Implementing WhatsApp as a customer service channel

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Foreword

This thesis report has been written with a lot of passion, dedication and enthusiasm. None of this would have been possible without the collaboration and support of the ones involved.

I would like to thank both entities, Hogeschool Utrecht and Eurail.com, which helped me a lot and cooperated with the content and findings. A special thanks goes out to my school supervisor, Sarah de Bakker, who provided me with guidance and many useful tips as well as Marisa Villarejo and Richard Meyer. Marisa is my company supervisor and Richard, the head of the customer service department. Both of them were extremely helpful and supportive, giving me advices and orientation towards the company's business and processes.

Moreover, I also want to thank the ones who helped me along the way, like other working colleagues and the participating customers.

During the research and writing processes, I went through many different phases, which increased my knowledge and expanded my thinking way related to the thesis subject and business in general. Overall, everything went smooth and I am happy to state that I did not have major issues to complete this report.

Executive Summary

This report provides analysis, evaluation and recommendation of implementing WhatsApp as a customer service channel at Eurail.com. Methods of analysis and gathering data include extensive desk research, interviews and surveys. Results of the analyzed data show different perspectives and outcomes which involve the main problem researched.

The report finds the prospects regarding the possibilities, difficulties, barriers and benefits of using an innovative communication channel to deal and stablish a relationship with customers. Major influential factors and different aspects of managing such channel, required a deep investigation and solid research.

The report encompasses the efficiency of WhatsApp as a customer service channel, including all its aspects. It shows that customers are satisfied with the channel, are willing to recommend the service to friends and family members and also, that the channel influences them positively on the purchase process. In addition, customers point out that the fast response time is very beneficial and helpful. Moreover, the response and handling times on WhatsApp are faster than on conventional emails and Facebook. Furthermore, the channel is less costly to maintain than emails and Facebook as well.

The available managerial and personal resources within Eurail.com, which make the company be able to run and implement WhatsApp as a customer service channel, are also being comprehensively specified.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Eurail.com and the customer service department

Customer service is a key department in any successful and well positioned organization, like in Eurail.com. This department is responsible for providing customers with pre and after sales assistance, as well as guiding them by clarifying questions. Moreover, the customer service department has a huge direct influence and impact on the company's sales achievements and profitability. (Gardner, 2005)

Eurail.com sells rail passes to travelers from across the globe. The company was established in 2006 with the goal of convincing the world that visiting Europe with one of its rail passes is the best way to discover the continent. As the organization likes to rephrase, traveling in Europe by train is comfortable and fun. When using a pass, travelers can access extensive rail and ferry networks in 30 different countries. (Eurail.com, 2016)

Eurail.com is an organization which only sell its products and provide its services online, through its website. There is no physical shop where customers can pass by or walk in, in order to get to know the products better or even buy them, for example. Therefore, the customer service department is extremely important for the company's business, because it is the touch point between the organization and the customers. Not only for Eurail.com, but for other companies that have a similar business model, having a solid customer service department is a key success factor. Through customer service, organizations are able to support and assist its customers, by answering their questions, providing information, suggestions, tips, helping them to make decisions, guiding them through the purchase process and providing after sales assistance. (Eurail.com, 2016) (Gardner, 2005) (Innis, 1994)

Communication channels

Currently, the organization uses conventional email and Facebook as tools to communicate and engage with customers. These communication channels proved to be effective and efficient over the years, however, due to technology improvements, the velocity of information and the change in human behavior, a new mean of communication has become a game changer: WhatsApp.

WhatsApp messenger is a cross-platform mobile messaging app, which allows its users to exchange messages via their smartphones, without having to pay for SMS. In addition to basic messaging, WhatsApp users can create groups, send each other unlimited images, videos and audio media messages. (WhatsApp, 2016)

Conventional emails are a good way to communicate with customers, because the conversation is kept private, a lot of information can be given and explanatory links added, which customers can read thoroughly. However, emails take longer to be written, are more formal and also, are not replied instantly.

Social media tools have also proven to be a good and effective way of communication. (Kavoura, 2013) However, when customers use social media channels for help, like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, the conversation is public or assumed to be public, which might be a hold back if customers want guidance on a more personal matter. (Wang, 2012)

Therefore, WhatsApp might be an alternative, for a wider range of customer services, which does not have this problem, because conversations are personal and private, meaning that consumers can ask sensitive or private questions and receive a quick and personal response, knowing that their comments are not indexed on the internet for life. Moreover, photos, movies and voice messages can be added to a WhatsApp conversation, meaning that it is possible to share explainer videos, personalized voice messages and photo instructions on product use from customer service agents, for instance. (Hauser, 2015) (Craske, 2014) (Olson, 2016)

The use of WhatsApp as a customer service channel is becoming bigger, but is still seen as a new trend. (Shorman, 2015) As mentioned before, this is happening due to the velocity of information and the change in human behavior. Smartphone users are getting more and more attached to their devices and the fast paced communication via text messages, thus, WhatsApp is an application that comes along on the curve. Therefore, even though researches have pointed WhatsApp as an efficient business tool, its implementation and performance can vary according to the company's business model, market, customers needs and segmentation. (Doyle, 2015) (Ukpere, 2014) (Anshari, 2015)

Aim of the research

The execution and completion of this research is very important in order to investigate, analyze and evaluate how Eurail.com should proceed regarding the implementation and use of WhatsApp as a customer service channel to communicate with its customers, provide them

assistance and support. The organization thinks that there is room for getting closer to its customers by providing a more dynamic and personal communication channel. The company is considering implementing it, but in order to decide, it is essential to see what is the added value, for Eurail.com, of offering WhatsApp to the customers and if the added value, worth the costs. To make it more precise, in this case, the added value is to keep customer satisfied with this new service, by providing a more dynamic and efficient communication, which facilitate a faster response time. Therefore, as WhatsApp proves to satisfy customers, it is essential to know how expensive it is to keep this level of satisfaction and consequently, the feasibility to maintain it. Thus, two key aspects were analyzed and evaluated in order to advise Eurail.com on the implementation of WhatsApp as a definitively customer service channel: customer satisfaction and costs.

It is important to point out that the use of WhatsApp as a customer service channel, is a result of a new project which was in pilot phase, thus, this is something completely innovative to Eurail.com. The testing phase of offering WhatsApp to customers, takes four months, from April to June, and only after that, based on findings and results, a decision will be made on this new channel being definitively implemented or not. Therefore, many factors are considered and assessed in order to monitor the WhatsApp use, performance and feasibility.

There are positive as well as negative factors. For instance, when using WhatsApp as a customer service channel, a company is literally listed in the friends list of the customers, which is something really personal. Moreover, texting via this app provide a faster response time and consequently, intensify customer satisfaction. It is also seen as a very flexible channel, because customers do not have to visit the website, Facebook or Twitter pages every time they want to start or continue a conversation, whereas they constantly carry their smartphones around. Also, for Eurail.com, is really helpful to share pictures through WhatsApp, due to the fact that customers ask for assistance on how to fill in their traveling details on the rail passes or if a specific type of ID or residency document is valid in Europe, for example.

Conversely, it is important to take into consideration, the costs and feasibility of implementing WhatsApp as a communication channel. It is extremely important to know and balance how expensive it was to implement and set the system, provide training to employees, agents wages, if the app is efficient, how much time a conversation per customer take, the average conversation time and if it helps customers to end up buying the product after having a WhatsApp conversation.

The aim of this research is to investigate, analyze and evaluate the use of WhatsApp as a customer service channel and advise Eurail.com if it should be definitively implemented or not. Therefore, the research was done on "How should the customer service department of Eurail.com proceed regarding the use of WhatsApp as a customer service channel?"

Followed by the sub-questions: (1) What is the degree of customer satisfaction when offering WhatsApp as a customer service channel? (2) What is the response and handling times on WhatsApp compared to conventional email and Facebook? (3) What are the costs per customer service channel? (4) What costs are related to implementing and running a WhatsApp channel? (5) What personal and managerial resources are available within Eurail.com for implementing WhatsApp as a customer service channel?

To support the sub-questions and the main research question, it is important to identify and investigate what are the available resources within the company. Furthermore, it is crucial to analyze the results of offering WhatsApp on customer satisfaction and response time, which means that customers might get faster replies when compared to other customer service channels like conventional email and Facebook. Moreover, knowing the response and handling times per channel is extremely important to calculate costs. Response and handling times measure performance and efficiency by showing how fast and how many messages or emails a customer service agent sends out per hour. With this information, it is possible to calculate and compare costs between different customer service channels.

After having done this research, it is possible to provide Eurail.com with a recommendation on the implementation of WhatsApp. A concrete advice is given based on the findings and results obtained. Eurail.com wants to get closer to customers by offering them a more personalized and innovative communication channel. However, as this was a new project in pilot phase, the company did not know what kind of outcome it was going to bring nor if it was feasible to maintain it. Therefore, with this research, it is attainable to advise how Eurail.com should proceed regarding the use of WhatsApp as a customer service channel, after having analyzed and evaluated the most important aspects discussed in this report like costs, performance, efficiency, feasibility and customer satisfaction.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The importance of customer service department

Customer service is essential to any organization that wants to succeed in its industry or market segment. Customer service is the service provided to customers before, during and after a purchase. No matter the size of the business, an excellent and well-structured customer service needs to be at the heart of the business model in order for a company to become successful. (Business, 2015) (Suttle, 2016) (Stevens, 2010)

It is essential to provide good customer service to all types of customers, including potential, new and existing customers. Even though it can take time and money, excellent customer service can generate positive marketing for the business like word-of-mouth for example, keep the customers happy and mostly important, encourage them to purchase again. Good and loyal customers are a major key to help business grow and prosper. (Business, 2015) (Suttle, 2016) (Stevens, 2010)

A company with excellent customer service is more likely to get repeated business from customers. Consequently, the company will benefit with greater sales and profits. Contrarily, companies with poor customer service may lose customers, which will have a negative impact on business. It costs a lot more money for a company to acquire a customer than to retain them, mainly due to advertising costs. Therefore, the efforts that go into maintaining quality customer service can really pay dividends over time. (Business, 2015) (Suttle, 2016) (Stevens, 2010)

Companies and organizations have been using landline, email and social media channels like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to communicate, engage and provide assistance to its customers. Those means of communication have proven to be effective and efficient, however, more and more, consumers are getting attached to their smartphone devices and using them to do pretty much everything they can, aiming at convenience and practicality. According to Statista, a renowned statistics web portal, the number of smartphone users is forecast to reach 2.08 billion in 2016, which is pretty impressive. (Statista, 2014)

Thus, in order to get closer to customers by providing a more personal service and consequently, boost sales, increase customer satisfaction, loyalty and profitability, many companies are implementing the usage of WhatsApp as a customer service channel. WhatsApp

was created in 2009 and since then, the application has 1 billion users around the world. (WhatsApp, 2016)

Researchers' findings

Research has shown that WhatsApp has proved to be an efficient customer support tool, because it increases customer satisfaction, provides faster response times, boosts sales and increases conversion rates. This means that customers will rather choose to engage and buy from companies that provide this type of communication service. (Lab, 2015) (Singca, 2015) (Mehta, 2015) (Kaur, 2014) (Oliveira, 2013) (Jamaluddin Ibrahim, 2014)

WhatsApp enables one-to-one communication, so customers feel like having a real, personal conversation with the company. They prefer this over publicly sharing their conversation with their network or having a time-consuming call with a customer service landline. (Lab, 2015) (Singca, 2015) (Mehta, 2015) (Kaur, 2014) (Oliveira, 2013) (Jamaluddin Ibrahim, 2014)

Moreover, 40% of WhatsApp users use the app for business as well. Usually, users do not turn off its push notifications, which makes WhatsApp more accessible than social networks like Facebook or Twitter. In addition, customers can immediately share photos, videos and private information: because the messages are private, customers can directly share personal information with the company, like photos or address details. On Twitter or Facebook, they are not able nor comfortable to do that. (Lab, 2015) (Singca, 2015) (Mehta, 2015) (Kaur, 2014) (Oliveira, 2013) (Jamaluddin Ibrahim, 2014)

 Another important aspect is that the application shortens the response time. Communicating via WhatsApp decreases answers and action times, what helps companies to delight their customers. Customer service via WhatsApp is easy and convenient for customers, but they are still delighted when they find out they can use WhatsApp to communicate with companies. (Lab, 2015) (Singca, 2015) (Mehta, 2015) (Kaur, 2014) (Oliveira, 2013) (Jamaluddin Ibrahim, 2014)

Today's world is predominantly technological driven, which has brought about diverse innovation. The complexity of these technologies requires users to abreast themselves with the ever-increasing changes in these technologies. Therefore service providers have to responsively embrace these changes to meet the demands of their consumers. One of such innovations is the upsurge of WhatsApp for business. The tool has become a dominant factor in today's digital world and it is affecting how users communicate and businesses operate. (Tawiah, 2014) (Latiff, 2015) (Hsiao, 2016)

Research has shown that companies are exploiting this channel to maintain customers' loyalty, participation and their opinions for market research. There is also a growing body of international evidence demonstrating the positive impact of digital messaging technologies and this has had positive impact on companies' image, sales and engagement with existing and new customers. (Tawiah, 2014) (Latiff, 2015) (Hsiao, 2016)

AIDA model

In order to implement WhatsApp as an official communication channel, Eurail.com needs to align its customer service department's position with the marketing department's strategy. Therefore, the AIDA model is a useful marketing tool, which helps the company to take and supports such decisions. (Rawal, 2013)

The AIDA model stands for attention, interest, desire, and action. It is an acronym used in marketing and advertising, which helps organizations develop effective communication strategies and communicate with customers in a way that better responds to their needs and desires. (Rawal, 2013)

ATTENTION
"Hey - What is that?"

INTEREST
"Wow, that looks interesting!"

DESIRE
"I would like to have this..."

ACTION
"I'll go ahead to get it!!"

Attention: Creating brand awareness or affiliation with the company's product or service. In this phase, the company will catch customers' attention by offering a new and innovative

communicative channel. This will connect the company's new offering with its image, so customers can associate Eurail.com as an organization offering WhatsApp.

Interest: Generating interest in the benefits of the company's product or service and sufficient interest to encourage the customers to start to research further. After having caught the customers' attention, they will be interested in trying and experiencing the novelty, which attracts new customers and potential sales to Eurail.com.

Desire: This is the desire phase for the company's product or service through an emotional connection, showing Eurail.com's brand personality and moving the consumer from "liking it" to "wanting it". After having used WhatsApp, customers will be triggered and feel the desire of using the products and services that Eurail.com has to offer.

Action: This is the last step of the model, where customers will be influenced and take the final action of purchasing from the company.

That being said, it is important to know when implementing WhatsApp as a customer service channel, Eurail.com is able to have the attention of customers, attract them, fulfill their expectations and consequently, create a strong and healthy relationship with them.

Chapter 3: Research Design

Research methods

Considering what has been mentioned in the introduction and literature, a research was done on "How should the customer service department of Eurail.com proceed regarding the use of WhatsApp as a customer service channel?"

For this research, quantitative and qualitative methods were applied. A consistent and solid desk research is fundamental, because it is considered to be particularly suitable for gaining an in-depth understanding of underlying reasons and motivations. It provides insights into the setting of a problem. Surveys have as a main purpose the quantification of data. This allows generalizations of results and the measurement of the incidence of various views and opinions from the sample. On the other hand, interviews took place. The purpose of the research interview is to explore the views, experiences, beliefs and motivations of individuals on the research topic matters. Qualitative methods, such as interviews, provide a deep understanding of many aspects, which is extremely valuable to combine with quantitative methods, such as surveys. (Creswell, 2003) (Newman, 1998)

In addition, as part of desk research, the use of iMail, which is a supportive system, was extremely important to brace the research methods. iMail is a system that supports and computes all data and information between the customer service activities and the customers. With this system, it is possible to calculate costs and average handling times as well as keep track of conversations. Moreover, a deep analysis and study of costs numbers was made. These numbers include the customer service department budget, wages of the agents involved in dealing with customers on WhatsApp, the cost of setting the WhatsApp system, license costs and other WhatsApp related costs. Out of these numbers, calculations were made and reports were written in order to categorize and evaluate the information obtained.

In order to give a deeper explanation, it is worth to mention that iMail supports the customer service team when processing customer enquiries. The software solution analyses and categorizes the concerns of customers, even in different languages and passes on suitable reply suggestions and text blocks to the relevant staff. In addition, iMail has many other automated functions. The system keeps record of messages and conversations, what provides

precise data for the calculation of response and handling times. With that, costs can be also calculated.

Overall, the data collected from the surveys and interviews was added to the desk research and iMail findings, in order to support and provide answers to the sub-questions and the main research question.

Surveys provide a high level of general capability in representing a sample. Due to the customers who answered the survey, the data gathered contains a better description of the relative characteristics of the sample involved in the study. Surveys can be administered to the participants through a variety of ways.

Research methods per sub-question

The research methods used per sub-questions are as follows:

(1) What is the degree of customer satisfaction when offering WhatsApp as a customer service channel?

For this sub-question, surveys were used, meaning that after every single WhatsApp conversation, customers were asked for feedback.

(2) What is the response and handling times on WhatsApp compared to conventional email and Facebook?

For this sub-question, desk research was done in order to calculate the response and handling times.

(3) What are the costs per customer service channel?

For this sub-question, desk research was done in order to collect data and transform it into meaningful information. As part of desk research, the use of iMail, which is a supportive system, was extremely important to brace the research methods. With this system, it is possible to calculate costs and average handling times. Also, a deep analysis and study of costs was made. The costs include the customer service department budget, wages of the agents involved in dealing with customers on WhatsApp, the cost of setting the WhatsApp system, license costs and other WhatsApp related costs. Out of the gathered data, calculations were made and reports were written in order to categorize and evaluate the information obtained.

(4) What costs are related to implementing and running a WhatsApp channel?

Desk research was done to support this sub-question in order to point out and explain the related costs.

(5) What personal and managerial resources are available within Eurail.com for implementing WhatsApp as a customer service channel?

For this sub-question, desk research and interviews were done to collect data and transform it into meaningful information, in order to explain and describe the company's available resources.

The research methods which were used per sub-question can be seen below:

1st sub-question	2nd sub-question	3rd sub-question	4th sub-question	5th sub-question
Surveys	Desk research	Desk research	Desk research	Interviews and desk research

Sampling

The sample of the research consists of 163 Eurail customers that are using WhatsApp as a customer service channel, plus 1 customer service manager and 1 head of customer service and fulfillment departments. Here it is important to mention that for this research, a total of 163 customers were contacted, however, the number of respondents can vary per sub-question as well as per specific questions asked within the surveys. This happens, because the intention is to provide customers with a more dynamic questionnaire that takes only a few seconds to be answered, so they can always complete it without hesitating. Therefore, the type as well as the number of questions were given to customers randomly.

Furthermore, having interviewed the managers was very valuable, because they have a lot of experience and see things with a more accurate perception. Moreover, they can combine, link and evaluate the relation between the company's available resources and the performance of using WhatsApp as a new communication channel.

For this research, a simple random sampling has been chosen. A group of subjects, which are Eurail.com customers, has been selected for study. Each individual has been chosen entirely by chance. Customers were chosen on a random basis, however, considering that the implementation of WhatsApp was a new project in pilot phase, every single customer had valuable insights that contributed to the research, therefore, the intention was to gather as much

data and information as possible. This way, results are more consistent and solid and biases, are minimized.

Data analysis

For the questions above, surveys were conducted to gather data: after every single WhatsApp conversation, customers were asked for feedback, which was classified in different categories, put together and lastly, evaluated. The evaluation consisted in a careful reading and understanding of the data and percentages obtained, in order to provide the answers for the research questions. Together with surveys, extensive desk research was made and also, the iMail system was used. With this system, it is possible to calculate costs and average handling times as well as keep track of conversations.

For the survey method, reports with statistical figures was the most suitable approach. This means that after data collection, reports were created in order to store and classify all data. Microsoft Word and Excel were the tools used for data gathering and consequently, used to analyze and evaluate findings, which means reading and understanding the data and percentages obtained, in order to provide the answers for the research questions.

Managers were also interviewed. The aim of these interviews is to, based on their knowledge and experience, get useful insights and information about the development and performance of using WhatsApp as a customer service channel. After having done the interviews, transcripts were made and coding took place. Coding was done to organize and sort the data. With that, it is possible to summarize and synthesize what is happening with the data. (Creswell, 2003) (Newman, 1998)

Conceptual model

The research's conceptual model can be seen below:
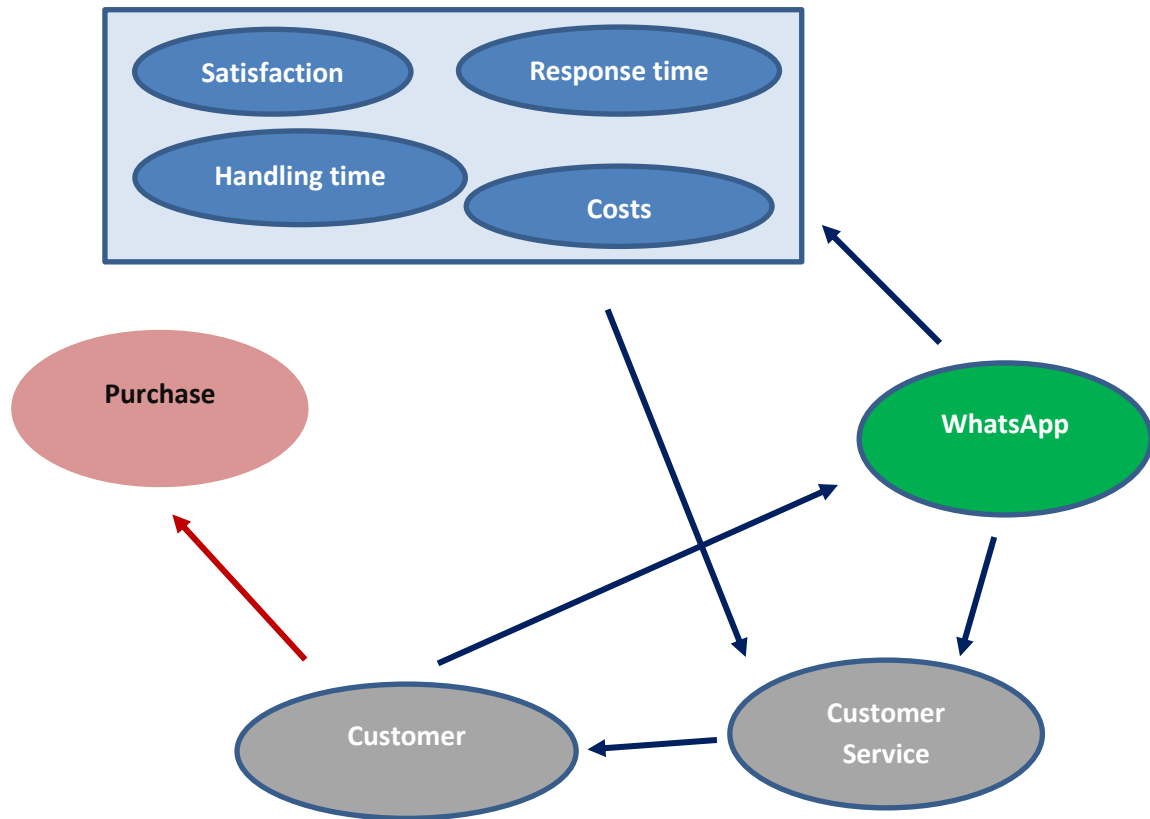
Ethics

Informed consent: Due to ethical reasons, before conducting the surveys, an explanation of what the research is about and how the results were going to be used was given to all participants. Even though participants were not expected to have difficulties responding, they were properly informed and addressed.

The above described strategy, ensured what was expected from participants and what data was going to be used and in what form.

Limitations and considerations

Although the research has reached its aims, there were some unavoidable limitations. First, because of the time limit, considering that it was conducted within approximately 4 months only. Secondly, even though the size of population who participated in this research is considerably reasonable, the number of respondents varied per sub-question as well as per specific questions asked within the surveys. In addition, only customers who have access and are using WhatsApp were reached, what limits the sample, keeping customers that are not aware of this communication channel or that still do not have access to it out.

Moreover, it is important to consider that conducting a research using the survey and interview methods, requires a lot of time to collect, analyze and evaluate data, mainly owing to the number of participants and the variance in their opinions and inputs. Considering that for this research, 163 participants responded to the survey and 2 professional from Eurail.com were interviewed,

Chapter 4: Findings

In this chapter, the findings are being presented and divided by sub-questions and also, research methods. All data used to brace the sub-questions, represents the period of time between April and September of 2016.

Customer satisfaction

What is the degree of customer satisfaction when offering WhatsApp as a customer service channel?

The customers were asked to answer how likely they are to recommend the WhatsApp service to family or friends, how satisfied they are with the service, how influential the service is on their purchase process, what is the most beneficial aspect of the service and if they would end up buying the product. The results obtained were very positive and ranked really high on their respective categories, meaning that in general, customers have highly approved and enjoyed having a WhatsApp communication with Eurail.com. The details of the results obtained are as follows:

Net Promoter Score (NPS)

- On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend this service to friends or family?

For this question, out of 149 respondents, a score of **9,38** was obtained. This is considered a high score, representing how likely customer are to recommend the WhatsApp service to others. This causes a direct impact on the company's sales, image and popularity as well as prove the efficiency of this communication channel.

Satisfaction degree

- On a scale of 0 to 10, how satisfied are you with this service?

For this question, out of 137 respondents, a score of **9,38** was obtained. This is considered a high score, representing how satisfied customer are with the WhatsApp service. This causes a direct impact on the company's sales, image, popularity and customer's loyalty and satisfaction as well as prove the efficiency of this communication channel.

<u>Influence on the purchase</u>

- On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest score and 5 is the highest, how influential our WhatsApp service will be on your purchase process?

For this question, out of 143 respondents, a score of **4,66** was obtained. This is considered a high score, representing the degree of influence that the WhatsApp service has on the customer's purchase. This has a direct effect on the company's sales, profitability and prove the efficiency of this communication channel.

<u>Benefits</u>

- What do you think is the most beneficial aspect of our WhatsApp service?

For this question, out of 132 respondents, **92%** have answered that the most beneficial aspect of the service is the fast response time. As well as this has a direct impact on the customer satisfaction degree, it influences the company's sales and proves the efficiency of this communication channel.

<u>Conversion</u>

- Will you buy a pass from Eurail.com after having this WhatsApp conversation?

For this question, out of 57 respondents, **65%** have answered yes, which means that they would buy a pass after having had a conversation with Eurail.com on WhatsApp. This conversion rate is extremely important to prove the efficiency and the impact that offering WhatsApp as a communication channel has on the company's sales and profitability.

Response and handling times

What is the response and handling times on WhatsApp compared to conventional email and Facebook?

Here is important to compare the different customer service channels. Comparing them is vital to see which one replies faster to customers and also, which one is more efficient and cost-effective when talking about the number of messages that a customer service agent can handle per hour. The results have put WhatsApp in front of the other channels as a more efficient and easier to work with communication channel. It is an easier channel for customer service agents to work with, because answers are more informal and straight to the point, meaning that

replying to a customer's query takes less time than on emails and Facebook posts. The detailed result can be seen below:

<u>Response time</u>

Response time is the length of time taken for a customer service agent or to answer a customer's query, from the moment it comes into the system to the moment the customer receives it back. The response time per channel goes as follow:

- Emails: average response time between April and September **11:59h**
- Facebook: average response time between April and September **11:01h**
- WhatsApp: average response time between April and September **05:48h**

The results above are very important to measure and prove the channel's efficiency and capability. In this case, the WhatsApp response time is faster than Facebook posts and emails. It is also interesting to see the differences between the fastest and slowest response time per channel. For some emails, some Facebook posts and many WhatsApp messages, the fastest reply was answered within 1 minute. However, the slowest email was replied in 26 hours, while the slowest Facebook post was replied in 20 hours and the slowest WhatsApp message, in 15 hours. However, on average, WhatsApp messages are replied within a few hours, while emails and Facebook posts take more than 11 hours to be answered.

<u>Handling time</u>

The handling time is a metric for the average length of contact in the customer service department. It measures how many emails, Facebook posts or WhatsApp messages a customer service agent can handle per hour. It is one of the most commonly analyzed KPIs in this sector and assessed when measuring efficiency. The handling time per channel is being shown below:

- Emails: average handling time between April and September **6.76** emails per hour
- Facebook: average handling time between April and September **6.76** Facebook posts per hour
- WhatsApp: average handling time between April and September **8.74** WhatsApp messages per hour

The results above show and distinguish how many messages customer service agents can handle per hour using different communication channels. This also proves the efficiency and productivity of the agents related to the different channels. In this case, the WhatsApp average handling time is higher than Facebook posts and emails.

What is interesting to see here, is that the fastest customer service agents can handle up to 20 WhatsApp messages per hours, while those same agents, can handle a max of 10 emails or Facebook posts within the same time frame. This happens, mainly because WhatsApp is an informal and personal communication channel, which requires less formal and more direct answers. For emails and Facebook, the language and the public is different, therefore, more standard, formal and structured answers and needed.

Costs per channel

What are the costs per customer service channel?

For this sub-question, desk research was done in order to collect data and transform it into meaningful information. As part of desk research, the use of iMail, which is a supportive system, as well as managers insights were extremely important to complete the findings. With this system, it is possible to calculate costs and average handling times. Also, a deep analysis and study of costs was made, by checking Excel files and financial records containing wages and precise numbers, for example. The costs include the wages of the agents involved in dealing with customers on WhatsApp, the cost of setting the WhatsApp system, license costs and other WhatsApp related costs. Out of the gathered data, calculations were made in order to categorize and evaluate the information obtained.

Costs per channel

It is very important to know how much each different customer service channel cost in order to evaluate their feasibility and cost-effectiveness. This is fundamental for the organization to precisely know the numbers of the different investments that must be made as well as the balance between implementation and performance.

To calculate the monthly costs, is fundamental to know the cost of the license fee per channel and the wages paid to customer service agents. The table below show the detailed costs per customer service channel. In the first column, the license fee per month can be seen. In the second column, the hourly salary of the customer service agents. In the third column, the

number of messages that the same customer service agents can handle per hour is being shown. In the fourth column, the number of messages received per month is stated. Lastly, the fifth and most important column shows the total cost per channel per month.

	License per month	Salary per hour	Messages handled per hour (AHT*)	Messages received per month	Total cost per month
Email	EUR 1200	11,50	6.76	6500	**EUR 12.200**
Facebook	EUR 700	11,50	6.76	3700	**EUR 7.000**
WhatsApp	EUR 500	11,50	8.74	2500	**EUR 3.800**

*AHT = Average handling time

In order to calculate the total monthly cost of a channel, it is necessary to divide the number of messages received by the number of messages that an agent can handle per hour. The result gives the number of hours that agents worked in a month. Then, it is necessary to multiply this number by the hourly salary to obtain the total salary paid to the agents. Lastly, when adding the total salary to the license fee, the total cost of a channel is obtained.

The results above indicate that WhatsApp is overall, a more cost-effective channel, because its average handling time is higher than the other channels and also, its license fee is cheaper.

Related costs

What costs are related to implementing and running a WhatsApp channel?

For this sub-question, a vast desk research was done in order to point out and explain the related costs. Excel files, financial records as well as receipts and invoices were analyzed and taken into consideration in order to collect, describe and make calculations. Moreover, insights from managers were really helpful to complete these findings.

The costs related to implementing and running the WhatsApp channel encompass configuration set up, license fee, two SIM cards containing the phone numbers, training the customer service agents and extra overhead costs involving four customer service agents who had to finish setting up the system, communicate the rest of the team and the organization and make some phone calls.

It is really important for the company to know what costs are related to implementing and running the WhatsApp channel, in order to calculate and analyze how expensive and feasible is to invest in such a channel. All cost details can be seen below:

Description	Cost
Configuration system set up costs	EUR 3000
License fee	EUR 500/month fixed
2x phone numbers	EUR 20
Training CS Agents	EUR 11.50 x 30 agents = EUR 345
Office team set up (4 CS* agents)	12hrs x EUR 11.50 = EUR 115
Total cost	**EUR 3.980**

*CS = Customer service

It is important to point out that the costs shown by the table above add up to EUR 3980, which is related to implementing and running the WhatsApp channel. These costs were held to set up the whole system, before opening WhatsApp as a customer service channel in April of 2016. To see how much the WhatsApp channel cost per month, please check the sub-question 3 section of this chapter.

Resources

What personal and managerial resources are available within Eurail.com for implementing WhatsApp as a customer service channel?

For this sub-question, desk research and interviews were done to collect data and transform it into meaningful information, in order to explain and describe the company's available resources. The desk research was fundamental to find and put together all information needed to come up with a solid, consistent and relevant preparation for conducting the interviews. A customer service manager and the head of the customer service and fulfillment departments were interviewed, what enabled gathering information to precisely brace this sub-question. The interviews were important, because the interviewees have a lot of experience and professionalism, what gives them the power and possibility to point out and explain different matters with precision and relevant information.

After having done the interviews, managerial and personal resources were pointed and described in detail, addressing every single aspect of it:

Managerial resources

As part of the company's managerial resources, Richard Meijer, the head of customer service and fulfillment departments, was a key player. He made sure the WhatsApp project would become live before the end of the second quarter of the year, he requested the proposal at Novomind's (company which provides Eurail.com with the WhatsApp system and license) account management, negotiated the implementation of the channel and the license costs. Also, after the implementation of WhatsApp, Richard will also be the responsible for monitoring and evaluating the performance of this channel and report its results to the company's CEO, Brenda Van Leeuwen.

Moreover, Rick Kruize and Othilde Petersen, both marketing managers, were essential pieces of the company's managerial resources to make the project happen. They were responsible for the proposition of the WhatsApp channel, meaning that they had to establish how this would fit in the company's proposition, what kind of response time the company wants to offer, what languages and how this new channel would be promoted. Not only during the pilot phase, but also after the implementation of WhatsApp, Rick and Othilde will be the responsible for measuring the WhatsApp sentiment in the market, as well as monitoring and adapting the company's image and proposition according to the variances and trends of the market and industry. They are also require to report the results to the company's CEO, Brenda Van Leeuwen.

It is important to mention, that the managerial personal was not only responsible to bring the WhatsApp pilot to live, but also are the ones who are responsible to maintain the channel after its final implementation, for example. They are the ones who have the specific and required skills, as mentioned above, to instruct other company's professionals and guide the organization as a whole regarding this matter.

Personal resources

As part of the personal resources, Marisa Villarejo, Silja Kuhnel and Pedro Lima were three essential persons within the organization. Marisa is the customer service manager, Silja is the customer service supervisor and Pedro, a senior customer service agent. Those three together, were responsible for writing manuals, training agents, instructing the rest of the customer service team, creating inboxes in the system, giving users access to the system, working together with other departments like marketing and IT, testing the system, evaluating the

WhatsApp pilot project, communicating the company internally and supporting users with all types of queries that would raise related to the WhatsApp system.

The whole customer service department has been methodically trained to handle the WhatsApp channel and is fully prepared to continue taking care of customers after its definite implementation, if decided.

In addition, Jacob Boersma, part of the company's IT team, was responsible for arranging the phone numbers and SIM cards, which would be used for setting the WhatsApp channel.

Also, James Harding, the website content writer, was responsible for creating a special section on the company's website, which would allow customers to see and add the company's WhatsApp number to their devices and therefore, reach the customer service team.

The findings above are result of two solid and informative interviews. The first interview was made with Richard Meijer, head of Eurail.com's customer service and fulfillment departments and Marisa Villarejo, the customer service manager. These two participants were chosen, because they were in touch with the WhatsApp project and are the ones who have more insights and experience with this communication channel. Next to it, two customer service agents were also asked to give their input and speak on behalf of the team. They have confirmed that the customer service team has been dealing really well with the WhatsApp channel, is fully trained and ready to continue working with it after its implementation.

Chapter 5: Discussion & Conclusions

Implementing WhatsApp: What does it mean to Eurail.com?

Implementing WhatsApp as customer service channel, means a lot to Eurail.com as a company and well stablished organization. This is a big step towards technology and communication improvements as well as increasing customer intimacy, what besides helping the company to get closer to the customers, it also enables Eurail.com to improve highly tailored problem solving capabilities and have a greater adaptation of products to customer needs, as well as higher customer loyalty levels.

The findings of this research, which will be discussed further in this chapter, have shown that offering WhatsApp to the customers, is proving to be a very effective communication channel, which increases customer satisfaction, increases the company's net promoter score, has a huge positive influence on the purchase process and therefore, a great impact on sales. To reinforce that, the WhatsApp channel has an extremely positive conversion rate, meaning that customer are buying the company's products after having a conversation via this channel.

In addition, when implementing WhatsApp as a new customer service channel, Eurail.com is getting ahead of its biggest competitors like RailEurope and STB. This communicational and technological advantage, help Eurail.com to gain a bigger market share, by attracting new customers and also, by creating a strong and loyal relationship with them. On top of that, this new communication channel helps to maintain old customers and also, encourage them to get in touch with the company and therefore, make them feel like using the company's products and services again.

What does it mean to the company's departments?

As mentioned above, adding WhatsApp to the company's communication portfolio means a lot to Eurail.com as a company. However, this also means a lot to the different departments of the organization.

Customer service: It generates more work for the customer service agents, like the number of pre-sales and after-sales queries, for example. In addition, it also increases the touch points between the customer and the customer service department.

Marketing: It increases the marketing department's promotional and communicational activities. It also, raises the monitoring of the company's image and public sentiment on social media as well as in the market and industry.

IT: Implementing a WhatsApp channel increases IT's challenges, because this is a new system for them, with different features and different functionalities, what requires more time to understand, spot and fix potential bugs and system failures, for example.

Finance: It is exciting for the finance department to see, analyze and evaluate the impact of WhatsApp on the company's sales, revenue and profitability. This helps to measure the financial performance of this new communication channel.

Results and conclusions

To embrace the performance and efficiency of WhatsApp, it is important to show and present the results of this research. The findings section of this research has shown outstanding results related to the WhatsApp implementation and performance.

Firstly, the degree of customer satisfaction was rated really high, meaning that customers are extremely satisfied with the WhatsApp communication channel. The Net Promoter Score was rated 9,38 on a scale of 0 to 10, which represents that customers are very likely to recommend this service to family members and friends. This is very good for the company's image, popularity and also, sales. Moreover, the satisfaction degree was also very positive, it was rated 9,38 on a scale from 0 to 10. This means that customers are extremely satisfied with this service, what is fundamental to maintain a good relationship with them and keep them loyal. Another positive factor is the influence on the purchase. On a scale of 1 to 5, a 4,66 rate was obtained, meaning that the WhatsApp channel, has a huge influence on the customer's purchase process. Moving forward, 92% of the respondents said that the most beneficial aspect of the service is the fast response time, which means that customers would get their answers really fast, what helps to keep them satisfied by assisting them and therefore, supporting them on the purchase process. Lastly, a very impressive conversion rate of 65% was obtained, meaning that 65% of the respondents would buy the company's product right after having had a WhatsApp conversation. This is a great achievement, which has direct impact on sales.

The findings also pointed out that WhatsApp has a faster response time and a higher handling time when compared to conventional emails and Facebook posts. While conventional emails have an average of 11:59 hours response time and Facebook 11:01 hours, WhatsApp has an

average response time of 5:48 hours. This means that customers receive their answers via WhatsApp way faster than via the other two channels. Furthermore, the average handling time for emails and Facebook posts is 6.76 messages per hour, while for WhatsApp it is 8.74 messages per hours. This means that customer service agents can answer almost 2 more messages per hour on WhatsApp when compared to the other two channels. This happens mainly because WhatsApp requires a more informal and to the point conversation, what proves the efficiency of the channel and the increased productivity of the agents.

When talking about costs, WhatsApp also proved to be a less costly channel to maintain and therefore, more cost-effective, when compared to conventional emails and Facebook posts. This happens mainly because its average handling time is higher than the other channels and also, its license fee is cheaper. While the emails channels cost Eurail.com EUR 12.000 per month and Facebook EUR 7.000, WhatsApp costs EUR 3.800. The details of these costs can be seen in chapter 4.

It is important to mention, that even though it is not an amount the organization needs to worry about, there are also many costs to implement and run the WhatsApp channel. The costs encompass configuring and setting up the system, the license fee, SIM cards, training customer service agents to be able to use the system and approach customers on WhatsApp and some office overhead costs. All the costs add up to EUR 3.980 and they can be seen in details in chapter 4.

In order to transform the idea of having WhatsApp as a customer service channel into really having it set up and open to customers, having managerial and personal resources within the company are essential. In Eurail.com it is not different and many employees had to put a lot of effort and dedication into this project in order to make it happen.

As part of the company's managerial resources, customer service and marketing managers were fundamental pieces and played a very important role to bring this project to life. They had to make sure the project would become live before the end of the second quarter of 2016, they had to request proposals from the account managers of the WhatsApp provider, negotiate the implementation of the channel as well as the license costs. Additionally, they were responsible for the proposition of the channel, having to decide how this would fit in Eurail.com's proposition, what kind of response time and what language the company would offer to its customers and also, how this new channel would be promoted.

As part of the personal resources, customer service agents and supervisors together with IT experts and content writers were essential persons to help making the WhatsApp project possible. They were responsible for writing manuals, training agents, instructing the rest of the customer service team, creating inboxes in the system, giving users access to the system, working together with other departments like marketing and IT, testing the system, evaluating the WhatsApp pilot project, communicating the company internally and supporting users with all types of queries that would raise related to the WhatsApp system. Furthermore, they were responsible for arranging the phone numbers and SIM cards, which would be used for setting the WhatsApp channel and for creating a special section on the company's website, which would allow customers to see and add the company's WhatsApp number to their devices and therefore, reach the customer service team.

SWOT analysis and future references

It is important to categorize and evaluate the findings in order to discuss possibilities, identify opportunities and come up with solid conclusions. Therefore, a SWOT analysis with the main aspects of this research is helpful to brace right decisions.

Strenghts
- High Net Promoter Score
- High customer satisfaction degree
- Positive influence on the purchase process
- Increase customer loyalty
- Fast response time
- High conversion rate
- Less costly than other channels

Weaknesses
- Hard to set up the system
- Takes time to configure the system

SWOT

Opportunities
- Be ahead of competition by offering an exclusive service
- Targetting new audience
- There's a growing community of WhatsApp users in Europe
- Improving communication provacy in the market

Threats
- If WhatsApp decides to change their working policies, it will have a direct impact on the company's business
- If competitors start using different communication channels, this might be an obstacle for the company

As shown and explained previously in this chapter as well as in chapter 4 of this research, offering WhatsApp as a customer service channel has many beneficial factors. It increases customer satisfaction, has a very positive influence on the purchase process, increases

customer loyalty, provides faster response time and increases the conversion rate. Thus, the findings results confirm what has been stated back in the literature review section (chapter 2), where research has shown that WhatsApp has proved to be an efficient customer support tool, because it increases customer satisfaction, provides faster response times, boosts sales and increases conversion rates. This means that customers will rather choose to engage and buy from companies that provide this type of communication service. (Lab, 2015) (Singca, 2015) (Mehta, 2015) (Kaur, 2014) (Oliveira, 2013) (Jamaluddin Ibrahim, 2014)

Furthermore, linking the findings back to the literature review in chapter 2, research has pointed out that WhatsApp shortens the response time. Communicating via WhatsApp decreases answers and action times, what helps companies to delight their customers. Customer service via WhatsApp is easy and convenient for customers, but they are still delighted when they find out they can use WhatsApp to communicate with companies. (Lab, 2015) (Singca, 2015) (Mehta, 2015) (Kaur, 2014) (Oliveira, 2013) (Jamaluddin Ibrahim, 2014)

This research has proven to be very solid and consistent, because the findings are reinforcing what has been researched before by other researches and explicitly mentioned in the literature review. The points mentioned above as well as the links which allow the connection between the findings and the literature review, are crucial to fortify the quality, power and precision of this research. This is not only important to prove the consistency of this research, but also to provide valid arguments and recommendations for further researches. In addition, this research has been methodically conducted, with a lot of structure, concise data and information as well as a vast desk research to brace and back up all content proportionated.

For future references, is vital to consider that offering WhatsApp as a business tool for companies, especially for customer service departments, is still something new in the market, especially in Europe. Therefore, it is not easy to find relevant books, articles, researches, scientific texts and other relevant journals related to this topic. This can make the life of researchers harder, quite disappointing even and extremely time consuming, when talking about finding relevant information. Nonetheless, this is a very actual and interesting topic, especially in this technologic world, where industries and companies are changing and this tool enables them to bring their game to another level.

For this reason, it would be extremely valuable for Eurail.com, to extend this research after the implementation of WhatsApp as a customer service channel and evaluate its performance and efficiency, after having decided whether to continue the new communication channel as a

definite mean of communication with its customers. This way, the organization can certify that the obtained results match with the expectations and feasibility of maintaining this new and innovative customer service tool.

That being said, it is also relevant to add some technical insights, which were not found in other researcher's content, and are result of being in touch with the whole Eurail.com's WhatsApp project preparation and implementation. Even though WhatsApp is a very user-friendly tool, which has a huge popularity among users, it is not too easy to set up the system and configure it for business purposes, talking from an IT perspective. This process can take up to a few weeks and requires a lot of skills to be executed. In order to have WhatsApp set for business, companies need to have a skillful managerial team with a hands-on attitude.

Lastly, it is important to mention that there are some threats that could possibly come from the external environment and affect and cause a direct impact on the company's business, plans, strategy and goals. For example, if the WhatsApp company decides to change their working policies due to law changes or new regulations that must be followed. Likewise, if other companies and direct competitors start using different communication channels, this might be an obstacle so the company needs to adjust, adapt or even change its business model to survive and turn the table in its favor. Eurail.com knows about this possible threats and needs to be aware and constantly monitoring the external environment to be able to react fast, if needed.

Chapter 6: Recommendations

The aim of this research is to investigate, analyze and evaluate the use of WhatsApp as a customer service channel and advise Eurail.com if it should be definitively implemented or not. Therefore, the research was done on "How should the customer service department of Eurail.com proceed regarding the use of WhatsApp as a customer service channel?"

To answer this question and provide Eurail.com with a final recommendation, there are two possible options: not implementing WhatsApp as a definitive customer service channel or implementing WhatsApp as a definitive customer service channel.

Option 1: Not Implementing WhatsApp

The difficulty to set up the system and the time it takes to configure it, could be negative points when taking into consideration the implementation of WhatsApp as a customer service channel. Moreover, the costs related to it, which encompass configuring and setting up the system, the license fee, SIM cards, training customer service agents to be able to use the system and approach customers on WhatsApp and some office overhead costs add up to EUR 3.980.

However, it is worth to mention that Eurail.com works with conventional emails and Facebook, which also had to be set up and configured beforehand. Moreover, these two other channels had their costs as well, costs that always are going to be consequence of implementing new channels and adding different tools to the company's portfolio.

Option 2: Implementing WhatsApp

This research has shown that WhatsApp has a high Net Promoter Score, has a high satisfaction degree, high influence on the purchase process, faster response time when compared to emails and Facebook, and a high conversion rate. Furthermore, because it is a tool which allows informal communication, customer service agents can handle more messages on an hourly basis on WhatsApp than on emails and Facebook. In addition, the costs to maintain the WhatsApp channel per month are lower than emails and Facebook as well.

The information stated above speaks for itself, putting WhatsApp in a very comfortable and favorable position, when compared to two other channels, which were definitively implemented by Eurail.com. Moreover, WhatsApp also proved to be a less costly channel to maintain and

therefore, more cost-effective, when compared to conventional emails and Facebook posts. This happens mainly because its average handling time is higher than the other channels and also, its license fee is cheaper. While the emails channels cost Eurail.com EUR 12.000 per month and Facebook EUR 7.000, WhatsApp costs EUR 3.800. Detailed information about costs and benefits can be found in chapters 4 and 5.

Final recommendation

<u>"How should the customer service department of Eurail.com proceed regarding the use of WhatsApp as a customer service channel?"</u>

After having completed this research, it is clearly possible to advise the customer service department of Eurail.com to proceed and implement WhatsApp as a definite customer service channel.

The tool has proven to be useful, helpful and cost-effective. As mentioned before in this report, offering WhatsApp as a communication channel increases customer satisfaction and boosts sales. Extremely positive results were obtained on Net Promoter Score, satisfaction degree, influence on the purchase process and conversion rate. These are main factors, which are essential for analyzing and evaluating the performance of this channel.

Furthermore, the WhatsApp response time is faster than conventional emails and Facebook posts. This also indicates a greater velocity when communicating with customers and consequently, assisting them in all kinds of matters in a faster way. In addition, the customer service agents have a higher average handling time on WhatsApp, meaning that agents can handle more messages with this tool per hours, what shows an increase in productivity and touch points between the company and its customers.

Another essential aspect is the costs and here, WhatsApp has a huge advantage over conventional emails and Facebook. For Eurail.com, on a monthly basis, WhatsApp is 1.5 times cheaper to maintain than Facebook and 3 times cheaper than email, which is a pretty impressive figure. This is definitely a big differential and weight factor when having to decide if a new channel should be implemented or not. This figure speaks for itself, making of WhatsApp the most cost-effective channel from the company's communication channels portfolio. The cost difference between channels is mainly due to the higher average handling time on WhatsApp and its lower license fee.

Overall, it is possible to conclude that implementing WhatsApp as a customer service channel, next to conventional email and Facebook, will be a great addition to not only Eurail.com's customer service department, but also for the whole organization itself. This will not only keep the company ahead of its competition, but will also make the company standout from the customer perspective, attracting new customers, maintaining a great relationship and loyalty with them, gaining market share, boosting sales at the same time as being innovative in its industry.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1: Data Dashboards

TOTAL EURAIL CONTACTS
Target already includes 10% contact ratio decrease and latest sales/traffic forecast

Total Eurail Contacts

Legend: ■ CS Emails ■ Facebook ■ ML emails ■ ML calls

TOTAL INTERRAIL CONTACTS
Target includes 10% contact ratio decrease and latest sales/traffic forecast

All Interrail contacts 2016

Legend: ■ CS emails ■ Facebook ■ ML emails ■ ML calls
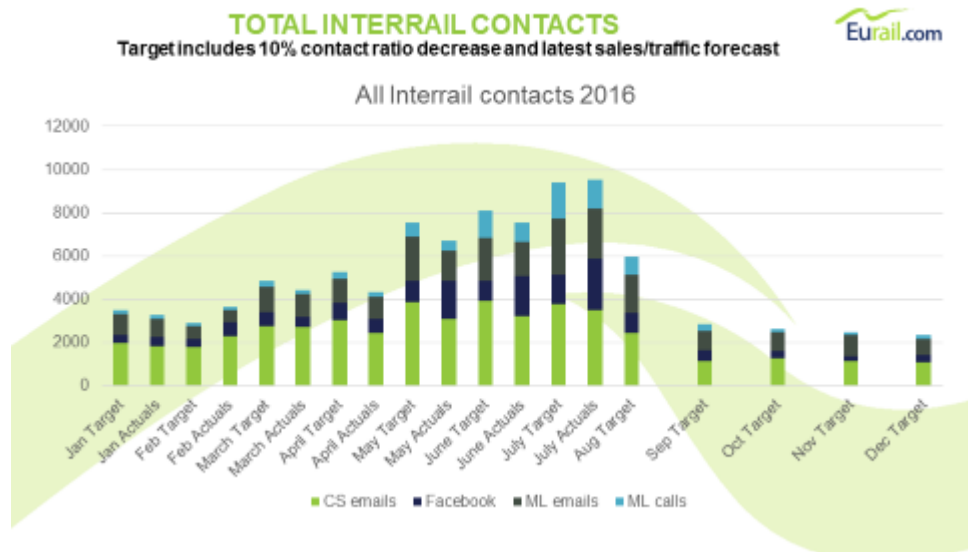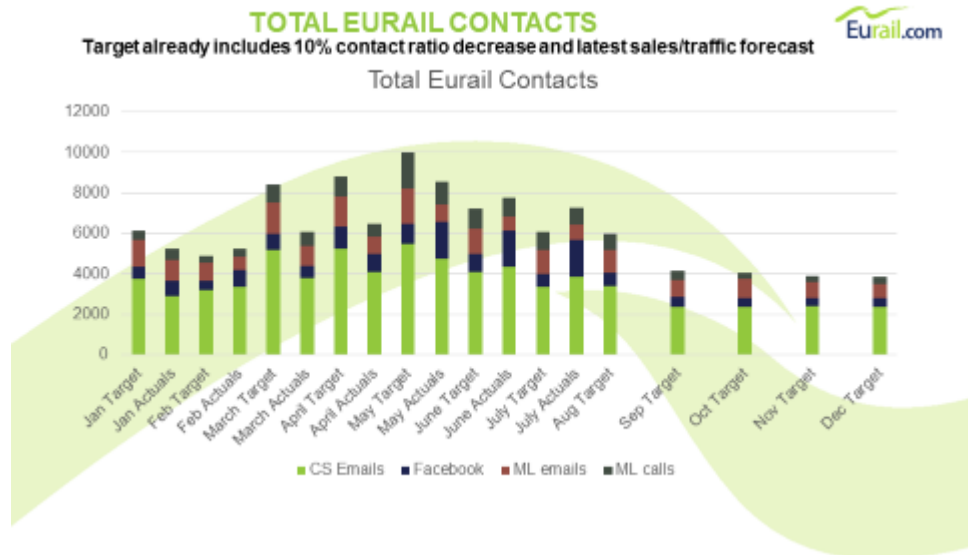
Homeworkers emails - Contact ratio

Contact ratio means: Contacts divided by orders. To easily see contacts as a part of the sales volumes.
This is why there is a peak in low season, as the orders have a stronger seasonal influence than our contacts.

Eurail.com

Eurail

—Target (=2015 - 10%) —2016

Homeworkers emails
Contact ratio (= emails divided by orders)

Eurail.com

Interrail

—Target (=2015 - 10%) —2016
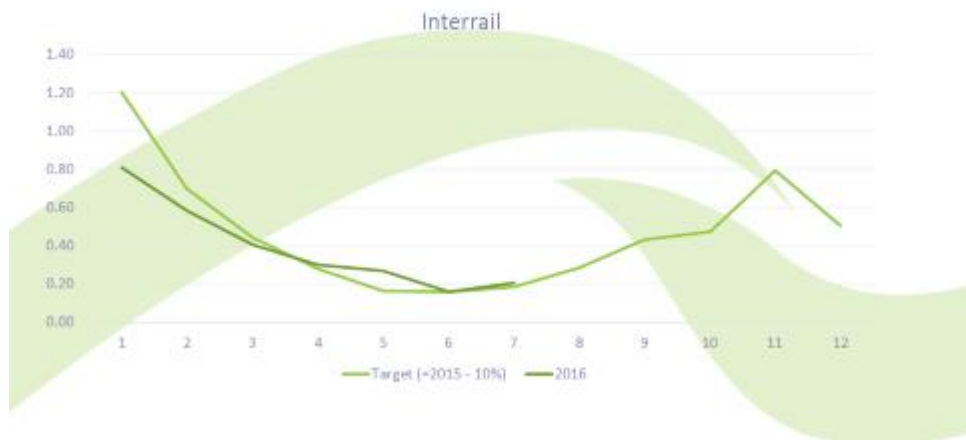
AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME FACEBOOK
(4 HOURS, 24/7)

Eurail.com

Eurail + Interrail + GRP
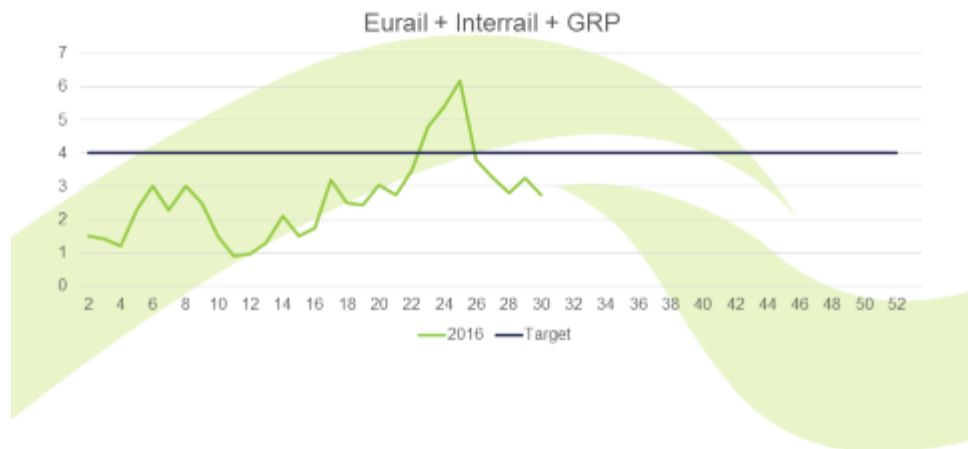
SERVICE LEVELS EMAILS HOMEWORKERS
(24 HOURS, 24/7)

Eurail.com

IR + ER + GRP

YTD Result: 97,4%
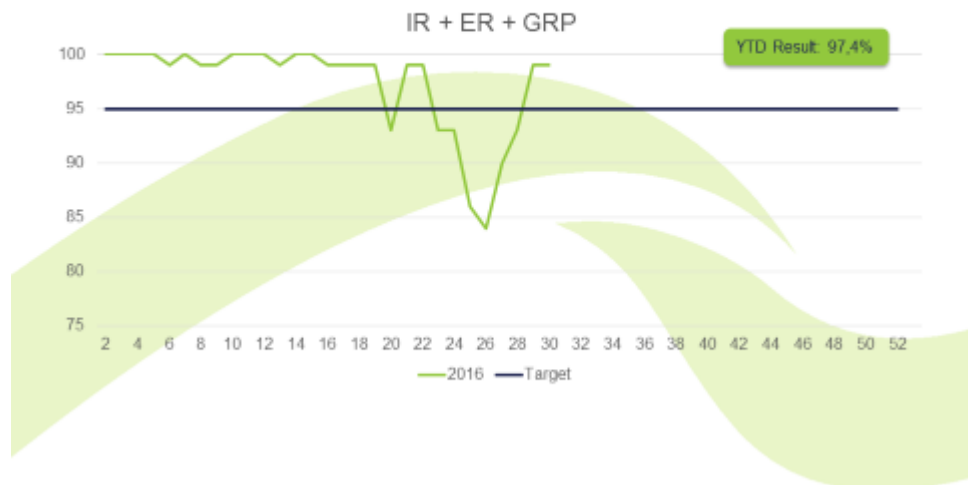
AVERAGE HANDLING TIME HOMEWORKERS
(6,8 EMAILS AND FB POSTS PER HOUR AS YEARLY AVERAGE)

Eurail.com

Emails & Facebook Homeworkers

Result 2015:	5,1
Target 2016:	6,8
Result YTD:	6,7

2016 — Original target --- Remaining target
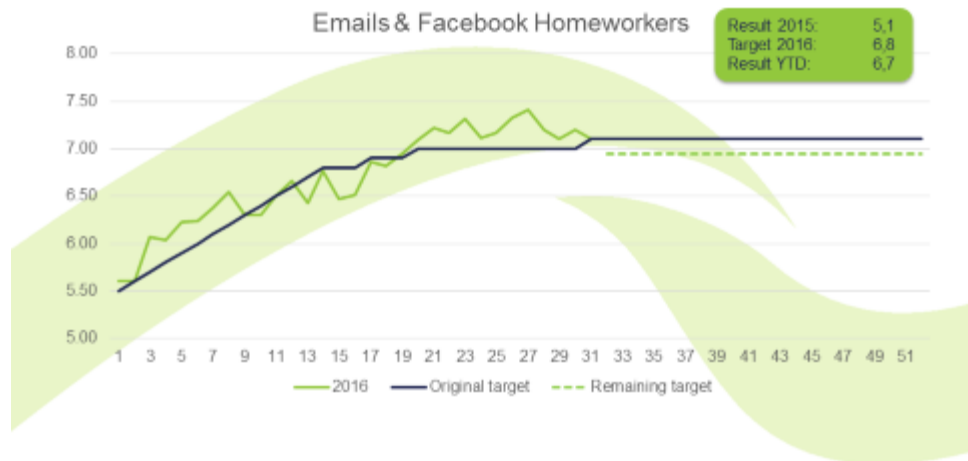
Appendix 2: Questionnaire

CUSTOMER-ID	ON A SCALE OF 0 TO 10, HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO RECOMMEND THIS SERVICE TO FRIENDS OR FAMILY?	ON A SCALE OF 0 TO 10, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THIS SERVICE?	WILL YOU BUY A PASS FROM EURAIL.COM?
706689	8	-	-
707074	10	-	Most probably
707169	10	-	Just bought
707170	10	-	Most likely
707424	10	-	Yes
707681	-	9	Yes
707763	10	10	Already has a pass
707806	10	10	-
707842	-	9	Will order soon
707892	-	9	Haven't decided yet
708258	10	10	-
708335	10	10	-
708342	10	10	-
708419	10	10	-
708538	8	9	-
708756	8	9	-
708856	10	10	-
708898	10	10	-
709725	-	10	Yes
709783	-	10	Yes
709863	10	-	Yes
710240	10	10	-
710280	-	10	Already has a pass
710316	10	-	He hopes so
710361	10	-	Yes
710386	-	9	Yes
710809	10	10	-
710904	10	-	Yes
710921	-	10	Yes
710972	-	10	Yes
711339	8	9	-
711369	8	10	-
711375	10	10	-
711378	8	-	Yes
711434	10	10	-
711456	10	10	-

711469	10	10	-
711479	10	10	-
711512	9	10	-
711533	10	10	-
711563	10	10	-
711687	9	10	-
711999	9	9	-
712000	10	-	Not sure
712018	9	-	She hopes to
712976	9	7	-
713009	10	10	-
713038	9	9	-
713043	9	9	-
713123	10	-	Yes
713125	8	8	-
713509	-	10	Yes
713547	-	10	Yes
713717	10	10	-
713745	4	5	-
713755	10	10	-
713787	-	10	Most likely
713827	10	-	Yes
714555	10	9	-
714687	-	9	Yes
714691	10	10	-
714694	7	9	-
714732	10	10	-
714752	10	10	-
714768	10	10	-
714793	10	10	-
714796	10	9	-
714914	10	10	-
715288	8	8	-
715326	10	10	Yes
715334	10	-	Already bought
716652	8	8	-
716675	9	10	-
716695	9	9	-
716782	10	10	-
716783	8	-	Yes
716804	9	8	-
717143	8	8	-
717204	8	9	-

717412	10	10	-
717413	10	10	-
717462	8	10	-
717454	10	10	-
717977	10	10	-
717984	9	10	-
718045	10	10	-
718334	10	-	Yes
718882	10	-	Not sure
718935	10	10	-
718937	10	8	-
718941	10	10	-
718957	10	10	-
718975	9	8	-
719024	10	-	Yes
719457	10	8	-
719967	8	-	Yes
720155	10	10	-
720184	10	10	-
720259	5	7	-
720277	10	10	-
720381	10	-	Yes
720885	9	-	Yes
720887	9	-	Maybe in the future
720902	10	10	-
720913	10	-	Yes
720920	9	-	Already bought one
721023	10	-	Yes
721024	10	10	-
721051	10	10	-
720253	10	9	-
720363	10	10	-
720996	10	10	Already bought
721095	5	7	-
721151	8	8	Already bought
721286	10	10	Yes
721378	10	10	-
721177	10	10	Yes
721353	10	10	-
721534	10	10	Yes
721750	10	9	-
721787	10	10	Yes
722212	10	10	No

721728	9	10	Probably
721936	10	10	-
721965	10	10	-
722426	9	9	-
722441	8	9	-
722463	10	10	-
722820	9	9	-
722802	10	10	-
726304	10	10	-
726685	10	10	-
726697	10	10	-
727260	10	10	-
729513	10	10	
723003	6	7	-
722993	7	7	-
723241	-	10	-
726871	9	9	-
726912	10	9	Probably yes.
727182	10	10	-
727195	10	10	-
728204	10	10	Probably yes.
728362	10	10	-
728364	10	10	-
728431	10	1	Yes.
729449	8	7	Yes.
729513	10	10	-
728459	10	10	-
728450	9	9	-
729109	8	10	-
729099	10	10	Yes
729091	10	10	-
729057	10	10	-
729220	8	9	-
729158	8	7	Of course
729795	7	6	-
730061	10	10	Yes
730125	8	10	-
729992	10	10	-
730634	10	10	Yes
730542	10	8	Yes
731064	10	10	-

Appendix 3: Average Handling Times

WhatsApp									
Yearly average	23	24	25	26	27 - 32	33	34	35	36
8.74	8.49	8.13	7.95	8.45	8.74	12.50	7.97	8.01	8.43

EMAILS & FACEBOOK														
Yearly average	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
6.76	7.32	7.12	7.17	7.33	7.41	7.20	7.12	7.19	7.14	7.05	7.14	7.27	7.22	7.41