

Facebook buys online customer service startup Kustomer

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The acquisition of five-year-old Kustomer comes as Facebook continues to weave e-commerce into offerings, particularly its WhatsApp and Messenger messaging services

Facebook on Monday announced it is buying a startup specializing in helping businesses interact with customers online.

The acquisition of five-year-old Kustomer comes as the leading social network continues to weave [e-commerce](#) into offerings, particularly its WhatsApp and Messenger messaging services.

More than 175 million people contact businesses via WhatsApp daily, and the number is growing, according to WhatsApp chief operating officer Matt Idema and Facebook vice president of [business](#) products Dan Levy.

"With our complementary capabilities, we will be able to help more people benefit from [customer service](#) that is faster, richer and available whenever and however they need it—via phone, email, text, web chat or messaging," Kustomer chief executive Brad Birnbaum said of uniting with Facebook.

"In particular, we look forward to enhancing the messaging experience which is one of the fastest growing ways for people and businesses to engage."

Kustomer, which is based in New York, will continue to service its existing clients after co-founders Birnbaum and Jeremy Suriel and the rest of the startup's team become part of Facebook, according to the companies.

The Kustomer platform provides software tools to help business representatives better tend to customer queries or concerns.

Facebook will provide resources for Kustomer to innovate and grow, according to Idema and Levy.

"That way, more people will benefit from customer service that is faster, richer and available whenever and however they need it," the Facebook and WhatsApp executives said.

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed, and it needs to be approved by regulators.

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