



Web chat most favoured new channel for Australian customer service, says Fifth Quadrant

Web chat more relevant for greater variety of queries than social media or smartphones

[Hafizah Osman](#) (ARN) | 24 April, 2013 17:26

Web chat is the favoured new channel for consumer customer service in Australia, according to a new report from research company, Fifth Quadrant.

In its *Emerging Consumer Channels: Social Media, Web Chat and Smartphone Apps* study, which polled more than 400 consumers and 53 business executives, it showed that as compared to its emerging channel peers – social media and smartphone apps – Web chat is the most used medium for customer service queries.

Fifth Quadrant head of research, Chris Kirby, said it is also perceived to have the highest suitability for general enquiries, technical issues, purchase or sales related questions, and complaints or service issues.

“Web chat has a great value proposition for consumers. It is a convenient offer of help at an appropriate time. When carried out properly, it is non-intrusive and simplifies the consumer's experience,” Kirby said.

The study also found that almost a quarter of Australian organisations offer Web chat but although the technology has been broadly available for more than five years, it is within the last one or two years that business interest has multiplied and the greatest number of implementations (40 per cent) has occurred. Three in five organisations reported confidence in their capability to scale up to support changes in demand for customer service via the channel.

This compares to just under half of organisations being confident in their capability to scale up to support social media and two in five to support smartphone apps.

Kirby said a reason for this difference could be the way each of the channels are managed. “Responsibility for managing and resourcing Web chat lies with the call or contact centre – a department well used to budgeting, planning for, and responding to fluctuating consumer communications.

“In contrast, social media and smartphones are typically managed by marketing and insight, or IT,” he added.

Source:

http://www.arnnet.com.au/article/459989/web_chat_most_favoured_new_channel_australian_customer_service_says_fifth_quadrant/