Live chat trends and insights from 400 consumers and 100 businesses
Businesses fail to meet live chat demands
Live chat grows sales, revenue, and customer loyalty
Businesses have to match consumer channel demands
Customers love real-time support, but hate the live chat experience
Do businesses priorities match customer expectations?
How to get ahead with live chat in 2017 and beyond
Methodology
For instant support, customers opt for live chat. But they’re rarely satisfied - most customer chat experiences end with frustration.

Businesses prefer speed - quick connection times and quicker responses. But here’s the disconnect: consumers care more about getting their issue resolved, even if it takes a bit longer.

Businesses that prioritize customer satisfaction over live chat speed metrics will see huge benefits. Consumers are more likely to remain loyal, engage in positive word of mouth, and spend up to $500 extra per month with businesses that provide effortless live chat experiences.

Businesses fail to meet live chat demands
Today, businesses are struggling to meet the conflicting demands of the customer. But the cost of not meeting demands is greater.

95% of customers value thorough, high-quality support more than speed.

47% of customers haven’t had a positive live chat experience in the last month.

52% Over half of consumers are more likely to repurchase from a company who offer live chat support.
Live chat grows sales, revenue, and customer loyalty.
of consumers have told friends or colleagues about a positive live chat experience
29%

of consumers have told friends or colleagues about a poor live chat experience
20%

Consumers tell their friends and colleagues about positive live chat experiences more often than they do for negative ones. But still, a fifth of consumers have spread negative word of mouth based on a bad experience.

Live chat - when done right - contributes to positive word of mouth, helps to win new customers, and helps businesses grow.
Businesses are realizing that live chat is not just a cost-centered support channel: it has the power to grow their business.

79% of businesses say offering live chat has had a positive effect on sales, revenue, and customer loyalty.

38% of consumers are more likely to buy from a company if they offer live chat support.
of people who spend between $250-500 a month online are the most likely to both buy from, and be loyal to, companies who offer live chat support.

51% of consumers are more likely to stay with or buy again from a company if they offer live chat support.
There's a disconnect between business and consumer expectations
They value personal and instant means of interaction

Whether it's by phone or live chat support, consumers want to speak to a real person. Consumers are rarely happy waiting for a delayed reply back.
Consumers prefer live chat support

Despite the rise in popularity of businesses offering support through social media, live chat still reigns as consumers’ preferred support channel.

Live chat, in theory, offers them immediate help with minimal effort required.
Younger consumers particularly love live chat for the familiar user experience of talking with friends through messaging apps.

Baby Boomers prefer traditional, offline channels like phone support over more modern methods.
But businesses think customers prefer to phone

42% of businesses think consumers prefer phone
14% of businesses think consumers prefer email
35% of businesses think consumers prefer live chat
9% of businesses think consumers prefer social media

Businesses may be overstaffing telephone support

There’s an opportunity for businesses to both improve customer satisfaction and reduce costs by routing more resources towards live chat and email support.
Consumers love real-time support, but hate the typical live chat experience
Live chat conversations should be effortless

Typical frustrations include:

- Support not being online despite live chat displaying as available
- Being disconnected during a live chat
- Effort required to start a live chat, particularly where there are pre-chat forms

38% of consumers are most frustrated by poor user experience on live chat.

43% of businesses know their user experience is not good enough.
Using scripted responses to save time and please customers is an art. Support teams aren’t making customers feel like individuals. There are ways to master a canned response that feels personal and human, but they’re few and far between.

29% of consumers find scripted, impersonal responses the most frustrating.

38% of businesses say their users find their scripted responses most frustrating.
Waiting for an agent to become available fuels frustration

Almost a fifth of customers rate long wait times as the most frustrating part of a live chat - they don't want to be in a queue.
There’s no excuse for siloing conversations or customer history

Consumers want to be recognized. They want to know that a business sees them as an individual, not a ticket number - without endlessly repeating themselves. But businesses are finding it difficult to ensure a consistent, unified approach to customer service that spans all the channels of the modern consumer.
Consumers value high quality support over speed.

95% say they would prefer slower support if it meant the quality of help was higher.

Traditional wisdom assumes that consumers want instant support, but this isn’t necessarily true. 19 out of 20 consumers would rather receive slower-paced and personalized expert support over fast, low-quality support.
Do businesses priorities match customer expectations?
Consumers don’t have faith in live chat

Live chat has a bad reputation. Consumers don’t expect high quality, speedy support. Their expectations for live chat are low, and yet, they still prefer it over phone, email, and social media support.

When starting a live chat conversation, 40% of consumers are not confident they’ll get the support they need in a reasonable amount of time.
Businesses strive to offer unique and memorable customer experiences...

... but consumers say they are falling short:

- 84% say it is an important priority for their team
- 56% of consumers cannot recall an exceptional live chat experience
- 83% of consumers have given up on a live chat due to frustration at slow responses or poor replies

This means businesses are making unhappy customers, losing revenue, spiking churn, and adding extra strain on other channels for the support team.

**What to do:**

Ask for customer satisfaction ratings and listen to their feedback
Businesses try to be personal…

84% of businesses say that offering a personal customer experience is an important or very important priority for their team.

…but consumers say it’s not working

29% of consumers find scripted, impersonal responses the most frustrating, and businesses know this too.

35% note them as the most frustrating factor for customers.

What to do:

Train your team to give canned replies a personal feeling by adapting templated content where necessary.
How to get ahead with live chat in 2017 and beyond

1. Choose a live chat solution that puts people first.
   Modern live chat support needs to be as easy and effortless as messaging a friend.

2. Invest in live chat customer satisfaction.
   Enable agents to meet customer expectations with personal, timely, and quality support.

3. Be memorable by your personal touch.
   Use the customer data you have available to delight customers with effortless customer service.

4. Exceptional chat experiences produce significant ROI.
   Offer live chat to increase revenue: customers are more likely to buy from you, and more likely to repurchase too.
Methodology

Consumer survey
We surveyed over 1000 US consumers, weighted according to US Census data. Our questions focused on live chat customer service, the overall experience consumers have with companies they do business with, and their current expectations.

Business survey
We conducted a third-party online survey of 100 small/medium business owners and managers who use live chat on their website to talk with customers. Our questions focused on business priorities, their customers’ expectations, and how live chat performs for them.
Live chat statistics

study by Kayako

Kayako is effortless customer service software that helps teams to grow personal customer relationships.