

Unlocking Customer Engagement

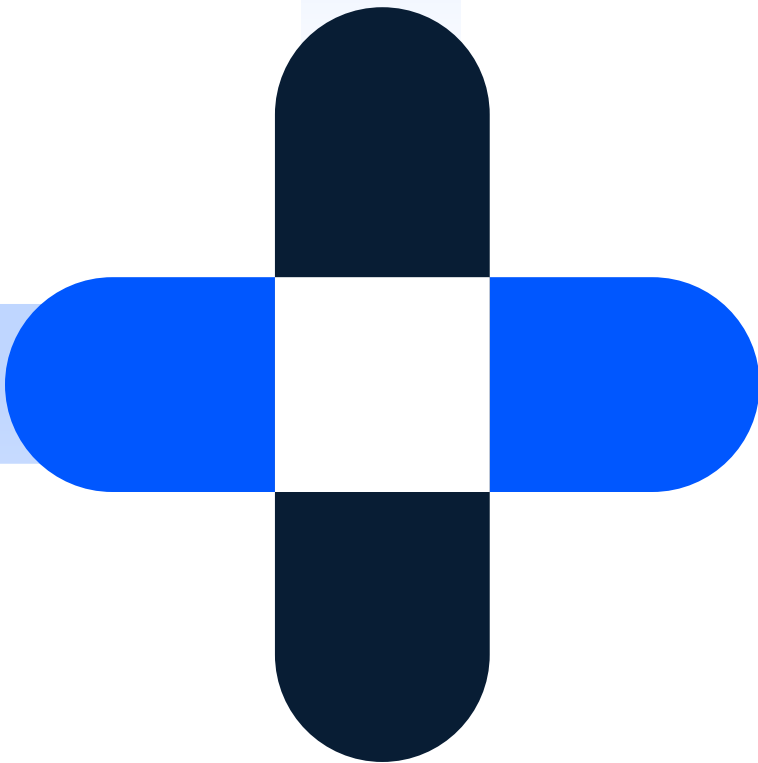
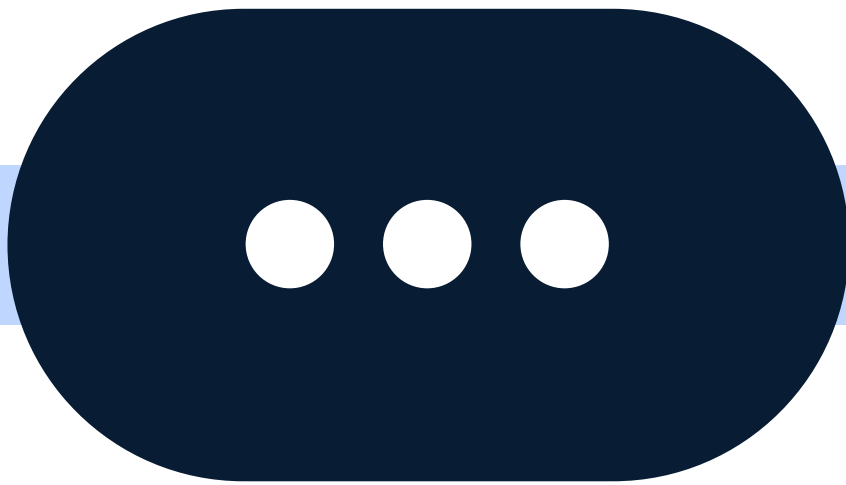
Drive Action With
In-Product Messaging

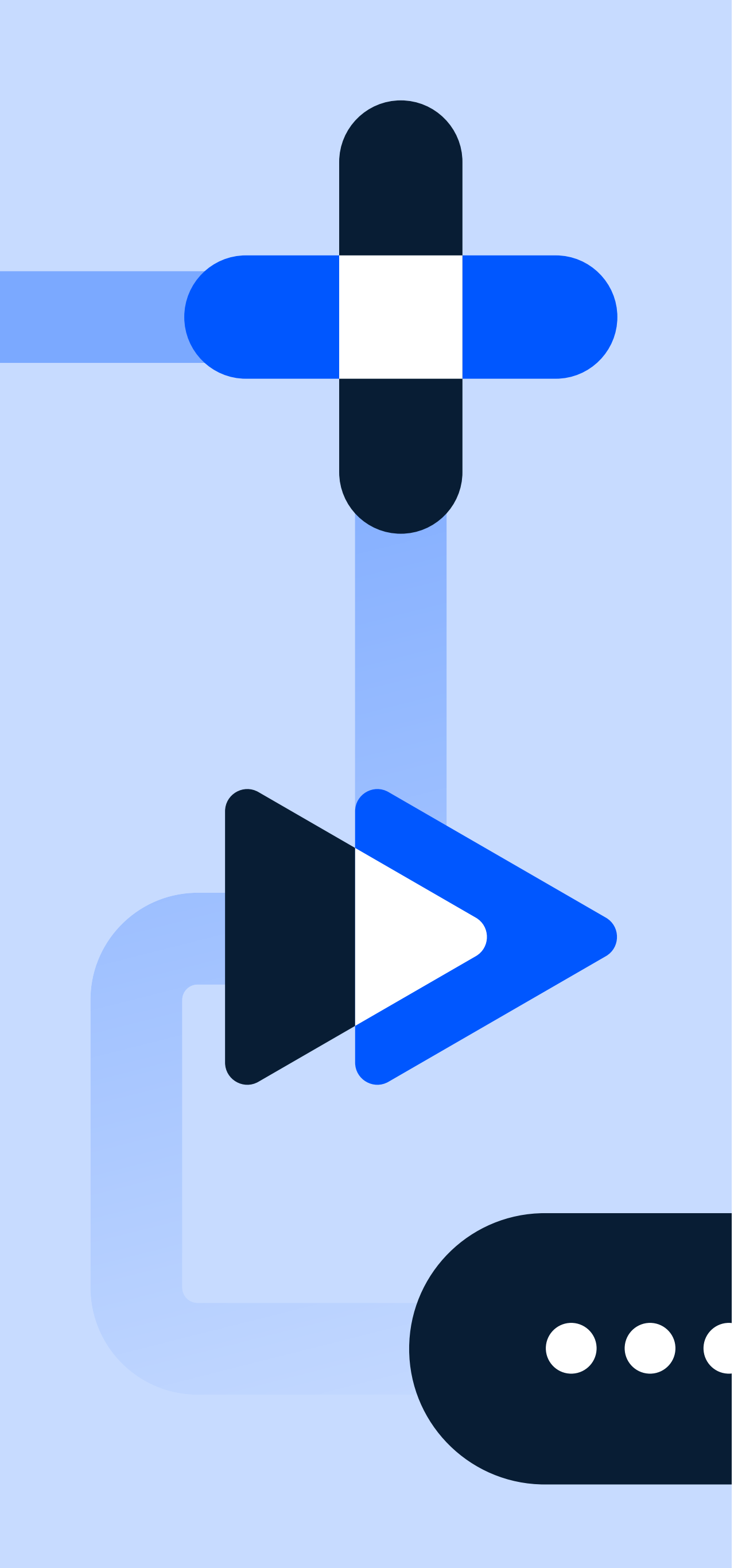


INTERCOM

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01 The secret ingredient your customer engagement tech stack is missing

Today, businesses are grappling with many hurdles in the online space. The digital landscape is more competitive than ever, consumer expectations continue to rise, customer acquisition is becoming increasingly expensive, and businesses are trying to navigate these obstacles without increased investment or headcount.

These times of change bring opportunities as well as challenges. Leading companies are refocusing their customer engagement efforts to increase customer retention, while also increasing efficiency.

According to a recent [Harvard Business Review Analytic Services](#) report, increased customer retention is the top benefit 69% of survey respondents aim to achieve from their customer engagement efforts. However, only 9% would rate their customer engagement as “excellent”.

So, what can businesses do to improve their customer engagement and increase retention? It starts with adding a messenger to your strategy to engage your customers while they are in your product, app, or website. This will empower your team to automatically deliver timely, targeted, and personalized messages in the moment, when your customers are primed to take action.

And you’ll be able to show customers the value from your products or features quickly, from the outset, and over time. As a result, your product will become stickier and you’ll nurture happy, long-term customers.

That’s where this guide comes in – we’re introducing a more effective way to engage with your customers. Discover actionable strategies that empower you to be there for your customers at the right moment. Learn how to activate customers, drive action in your product or service, and increase customer loyalty – without overstressing your team or resources.

Enjoy!



Ruairi Galavan
Director of Customer Engagement
at Intercom

Business benefits of in-product messaging

Modern customers expect engagement on their terms. It must be relevant to what they're doing and what they need, convenient but non-disruptive, and it needs to have that personal touch.

With traditional engagement channels alone (such as email or SMS marketing), these expectations might sound impossible to live up to. But when you also engage your customers in the moment while they are using your product, app, or website, you can exceed customer expectations and increase product usage and customer retention in the process.

Traditional Engagement



Traditional channels fail to engage customers in real time, resulting in missed opportunities to drive action.



Lack of holistic customer insight leads to impersonal, generic communications that are ignored.



Messages from different parts of the business create a disjointed experience.



Legacy messaging tools spam customers without giving them a way to respond.

Modern Engagement



Messaging customers in your product, app, or website engages them in the moment that they're most likely to take action.



Powerful data and rich targeting personalizes the customer experience for deeper engagement.



Cohesive messaging campaigns across the entire customer journey create a unified customer experience.



Gathering and acting on customer feedback drives ongoing growth and customer loyalty.

4 simple ways to start modernizing your customer engagement strategy for maximum impact

Move from traditional to modern engagement:

Customers still expect traditional engagement methods, but by adding a direct channel of communication such as a messenger to your product, app, or website, you can provide that relevancy, immediacy, and convenience which drives action.

Provide personalization at scale:

One-size-fits-all strategies are outdated. What's more, [98% of B2C](#) companies say that personalization increases customer loyalty. With data powering personalization, customers feel known, understood, and recognized as individuals and are therefore more likely to engage with your efforts.

Create a cohesive customer journey:

Craft a consistent customer experience across every touchpoint by integrating tools across the business and orchestrating connected messaging campaigns, fueling deeper engagement at every step of the customer journey.

Empower your team to automatically gather and act on customer feedback:

By using automation and reaching out with surveys, you can open a two-way dialogue and gather powerful, revealing customer feedback. Marketing and product leaders will have an opportunity to talk to customers instead of at them – while also collecting rich, real-time first-party data which can be used to optimize the customer experience, product roadmap, and entire business.

By engaging with customers when they're already active in your product, you can increase your opportunities to drive deeper product usage and reduce churn – boosting your business's bottom line.



“In-product communication is paramount for the efficacy of the type of work that we do. Our engagement rates with in-product messages are 25–30% higher than what we see with email – and that’s something we couldn’t do before.”



Craig Vincent

Head of Global Success Programs,
Customer Success at Amplitude

Drive action by engaging with your customers in your product, app, or website

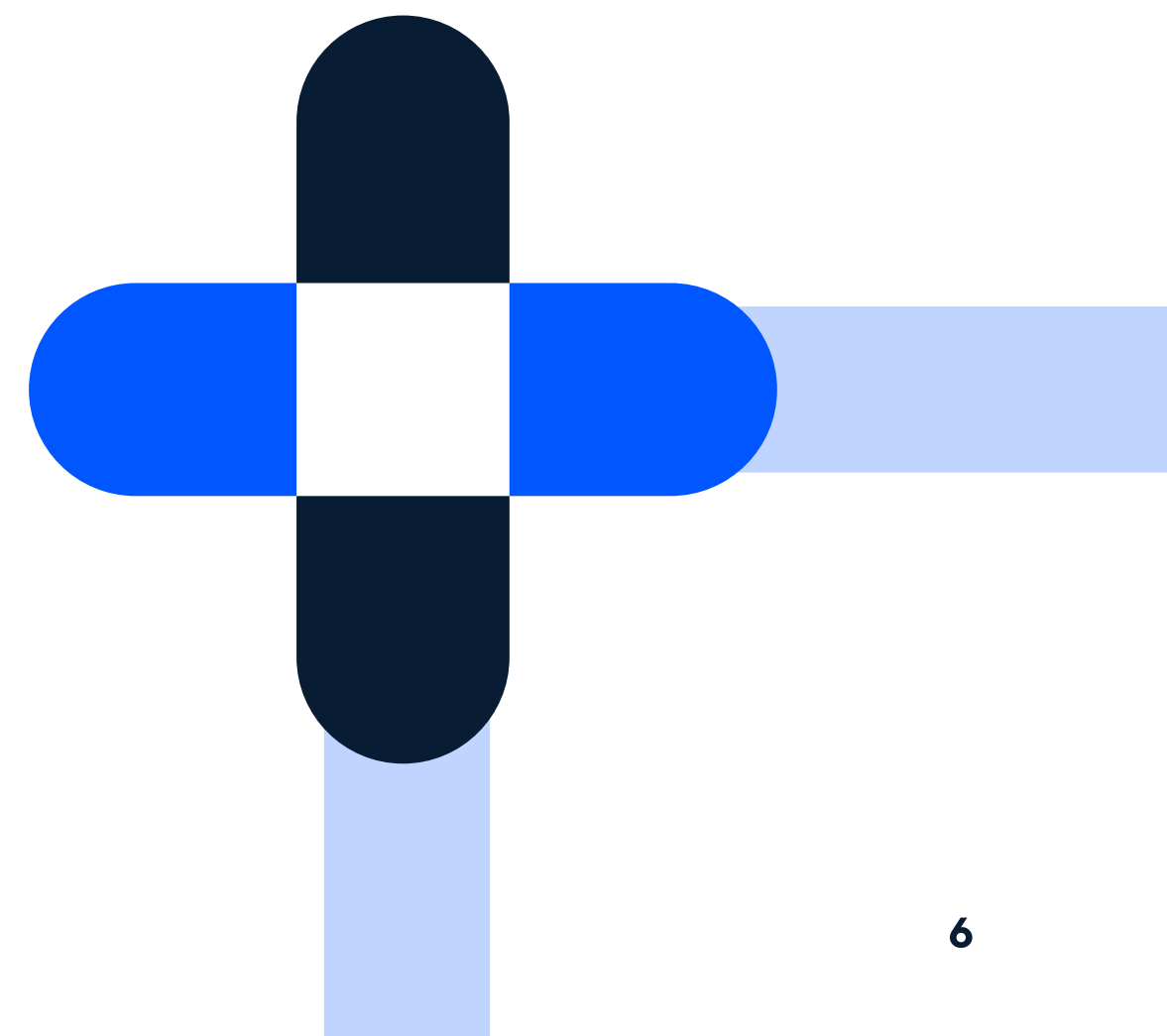
In the digital age, where customer attention is increasingly fleeting and divided, it can be challenging to get customers to take action from the messages your team sends.

This is true whether you're trying to help customers get set up using your product or service for the first time, encouraging them to try out a new feature, or sharing an upcoming promotion. While what you say and how you say it plays a major role in engagement success, to spark true action and help customers see immediate value, you'll also need to turn your attention to when and where these messages are landing.

Reaching customers while they're using your product or scrolling through your website is the most powerful and effective way to interact with them as this is the moment they are primed to take action. In-app messages reach customers without interrupting what they are doing and act as a convenient springboard towards the action you want them to take. Armed with a modern customer engagement tool, you can send hyper-targeted messages backed by rich data to really personalize interactions for a truly tailored and relevant experience for your customers.

By contrast, more traditional communication channels, like email marketing or SMS tools, might fail to reach the customer at the right time to drive action.

Engaging with your customer outside of your product means the customer may need to click away from their inbox to take action based on your message. Not to mention, they likely have a number of other distractions competing for their attention – meaning your call to action could be quickly forgotten.



DRIVE ACTION BY ENGAGING WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS IN YOUR PRODUCT, APP, OR WEBSITE

Now that we've set the context, let's dive into how you can leverage in-product engagement to maximize the effectiveness of your onboarding experience and your feature or product announcements.

1. Activate customers faster with reduced time to value – minimizing early stage churn

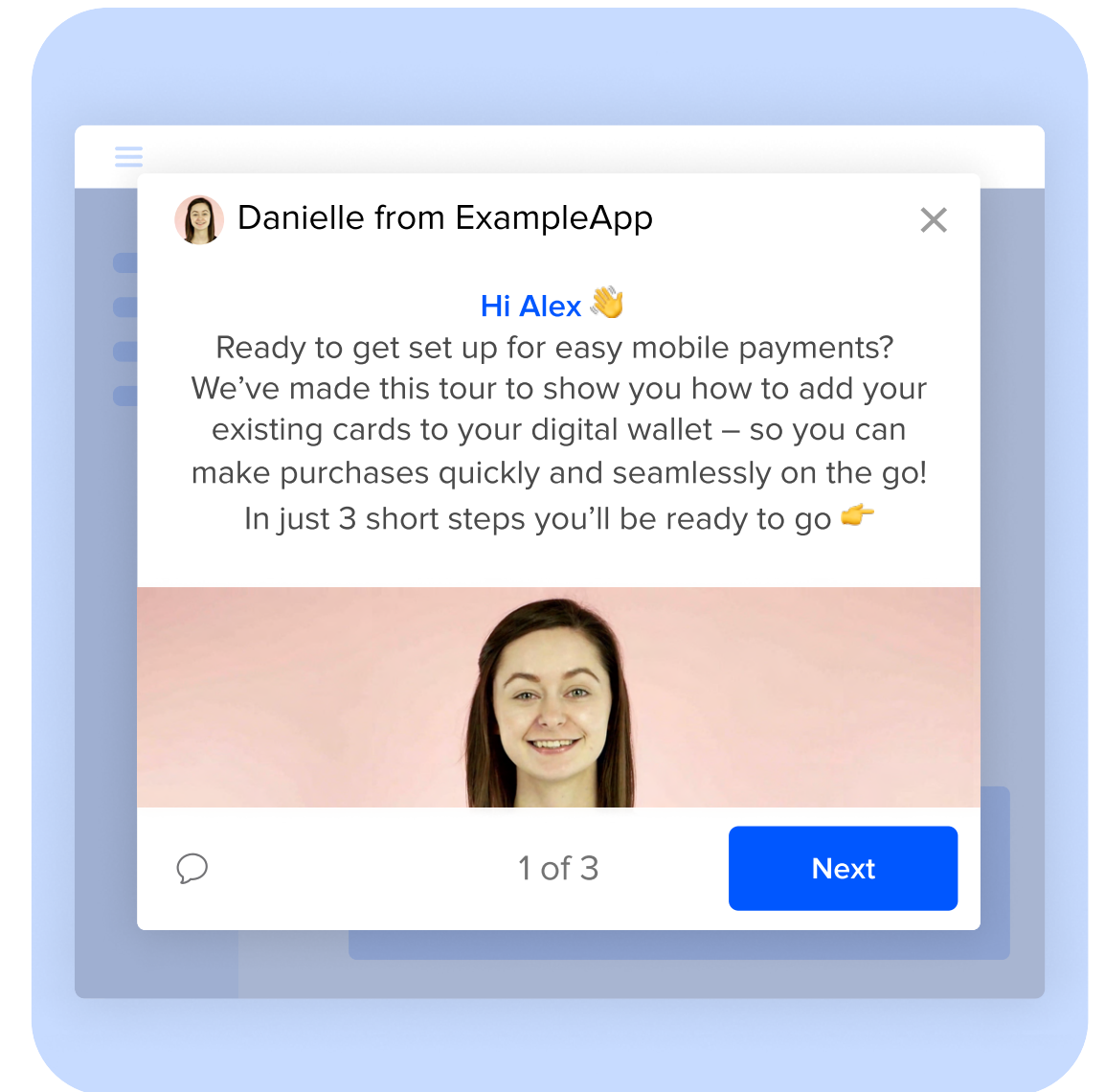
Engaging your customers with in-product messages can speed up your onboarding process to improve efficiency and customer success. In-product messages are hyper-targeted notifications sent to customers while they're using your product, app, or website. You can automate these messages to provide new customers with a thorough walkthrough of important features at key moments during onboarding to set them up for maximum success.

For example, say you have a mobile banking app and your onboarding goal is to get customers to make their first payment digitally.

You can set up a product tour to walk new customers through the process of setting up their digital bank card and making their first payment. To make your tour deeply personalized, you could target new customers, who haven't yet set up their digital card, encouraging them to do so the next time they log in. Perfect timing!

Onboarding customers in the moment they're already engaging with your product or service will help new sign-ups learn the ropes quicker, reach those all important "aha" moments, and find value up front. Not to mention, automating the onboarding process in this way saves your team time and increases efficiency.

Intercom customers we surveyed saw a **22% average** lift in activation rates after implementing Intercom for onboarding.



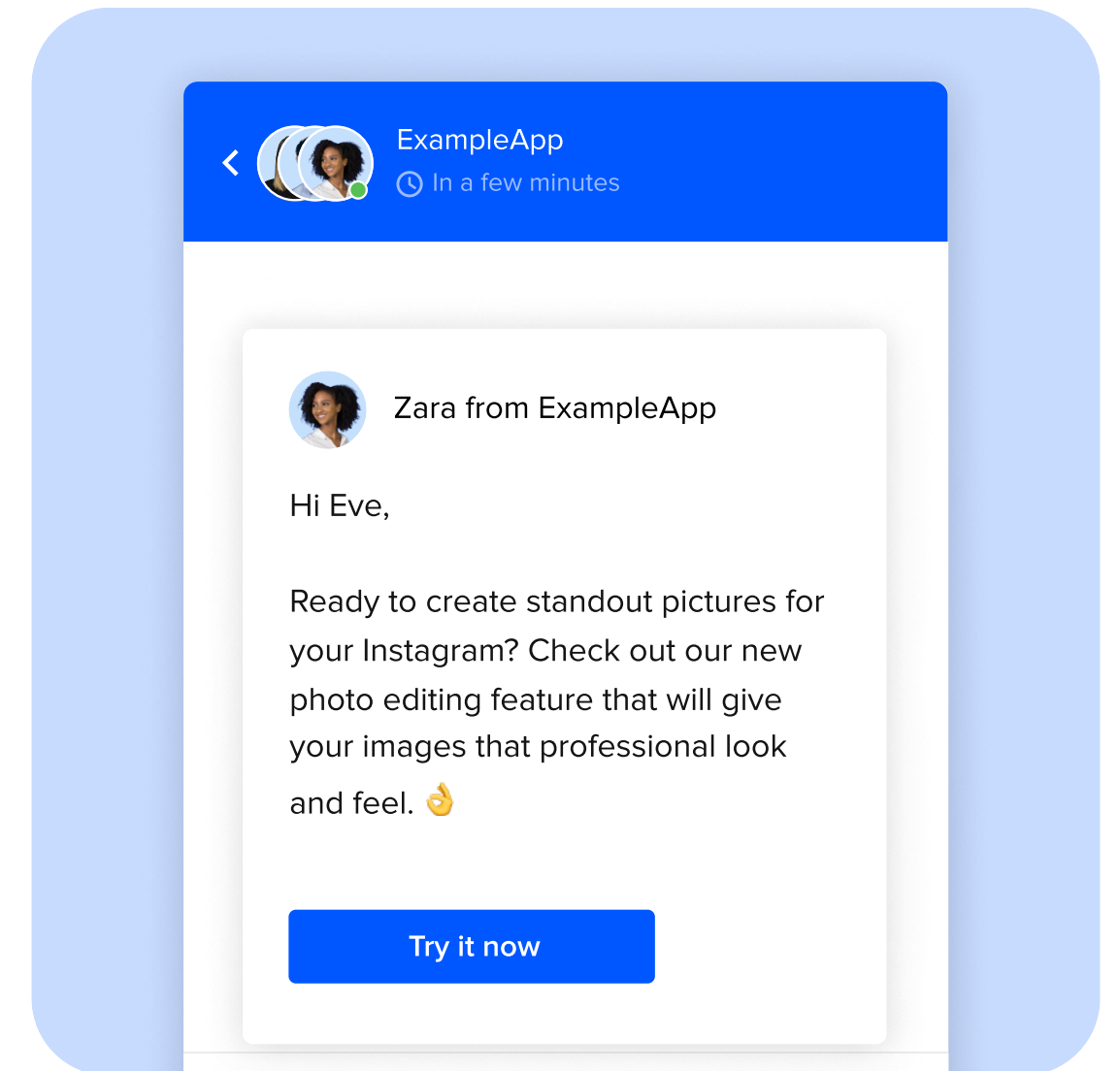
2. Drive product usage by reaching customers when and where they're primed to take action

With modern customer engagement tools you can send in-product messages on both mobile apps and desktop websites while the customer is browsing. So you can announce your latest feature to them and show them how to use it while they use it, increasing the likelihood of the customer taking the action you want them to take. In fact, we've found that in-product messaging like this can drive 3-4x higher engagement rates than traditional communications.

In-product messaging can drive **3-4x** higher engagement rates than traditional communications.

In the real world, a business may have a physical store filled with sales assistants who can inform customers about exciting new products. Because customers can see the product and find out more about it there and then, there's an increased likelihood that they'll purchase it and return again based on their positive experience. Digitally engaging with customers in your app can have the same effect.

Here's another example: say you have a subscription-based photo editing app and have just launched a new feature. You can automatically send in-app messages to existing customers announcing this feature and showing them how to use it. Or likewise, you can target new customers who are trialing your product or service as an effective way to upsell and convert them to paying customers.



Our customers see a **31% average** increase in their users taking a desired action from the messages they send after implementing Intercom for announcements.

How to unlock the full power of in-product messaging

Adding an in-product element to your engagement strategy is essential for creating a modernized customer experience. But how can you make sure your efforts are reaching their full potential and boosting your business's bottom line? Here's how to supercharge your engagement strategy in three easy steps:

1. Gather, analyze, and act on powerful data to personalize your customer engagement strategy

It's no secret that personalization plays a key role in providing high quality customer experiences. In fact, McKinsey found that it can drive a 10 to 15% lift in revenue. Therefore, creating personalized communications powered by data should be a top priority for your business. If engaging with customers in your product is the engine for driving action, then data is the fuel.

Customers expect ultra-personalized messages that cater to their individual needs, including what they are interested in, the actions they do or don't take in your product, and what their preferences are. Using modern tools, you can capture this dynamic, live data directly from your customers and use it to deliver the right message to the right person, at the right time. Here are two powerful ways to do it:

Collect personal details with bots to create more tailored messages

You can set up bots to automatically collect first-party data directly from your customers while they're engaging with your product, such as details on what they want to achieve with your product or service or what size their business is. With this level of insight you can send hyper-tailored content and promotions to specific groups of customers based on who they are and what they need. Messages that directly address their needs like this are more likely to pique their interest.

Use quantitative and qualitative survey data to customize your campaigns

Sending customers surveys while they’re using your product or browsing your website is a powerful way to get your hands on rich quantitative and qualitative feedback which you can then use to personalize marketing messages and campaigns. Such data might include: details on what people want to achieve with your product or service, how much value people are getting from it, or how you can improve it.

For example, sending a quick signup survey at the onboarding stage can help you get a better idea of what your customers' goals are and which of your features are most relevant to their use case. Then, armed with this data, you can send a sequence of tailored messages that drive customers to those features and deeply engage them based on their feedback.

 Liz from ExampleApp

×

Welcome to our app Anna!
Let us know a little more about yourself

How familiar are you with products like ours?

0

1

2

3

4

5

0 - Not familiar

5 - Very familiar

What describes your role?

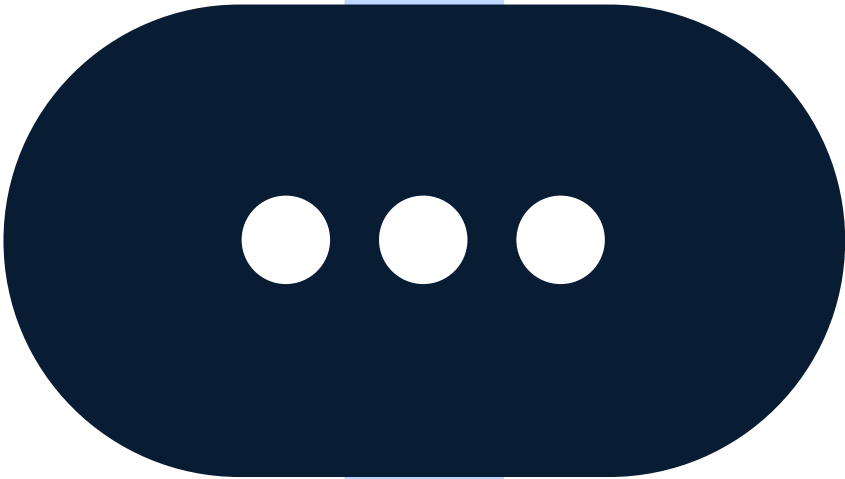
Sales

Marketing

CS & Support

Other (Please specify)

Next



2. Use customer feedback to fuel bottom-line business growth

First-party data doesn't just power personalized communications between you and your customers. It should directly influence bottom-line business decisions across the entire organization – from what you build next in your product roadmap, to how you sell to customers, and how you solve their issues and keep them happy.

Collecting feedback at the precise moment customers interact with your product or website allows you to gain a deeper understanding of how customers view your product and the experience you offer.

This means company-wide strengths and weaknesses can be identified and the right teams are empowered to make data-led decisions that collectively increase customer loyalty.

All-in-one doc software [Coda](#), for example, uses surveys to tailor experiences to customers' unique needs and to measure a net promoter score (NPS) in order to proactively improve the customer experience. Coda's team leverages the insights they get from surveys and shares them with the customer support team and customer success team so they can step in at the right moment to help transform negative detractors into happy, loyal customers.



“We want to provide a more contextualized and personal experience based on user feedback. So, once we capture the information, we can then synthesize it for our teams and then use that data to power downstream behavior.”



Brian Lederman

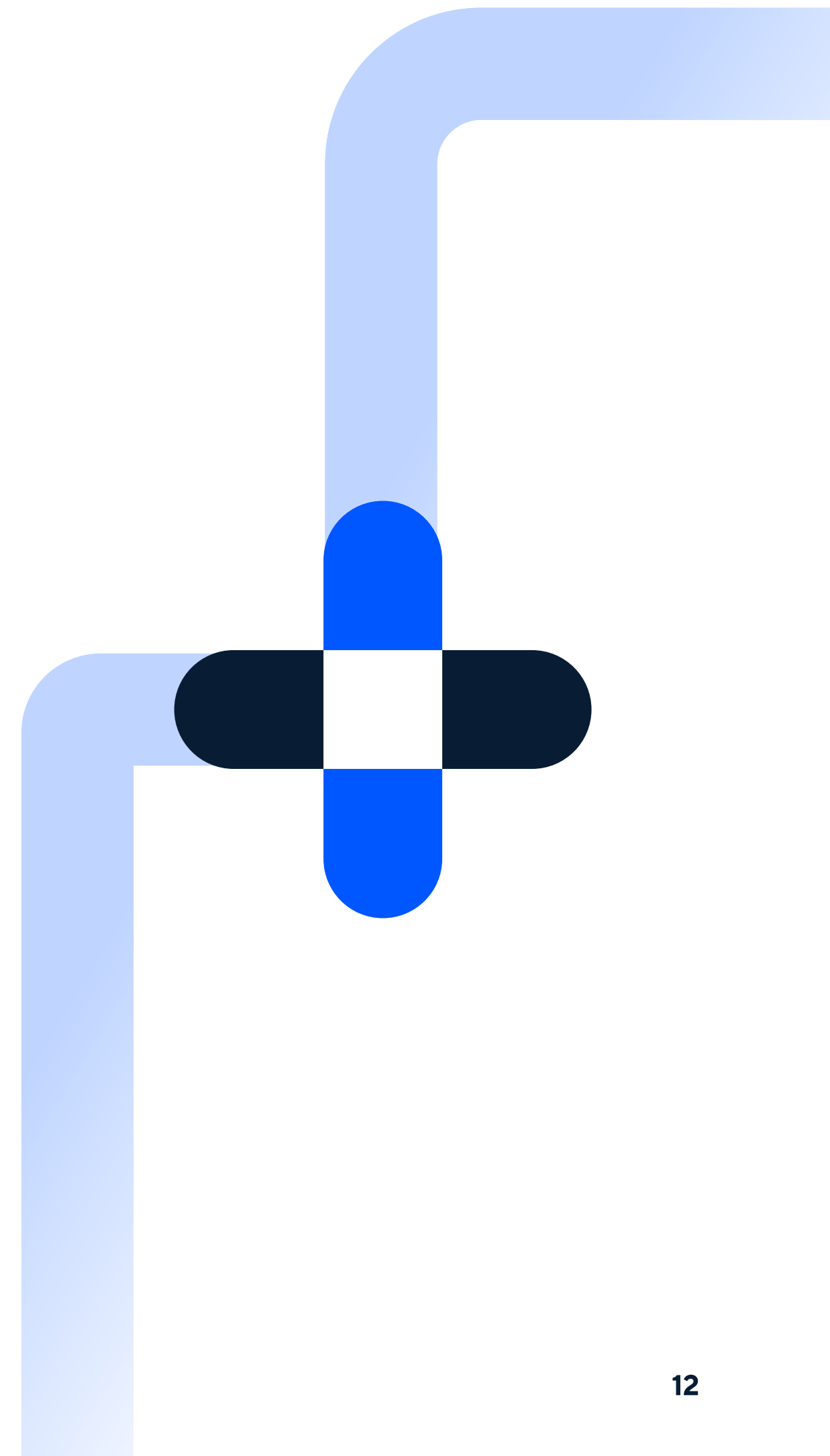
Head of Sales, Support, and Success at Coda

3. Optimize your tech stack to support cohesive journeys across all touchpoints

The customer journey is no longer linear. Instead, it has become a series of touchpoints which customers can weave in and out of in any direction they choose – with the sum of these touchpoints making up their overall customer experience.

Building cohesive customer journeys that span every touchpoint across channels and integrate throughout the business is an essential characteristic of successful modern customer engagement. Each customer interaction should enrich the next, from activation to long-term retention.

Many marketing and product teams are rightfully concerned about messages from different parts of the business creating a disjointed experience. With limited resources, they need a way to unify their efforts without inducing hefty costs or heavy technical changes that require coding. We recommend adding a powerful next-generation tool (like Intercom) to your existing tech stack. This will help ensure the right members of the right teams have the data and targeting capabilities they need to create cohesive experiences across each touchpoint throughout the customer journey.



Checklist for integrating and elevating your tech stack:

- ✓ **Integrate your key engagement tools and channels** such as messengers, bots, automation, product tours, and surveys to engage contextually with your customers from onboarding and throughout their lifecycle. Adopting an all-in-one platform that has all of these tools integrated streamlines your workflows, breaks down data silos, and empowers your team to engage with your customers more efficiently and personally.
- ✓ **Make sure your tools plug in and play** nicely with your current tools. For example, the Intercom Messenger integrates seamlessly with your marketing tech stack, including apps, analytics, email marketing tools, and SMS channels.
- ✓ **Optimize for an omnichannel experience**
Make sure your tools empower your team to continuously engage customers cross-channel. For example, with Intercom, you can create multi-channel onboarding campaigns via Series with in-product messages as well as email, SMS, and push messages to drive further engagement seamlessly.



From acquisition and onboarding to loyalty campaigns, Stuart is making the most of Intercom's engagement products to maximize the experience of their clients and drivers, seeing goal completion results of 60% and higher for many of these engagement campaigns.

Key metrics to measure success

By engaging customers at the right time, in the right place, you should see a significant increase in bottom-line results such as reduced time to value, increased activation, and greater feature and product usage. And the more embedded customers are within your product, the less likely they are to churn. There are four areas worth investing in.

Message engagement rate

An effective onboarding or announcement campaign will help customers discover useful new features when and where they need them most. The success of these messages can be simply answered with one question: Did customers take the desired action after receiving the message?

Open and click-through rates will give you an idea of how your messages are engaging customers. But it's even more powerful to track actions customers do or don't take after receiving individual messages. For example, of those who received a "key feature" message, how many used the feature afterwards?

Any good engagement platform will let you measure your performance. Intercom, for example, allows you to see the direct results of your engagement efforts – making it easier to attribute success to your messages and optimize performance going forward.



The simple act of delivering the message in-product made a big impact – converting an additional 14% of customers. In total, Baremetrics was able to increase annual plan subscriptions by 30%.

Feature adoption rate

With in-product messaging, customers adopt key features faster because you can show them exactly where to navigate to in your product or website – rather than sending them an email instructing them back into the product to find the exact button or feature they need.

Key feature adoption analytics will include depth of adoption (i.e. stickiness) as well as time to adoption, and breadth of adoption (how widely your feature has been adopted across your customer base).

For example, if a customer is regularly accessing your product but not a specific feature, then they may benefit from an educational campaign about the benefits of said feature. And with a solution such as Intercom, you can use customer data and targeting capabilities to target this educational campaign specifically at users who haven't used the feature.



“Since we implemented Intercom, our product activation has increased by 11% across the board, and its automation capabilities have helped us to scale our efforts without increasing headcount, which has saved us \$1 million.”



Craig Vincent

Head of Global Success Programs,
Customer Success at Amplitude

Customer retention

The bottom line is that it's cheaper and more valuable to retain customers than acquire them – and the sum of all your engagement efforts should lead to better customer retention.

Customers who use key features more often will find more value in the product, and are therefore less likely to churn. In fact, Intercom customers we surveyed saw, on average, a 21% lift in customer retention rates after implementing Intercom for onboarding and reducing time to value. Being able to measure and prove the impact your customer engagement strategy is having on customer retention can showcase the impact your team is having on the business.



"Unity triggers targeted messages (formerly Visitor Auto Messages) on their subscription cancellation page to proactively engage potential churn risks before they unsubscribe. 10% of churn saves come specifically from these proactive Intercom Visitor Auto Messages on the cancellation page."



KEY METRICS TO MEASURE SUCCESS

Net Promoter Score

By measuring your Net Promoter Score (NPS) you can track the success of the relationship between the customer and your brand.

Customers don't just buy your product, they invest in the experience – and a strong NPS can be an indicator of how effective your engagement efforts are.

Ask for feedback throughout the customer journey (while they're active in your product) and monitor metrics over time. It's a simple format – for example, ask customers how likely they would be to recommend your company or service on a scale of 0 to 10. By tracking your NPS over time, you can see the direct impact your engagement efforts are having on customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

You should also ask further, optional questions to solicit specific feedback when engaging in an NPS survey, and use that feedback to improve your customer experience.

Personalized, non-disruptive interactions contribute to a positive overall customer experience with your brand and in turn should improve your overall NPS score.

tado°

As an NPS-driven company, tado° uses Intercom to measure customer sentiment and continuously improve its customers' experience. This ability to build and maintain strong, personal relationships with its customers is one of the many reasons tado° trusts Intercom.





INTERCOM



Future-proof your customer engagement strategy

Want to learn more about how to activate, engage and retain more customers in the modern age? Get a recent [Harvard Business Review Analytic Services](#) report for insights on the current state of customer engagement and strategies for unlocking consistent growth and efficiencies for the year ahead and beyond.

Get the report

