

## The Plain-English Guide to Webhooks

Today, we don't have to do much research to find the information we need. Whether working, shopping or staying plugged into the news or your favorite trends, webhooks allows everyone to get the data they want with minimal effort.

Think of webhooks as personal assistants who know your needs so well that they complete tasks for you without having to ask. They constantly find the information you need and deliver it to you as soon as they receive it. Thanks to webhooks, you can order your dinner to-go online and be notified when it's ready. You can also receive a push alert on your phone when prices drop for a flight or for that concert you've been dying to attend. This handy tool constantly researches and delivers the simple information you need so you can focus on more complex tasks.

### WHAT IS A WEBHOOK

Webhooks are all about sending information from one software to another in real-time. They're used to notify team members of newly assigned tasks in Trello or when an e-commerce brand sends alerts to consumers when a sold-out product is back in stock. Ever use Google Alerts to get information about certain trends or news updates? Webhooks. Did you get notified when you received a payment on PayPal? Definitely webhooks. Webhooks, also known as web callbacks or HTTP push APIs, make sure desired information is delivered as soon as it's available, causing more efficiency for consumers.

Webhooks are very similar to [APIs](#) but work in reverse. APIs allow software to ask another piece of software for information and the asked software delivers the data it has at the time. Issues come in when software doesn't have the desired information needed at the moment resulting in no data being delivered. The software will have to continuously ask the other for information until results are found. With webhooks, the software that has information sends it to the software that needs it as soon as the data is available. After requesting information, the software can sit back and wait or continue to do other tasks while the other constantly searches for the needed data. Once the information is found, the software delivers it to the other, usually in real-time.

These "reverse APIs" provide convenience and productivity without anyone giving it a thought. Unlike APIs, webhooks only send data, not requests. Once webhooks know what information is needed, it continuously delivers it to software in real-time without it having to ask. For example, consumers shopping online find the product they want to buy is sold out. They could visit the site frequently to see if the product is back in stock or they could opt-in to get notified when it's finally available. When consumers request to get notified, webhooks take over. These webhooks will review the site's inventory until it has the product back in stock and available for purchase. Once webhooks have this information, it notifies everyone who requested it. Now consumers are able to buy the product without worrying that it will sell out again thanks to webhooks constantly checking for them on their behalf.

### WEBHOOKS IN ACTION

Webhooks can be used with [HubSpot workflows](#) to pass information from HubSpot to another web application. They have a variety of uses that can be integrated into websites such as sending push notifications and data. A popular case for webhooks is posting HubSpot contact data into a CRM when that contact fills out a form on a site. Other popular ways to use webhooks are by sending chat alerts from an external system to a company's chat stream to let employees know something important is happening or sending deal data to an external shipment-handling system to create a purchase order.

In order for these processes to happen, a webhook URL must be entered into a workflow.

[Learn how to set up a webhook in your HubSpot workflow](#)

These URLs are telling an application that it has information that it needs and delivers the data to it. For example, a customer buys a product from an e-commerce brand. The webhook URL allows the application to collect the customer's order and shipping details and sends it to another application that can process the order. The e-commerce brand receives the payment and the product is shipped out to the customer.

Another example can be as simple as notifying team members of new tasks. Webhooks can integrate into Slack, a cloud-based chat software, and Trello, a project management software. A project manager can add a new task into Trello and the team member she assigns it to will get a notification in Slack that he has a new task to complete. Webhooks allow the information plugged into Trello to be transferred over to Slack for the person who needs to learn this information.

Whatever the reason you may need a webhook to be integrated into your site, there are a number of ways they can help with productivity.