

Japanese Operators Successfully Roll Out RCS Messaging to 20 Million Subscribers (& Growing)



The Challenge:

With mobile network operators (MNOs) across the globe seeing an uptick in network utilization with a flat-to-down revenue stream, it begs the question: Where will revenue growth come from?

In Japan, the three largest operators chose not to ignore the changing landscape, but to evolve with it. So, what motivated them to take a proactive stance?

Simple. The changing landscape simultaneously increased consumer expectations. New products, services and experiences caused a shift in the way consumers spent their time and money. Knowing this, it was clear that the operators had to begin differentiating their services to remain top-of-mind to their valued consumers.

Due to the rising network utilization and consumers communicating solely through SMS and email technology, it was clear that the best starting point for an improved customer service lies within the messaging ecosystem. Consumers were accustomed to these services and had started to become comfortable using messaging to engage with more than just their families and friends.

This opened a massive opportunity for the operators to launch an easy-to-use and more secure form of messaging that enabled richer communication across channels that introduced brands to consumers. This capability expanded far beyond SMS and email, and was built upon Rich Communication Services (RCS) technology. RCS is the catalyst for new revenue opportunities and evolving business models that the operators were looking for.

AT A GLANCE

INDUSTRY:

- Top 3 Japanese Mobile Network Operators
- 181 million subscribers

CHALLENGES:

- Lack of interoperability across all three network providers
- New services taking subscriber attention away from network providers
- Increase in network utilization with a flat-to-down revenue stream

SOLUTION:

Synchronoss Advanced Messaging

RESULTS:

- 20 million +Message subscribers
- 50% reduction in customer care agent attrition
- 50% cost savings as compared to voice customer care
- 86% customer satisfaction rating

Synchronoss Advanced Messaging



The Solution: Synchronoss Advanced Messaging

In March of 2018, the three largest Japanese operators announced their partnership to create the world's first operator consortium and unveiled the +Message service. This rich communication services (RCS), advanced messaging application allows interoperability across all three network providers, powered by Synchronoss Technologies.

The rollout of +Message began with person-to-person (P2P) messaging functionality which delivers a personalized service through easy, convenient and fun messaging interactions previously unachievable with standard SMS technology, thus encouraging consumer adoption and bringing the consumer relationship back into the hands of the operator. Though P2P did not immediately contribute to the operators' bottom line, it was a critical component to getting initial user adoption and provide the interoperability Japanese subscribers were looking for.

+Message then rolled out their business messaging capabilities with both application-to-person (A2P) and person-to-application (P2A) functionality. Operators, as the first brands on the platform, enabled subscribers to directly interact with operator customer care via RCS messaging. This gives users the ability to chat with operator customer service through the app rather than waiting on a customer care call or going to a retail location.

Earlier this year, in the second quarter of 2020, +Message was chosen by the top financial institutions in Japan to enable a common user interface for safe and secure banking transactions. This service is called AIRPOST and is provided by TOPPAN FORMS. Participating companies include MUFG Bank, The Mitsubishi UFJ Factors, The Musashino Bank, JCB and Tokio Marine & Nichido Fire Insurance.

The Results: (The Value to the Operator)

STRONG SUBSCRIBER ADOPTION

The +Message subscriber base continues to grow exponentially, and brand interest and adoption continue to climb as well. On November 10, 2020, the Japanese consortium announced reaching 20 million +Message subscribers.

20 million+ subscribers reached in 2020



IMPROVED CUSTOMER CARE

The customer care chat function of +Message has shown an increase in customer satisfaction, reduced agent attrition and increased operator cost savings due to the simplified customer care journey. One of the three operators experienced 86% customer satisfaction rating, which is 10 percent higher than through a traditional voice channel. The operator also saw a 50 percent reduction in agent attrition and a 50 percent cost savings.



INCREASED SUBSCRIBER ENGAGEMENT

+Message has experienced increased subscriber engagement versus with standard SMS and email, showcasing an 85 percent open rate, 95 percent conversion rate and 40 percent response rate to surveys. To put it in perspective, traditional web outreach receives a 10 to 15 percent response rate to surveys.



70 percent of one operator's total subscriber base had never called customer care prior to +Message

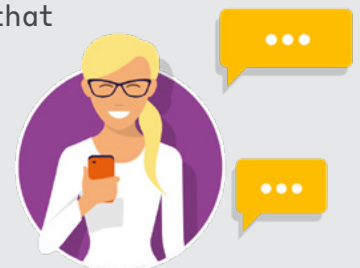
The Value to Brands:

Because +Message is automatically embedded on devices, Japanese consumers no longer have to download individual apps to engage with their favorite brands. They can now communicate directly through the +Message app itself. Brands will be able to offer the services and experiences consumers have been looking for in an easy-to-use way from booking flights and reservations to using ride share services, proving beneficial to invest in RCS advertisements to improve consumer engagement and interest. (Mobile Squared, 2019)



With RCS, consumers are 12.8 percent more likely to open an advertisement than through standard mobile advertising methods. By giving brands and aggregators a single access point for business-to-consumer (B2C) messaging and easy-to-use tools and APIs for onboarding, chat bots and analytics, brands can engage with consumers in an entirely new and meaningful way. Proving beneficial to invest in RCS advertisements to improve consumer engagement and interest. (Mobile Squared, 2019)

Two-way communication is an essential component to a successful A2P experience and through +Message, brands have a trusted and secure place to connect with their consumers. Considering the willingness of consumers to engage through a trusted app, this new advertising and communication ecosystem is a great short-term investment for long-term gain that provides better engagement rates.



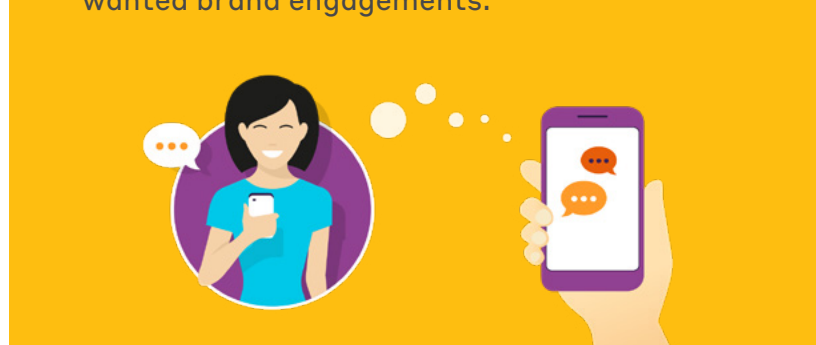
The Value to Subscribers:

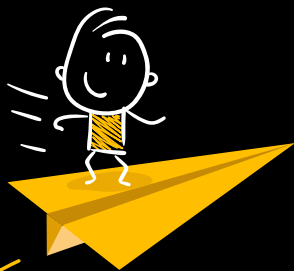
The enhanced messaging experience that Japanese subscribers loved in the OTT messaging solutions is now offered through a more trusted, secure avenue: their network provider. Consumers utilize +Message knowing their information, conversations and brand interactions are verified and safe. For instance, + Message is used to provide verified and accurate information to the Japanese public when it comes to disaster relief and emergency notification services.



In addition, one operator found that 70 percent of its messaging users had never called their customer care line before adopting +Message, suggesting the chat function increases customer willingness to engage through new lines of communication. This has provided a 10 percent increase in customer satisfaction in the users who have switched to + Message.

+Message places emphasis on the P2A aspect of Advanced Messaging in order to put consumers in control of the communication channel. By allowing the consumer to manage their own relationships with brands and businesses of their choosing, as opposed to being subjected to unsolicited messages, consumers are more likely to have meaningful, wanted brand engagements.





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**Be proactive now, so you don't
need to be reactive later.**

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Synchronoss is the market leader in providing white-label, end-to-end Advanced Messaging to global operators. The A2P and P2A functionality is an attractive, value-add service offering to those who wish to remain relevant in the ever-changing telecommunications landscape.

Engage with Synchronoss to see how we can assist you in remaining ahead of the technology curve and become top-of-mind to your subscribers.



Sources:

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