Generation Z Communication Trends Report

Get a glimpse into the future of business communication with digital natives.

LiveChat | ANNIVERSARY

Think you've got Gen Z figured out?

Even though nearly half of Gen Zs are still in their teens, the oldest are reaching their mid-twenties. They already have a job or two on their resumes and disposable income to spend on products and services from brands they trust.

With 20 years of market presence, we've witnessed and shaped changes in business communication first-hand.

We took a closer look at Generation Z through that lens and set the guideposts to help your business connect with these digital natives.
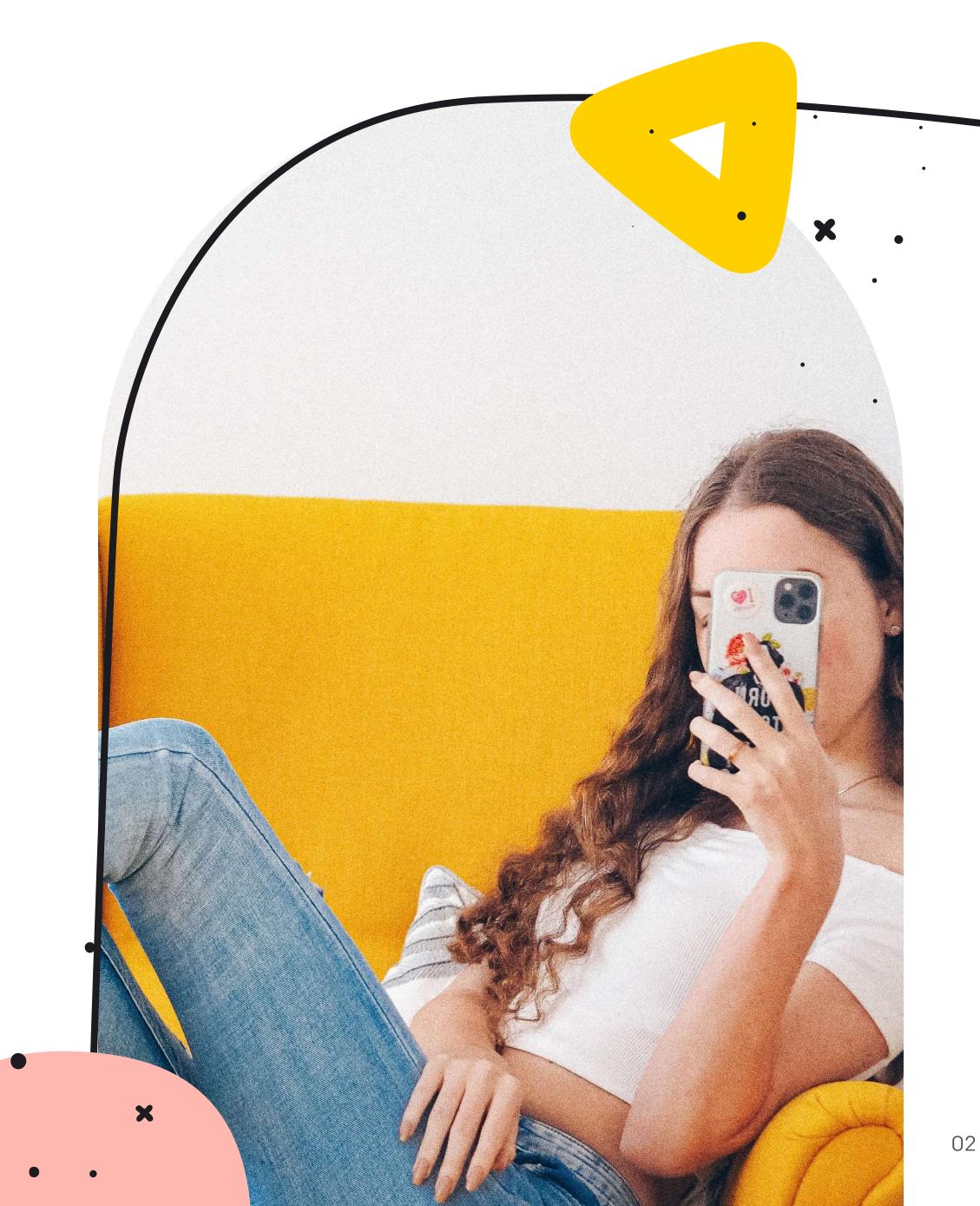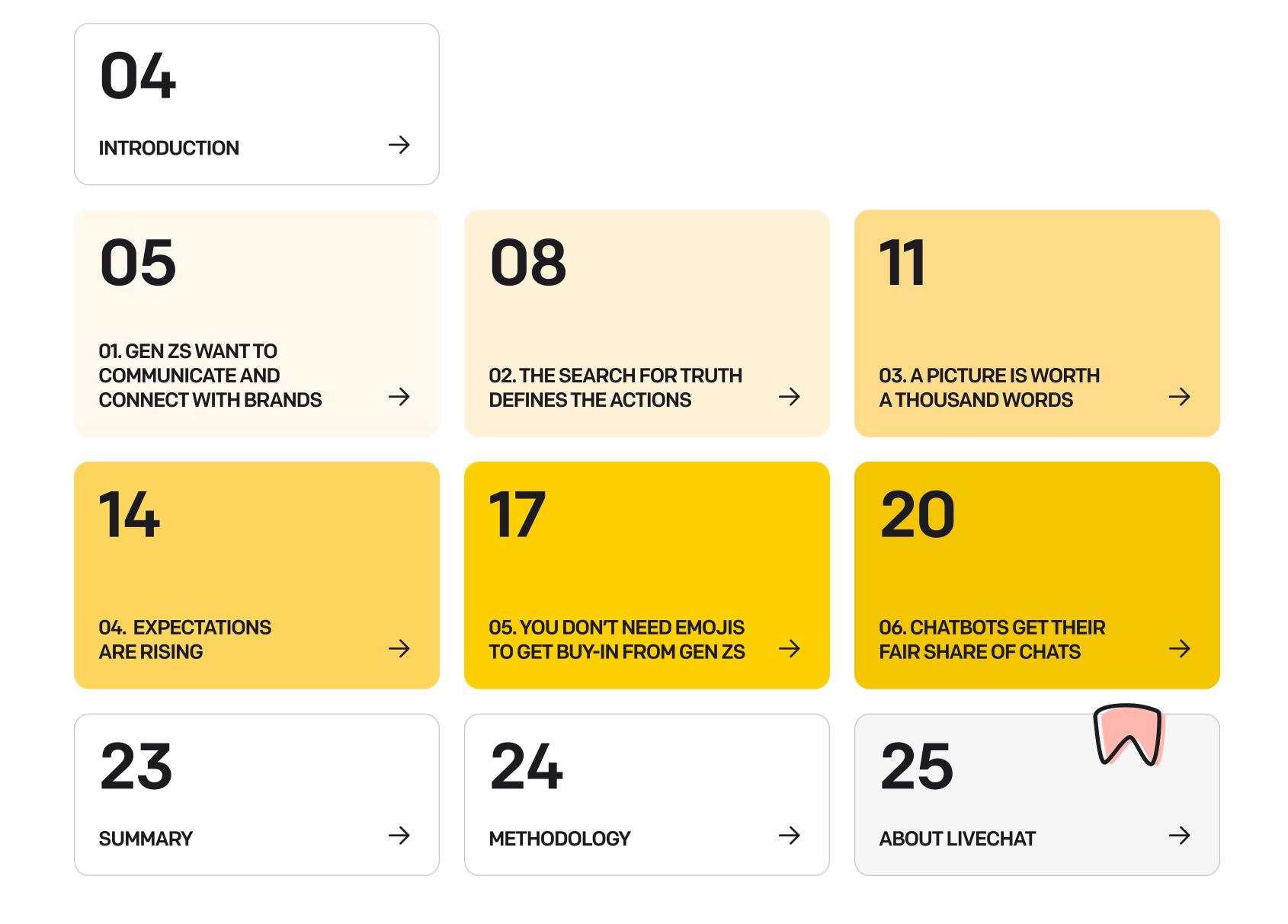
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Generation Z, eh? Born between 1997 and 2012, they're the first generation growing up in an "always on" technological environment.

While some of you might still think of Gen Zers as heavy-TikTok using teens, there were around **7.3 million full-time Generation Z workers** in America in 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Young students and professionals already boast $360 billion in disposable income.

Even if they aren't the main generation you're targeting right now, they'll become a major purchasing power you won't be able to ignore as they mature over the next couple of years.

Like other generations that faced their own sets of challenges, Generations Z has its difficulties with navigating today's reality. The global pandemic and geopolitical conflicts are a lot to take on for young adults, leading to phenomena like the Great Resignation. They look at how companies approach those challenges, the values they communicate, and how they act. Gen Zers want brands to take stands on matters like global warming and sustainability.

We combined global market trends with our consumer data to prepare this report. It'll help you build stronger customer relationships, navigate Gen Z's values and beliefs, and turn visitors into customers.

Gen Zs want to communicate and connect with brands

No generation has had as many avenues to get in touch with brands as easily as Gen Z. They don't cling to online shopping as much as one might think. They're much more omnipresent and want to see different products and try them on in person before purchasing.

More importantly, they deeply care about the story behind those products and brands.

One way to get to know them is by talking directly to those brands, and **chat length can reflect that.**

What we've learned

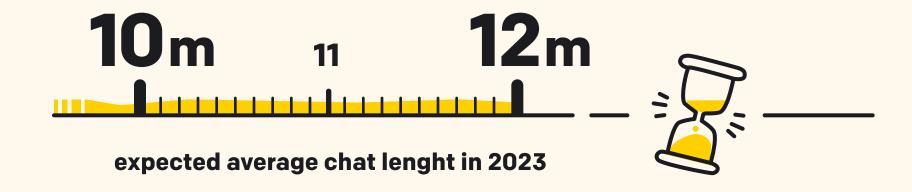**The average chat length in the last two years is around 11 minutes.**

Out of all monthly average chat lengths, months with chats lasting ten minutes were the most common, making up 7% of the total chats in the analyzed period.

Gen Zs care more about a thorough resolution of their issue, even if it requires a reasonably long conversation, rather than getting it done quickly.

Going forward

Based on our observations, we expect the average chat length to remain at this level toward the end of 2022 and in 2023, but results may vary and fluctuate between 10 and 12 minutes.

10m   11   **12m**

expected average chat lenght in 2023

Average chat length like this gives your agents enough time to take care of your Gen Z customers and **use that time to build the relationships with them that they value so much.**

Gen Z is amplifying change by advocating for causes via social media. Brands need to pay attention to what this generation values — experiences, political activism, and environmental consciousness — by meeting them where they are with solutions like checkout on Instagram.

Chaniel Laidet

**Partner Manager,
Marketing Technology Partnerships**
at BIGCOMMERCE

The search for truth defines the actions

We can distinguish four core Gen Z behaviors when it comes to their relationships with brands and they all stem from its search for authenticity, **according to McKinsey.** Those behaviors include:

- ✓ Individual expression and avoiding labels
- ✓ Mobilizing for causes they believe in
- ✓ Solving conflicts and improving the world with dialogue
- ✓ Being analytical and pragmatic in their decisions and relationships with brands

These behaviors and the search for truth can be reflected in the **increasing number of chats** Gen Zs have with businesses.

What we've learned

The pandemic has heavily accelerated the average number of chats that Gen Zers have with businesses. Even with offline businesses bouncing back, the average number of chats increased more sharply in the first half of 2022.
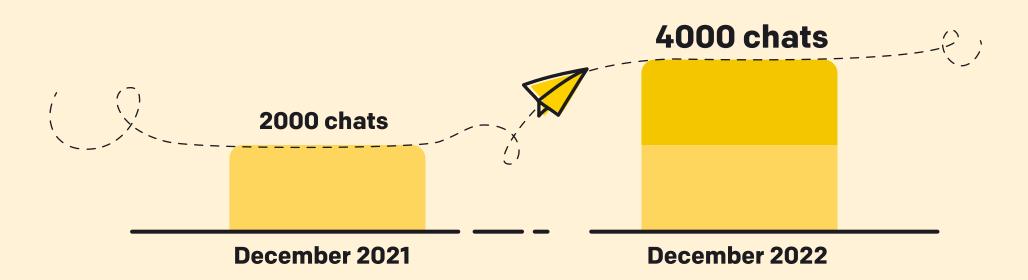
When we look at year-over-year data, the average number of chats in June 2022 doubled compared to 1460 chats in the corresponding period. This is also due to **Gen Z's preference for text-based communication**, and we should be seeing an additional increase as more Gen Zers get purchasing power and can talk to brands on their own.

Going forward

If the number of chats continues to grow at this rate, businesses can expect up to 4,000 monthly chats on average in Dec 2022, with more and more Gen Zers doing their holiday season shopping online. This would be twice as many chats compared to the same period in 2021.

4000 chats

2000 chats

December 2021   December 2022

We should see a dip in this metric at the beginning of 2023, but that intense period at the end of 2022 is an excellent way to build your relationships with a higher-than-usual number of Gen Zers buying gifts for their loved ones.

Gen Z expects coherence and presence. Coherence in what you represent, across all channels, by all your customer-facing employees. Internally, everyone needs to be aligned around what quality means for you, independent of who's answering and on which channel.

Valentina Thörner

Empress of Remote & Quality

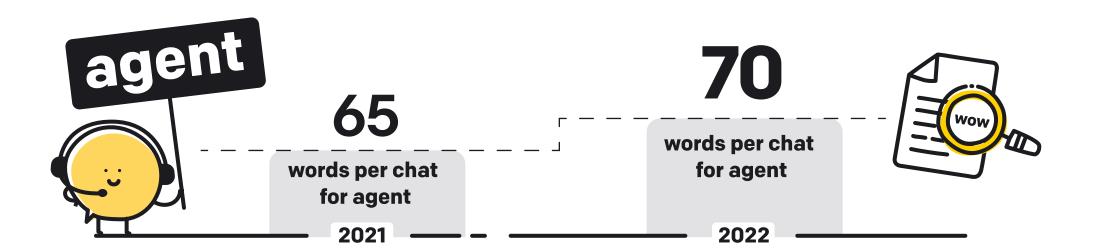**at** 🐱 Klaus

A picture is worth a thousand words

Typical Gen Zers spend an average of **ten hours online every day.** They browse social media, text friends, but also communicate with businesses.

The number of words per chat visitors use steadily decreases, from about 25 in 2020 to 15 in June 2022.

The decrease could be linked to Gen Z's use of short sentences, abbreviations, and slang, which could explain the drop in the average number of words per visitor. On another note, this could also mean that visitors are better at using chat as a support platform.

What we've learned

To get the full picture, you should look at a year-over-year comparison of the average number of words per chat for agents. It was almost identical throughout 2021, ranging from 64 to 65 words. This was a starting point in 2022, and the metric gradually increased as we progressed further into the year, reaching roughly 70 words per chat in June 2022.

agent

65
words per chat
for agent
2021

70
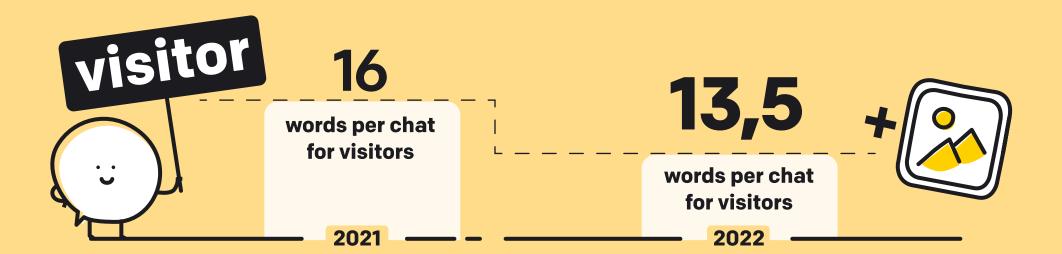words per chat
for agent
2022

wow

This might indicate the agents' increased levels of empathy and understanding towards customers and chats becoming more conversational on their part. **Taking the time to write more thoughtful messages is something that Gen Z will appreciate.**

Going forward

Agents will keep using the same average number of words per chat for the foreseeable future, but the same metric for visitors will decrease gradually and reach 13.5 words in spring 2023, down from 16 in June 2022. **They'll supplement the messages with supporting images more often, though.**

visitor

16
words per chat
for visitors
2021

13,5
words per chat
for visitors
2022

+

That should come naturally, as Gen Z heavily relies on images to show rather than tell about the issues they come across. After we saw images in every 5th chat in June 2020, we can expect at least one of them in every other chat at the beginning of 2023.

12

When communicating with Gen Z, it's all about their convenience, availability and simplicity. Omnipresence is a must as most of the communication happens on the go. That also means the solution is expected to be provided right away, so make sure you have the right tools for the job.
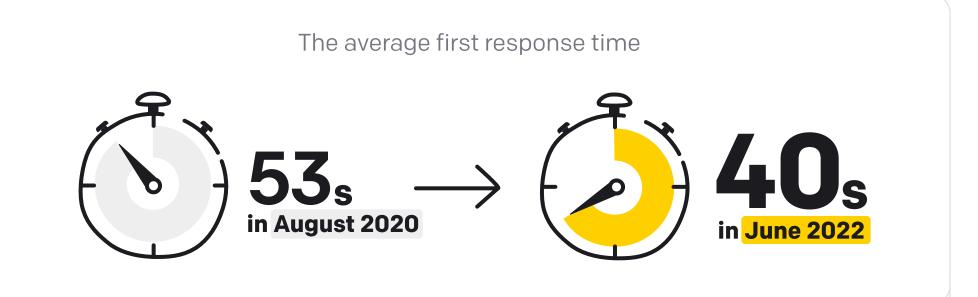
Szymon Klimczak

Chief Marketing Officer
at ◻ LiveChat

Expectations are rising

Gen Zs can take well over ten minutes to talk to support agents about their issue and value the quality of service more than the speed. They're less forgiving when it comes to **first response time.** Even if Gen Z represents only a fraction of your customers, you'll do your business a favor by keeping this metric at its lowest because everyone will appreciate it, regardless of generation.

What we've learned

Since Gen Zers are more comfortable publicly discussing their displeasure, support agents had to learn to work quicker.

The average first response time

53s
in **August 2020**

→

40s
in **June 2022**

With the slowest average first response time at 53 seconds in August 2020, **businesses improved significantly at getting back to visitors.** The average first response time reached fewer than 40 seconds in June 2022, around 6 seconds faster than the average response time in the last two years.

Going forward

If you want to get ahead of the curve, try to keep your first response time between 35-40 seconds because that's the range businesses will be working in midway through 2023.

35
seconds

Think about going omnichannel. Your Gen Z customers will appreciate having more ways to communicate with you, and you'll be able to handle them all in one place without compromising your first response time.

15

Our research has found that responsiveness matters across all channels — reviews included — with <u>**64% of customers preferring to buy from a responsive business**</u>. As Gen Z buys more, we can expect not just more reviews, but more scrutiny on how openly and quickly businesses respond.

Briarley Laban

Senior Director of Global Partnerships - Product & Audience Marketing
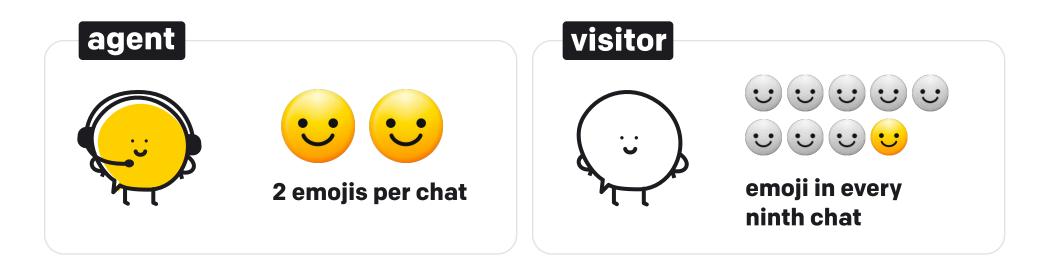
at ⭐ Trustpilot

You don't need emojis to get a buy-in from Gen Zs

Gen Zers are using a ton of emojis, and they can basically communicate using emojis alone, right? Well, not exactly, or at least not in the context of business. Agents using more emojis per chat could reflect ways to make conversations more engaging.

However, **more emojis don't seem to be what Gen Zers expect**, judging from their scarce use of smiley faces. Taking agents and visitors into account, we've seen a linear growth in the average number of emojis per chat, from one emoji every other chat to more than two emojis per chat.

What we've learned

Emoji use varies significantly between agents and visitors. When we look at the average number of emojis used by agents across all chats, including chats that didn't contain a single emoji, we noticed that after using an emoji in every other chat in July 2020, agents used two emojis per chat in June 2022.

agent

2 emojis per chat

visitor

emoji in every ninth chat

In the same period, the numbers were significantly lower among visitors. An emoji was used in every ninth chat on average, and there was virtually no difference in June 2022.

Going forward

Taking agents and visitors across all chats into account, including those with zero emojis, we should **see three emojis per chat** on average by the end of 2022 and nearly four in the middle of 2023.

Agents will drive this increase because we expect the emoji use by visitors to stay the same. Visitors don't need emojis to communicate their message. If you planned to use more emojis in your business communication because you felt like everyone thinks you're a boomer, you might want to revise your approach.

At Zapier, we use emojis for everything from a high five when we help our customers solve a problem to a sad face when there is a bug that we can't fix right away. Emojis help us display to the customer that a human behind the text is trying their best to help them.

Adam Francois

**Sr. Customer Champion
at _zapier**

Chatbots get their fair share of chats

Gen Zers are more comfortable talking with chatbots than previous generations. They try to talk to bots before they talk to an agent, which is reflected in the **average number of bot chats** and the average number of messages from bots in those chats. Things take an interesting turn when a visitor requests to switch to an agent

What we've learned

The number of bot chats more than tripled in the last two years. After a dip that reached 201 bot chats in February, we witnessed rapid growth, culminating with 253 average bot chats per business in June 2022.

253
average bot chats per business in June 2022.

Bots are great at taking the workload off your agents' shoulders. **They need 3.5 messages on average to wrap up a chat.** Some cases are too complex for bots to handle, though. While agents only need 4.5 messages on average with non-bot chats, they need around six messages to solve a visitor's case whenever a chat is transferred to an agent.

Going forward

You'll only be getting more chats with Gen Z in the near future. Almost half of them are still in their teens, so you can expect a more accelerated growth in this metric, and you'll need bots to stay on top of those chats.
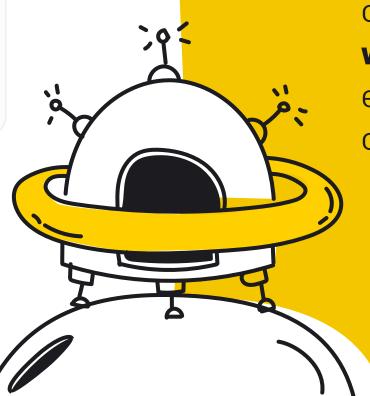
312
expected monthly bot chats by the end of 2022

350
expected monthly bot chats midway 2023

With 312 expected monthly bot chats by the end of 2022 and 350 chats midway through 2023, implementing a **chatbot is the best way to increase efficiency without increasing your headcount,** even if your agents will still need to take over more challenging chats from bots.

Virtual assistants are prolific — we ask smartphones for the weather and speakers to order groceries. Widespread chatbot adoption is both a natural progression and a growing expectation by a generation accustomed to quick and accurate info via humanless contact.

Gayle Wheaton

Director, Product and Go-To-Market Strategy at HubSpot

Summary

Building customer loyalty with Gen Zs is a real challenge, but it's not impossible. If your business truly wants to connect with the youngest consumers, an omnichannel presence will help you with that.

Gen Z is used to constant connectivity, which gives you more ways to reach them with your messaging. Whether it's chat, text, social media, or in-app messages, **you can talk to them in real time or asynchronously.** Don't try to trick them with marketing speak — it will put them off.

By 2030, 1.3 billion Gen Z workers will replace 693 million retiring baby boomers in the labor market, and Gen Zers' <u>future earnings will reach $2 trillion</u> in that time. They want to support brands that are vocal about what they believe in and aligned with how they perceive political and social problems.

LiveChat

Stay true to your values, treat Generation Z with empathy and understanding, and you'll have a greater chance of maximizing your profits

Need a hand with that?

Sign up for LiveChat

Methodology

The Generation Z Trends Forecast Report pulls together aggregated data from LiveChat product usage data and data points from third-party sources.

The product usage data and global trends we looked at allowed us to extrapolate, predict, and describe six key metrics and trends in customer communication with the youngest group of consumers.

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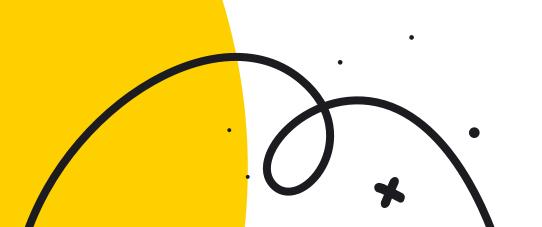
The LiveChat product usage data gathered over two years between July 2020 and June 2022 includes information from 1,723,000,000 chats from 59,558 businesses worldwide.

1,723,000,000 **chats**

59,558 **businesses worldwide**

About LiveChat

LiveChat is a complete customer service solution that offers several ways for businesses to communicate with buyers.

Many customers use the platform because of its customization capabilities and limitless integrations. It integrates with all popular messaging channels and hundreds of other tools such as Shopify, Hubspot, and Google Analytics.

Founded in 2002 with offices in Poland and the United States, LiveChat is actively used by over **37,000 companies** worldwide and supports over **75 million** chats monthly. Learn more at **www.livechat.com** and take a look at our industry-leading portfolio of products, including **ChatBot**, **HelpDesk**, and **KnowledgeBase**.

LiveChat **ChatBot** **HelpDesk** **KnowledgeBase**