps have become part of our everyday life for messaging, payments, gaming and more!

Singapore

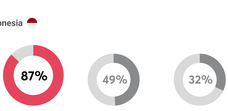
Hong Kong



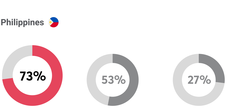
Thailand



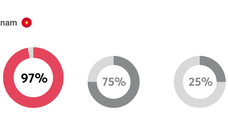
Indonesia



The Philippines



Vietnam



When did chat apps become so popular?

Instant messaging and SMS arose in the mid-1990's, but with the advent of Wi-Fi and high speed networks, mobile chat apps took centre stage in 2008 with the launch of Facebook Chat, followed by WhatsApp in 2009.

Since then, chat apps quickly became a key mode of global communication because ...

- It's easy to send media including photos, videos and voice recordings
- They're a convenient way to message groups of multiple people at once
- They offer privacy by allowing personal phone numbers to stay hidden
- They keep communication costs low compared to other channels

6 of the world's most used apps globally are primarily used for messaging

And all the top apps have some sort of messaging functionality

Source: Forbes

Why are chat apps important for brands?

Collaboration and communication are at the heart of any successful business.

But, as the popularity of chat apps continues to grow, the key to success is knowing how your audience uses them. When it comes to chat apps, user-brand engagement differs across platforms and many people use multiple chat apps for multiple reasons, sometimes for different cultural reasons.

How does the future of chat apps look

E-Commerce
More and more payments integration

Chatbots
A way to connect users and businesses

VR/AR integration
Allowing users to communicate in new ways

Instant translation services
Real-time language translation

P2P Decentralisation
From user to user without an intermediary

Biggest M&A transactions

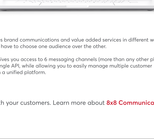
Facebook + WhatsApp $19 Billion

Microsoft + Skype $9 Billion

Rakuten + Viber $0.8 Billion

Source: Bloomberg, Digital Trends

The bottom line - One chat app is not enough



Each chat app enables brand communications and value added services in different ways and businesses should not have to choose one audience over the other.

8x8's Chat Apps API gives you access to 6 messaging channels (more than any other platform provider) with just a single API, while allowing you to easily manage multiple customer conversations through a unified platform.

Get connected with your customers. Learn more about **8x8 Communication APIs**.

8x8, Inc. (NYSE: EGHT) is transforming the future of business communications as a leading Software-as-a-Service provider of 8x8 XCaas™ (eXperience Communications as a Service®), an integrated contact center, voice communications, video, chat, and API solution built on one unified platform. 8x8 XCaas™ is a cloud-native, unified communications platform that combines the best-in-class Contact Center as a Service (CCaaS) to power the communications requirements of all employees globally as they work together to deliver differentiated customer experiences. For additional information, visit www.8x8.com, or follow 8x8 on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.

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