



On the Radar: Quiq combines asynchronous messaging with agent response time management

The platform includes built-in collaboration features and real-time monitoring

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Summary

Catalyst

Quiq offers Quiq Messaging, an asynchronous messaging platform for customer service to help with pre-sales questions and post-sales support. The platform integrates into a variety of internal and external messaging platforms, as well as enterprise systems such as CRM, email, and reporting systems.

Key messages

- Delivers asynchronous messaging and conversations that are displayed in a multiconversational user interface.
- Integrates easily into a variety of external and internal systems through its open API framework built on webhooks and REST APIs.
- Built-in collaboration and transfer allows managers to deliver coaching to handle escalation issues.
- A manager dashboard displays response times and provides the ability to monitor active conversations in real time.

Ovum view

In the new age of customer service, companies are pairing technology with human interaction to enable fast and relevant service, and to deliver the most optimized customer experience. Asynchronous messaging via multiple engagement channels is an emerging trend that an increasing number of vendors are offering to provide convenience and ease for the customer while creating efficiencies for customer service organizations.

As a vendor in this new and rapidly growing category, Quiq allows agents to communicate with customers the same way they would via email or SMS, where messages don't require immediate response, but expanded to popular messaging channels such as Facebook Messenger, Kik, and web chat.

Despite the growing array of messaging vendors, Quiq has two competitive differentiators: The first is the rich experience of its founders, whose backgrounds were formed in the customer service industry. That makes them acutely aware of challenges that agents face when engaging with customers, and their approach is to create solutions geared toward solving those unique challenges. The second is its multimodal customer messaging platform, which layers in some basic workforce management capabilities.

The company's obvious weak spot is the absence of an artificial intelligence (AI) offering to deflect live agent chat support when spikes in services occur or if companies want to automate first-level queries, although the executives promise an AI release in late 2017 or early 2018.

Recommendations for enterprises

Why put Quiq on your radar?

Quiq offers an asynchronous messaging solution that mimics the way consumers interact via messaging in their daily lives. The platform's ability to integrate into various external and internal applications via an open API framework enables fast deployment. Its integration with workforce management capabilities positions it uniquely in the category. Finally, its bundled pricing model provides flexibility in a rapidly changing industry and allows companies to scale as customers or volume increases.

Highlights

Quiq offers messaging for customer service with pre-sales service and post-sales support. Its core product is Quiq Messaging, which was launched in September 2016. Originally built as a standalone application, Quiq has developed three pre-built integrations with Oracle, Zendesk, and Salesforce. The Oracle integration is deep. Built as an application inside the Oracle desktop, it plugs in to the Oracle Service Cloud in a native fashion. It resides inside Oracle's Core Services offering, and the existing workflow and business processes all live on top of it. Unlike other messaging platforms, the technology takes a sharp focus on managing messaging at scale by delivering asynchronous messaging and conversations that are displayed in a multiconversational user interface.

In today's world, conversations often don't occur simultaneously, so asynchronous messaging allows consumers to communicate with companies in the same way they communicate with friends – by texting and messaging. During the duration of an interaction, if a consumer decides to stop, the conversation can be picked up later where it left off. Even if a different agent accepts the chat, all the context from the previous conversation is present. It's a retrofitted chat experience where all conversations are retroactive and interactive.

Because the industry is moving toward an open framework approach, Quiq also integrates easily into a variety of external and internal systems through its open API framework built on webhooks and REST APIs. For messaging platforms, Quiq Messaging integrates with Facebook Messenger and Kik platforms, as well as SMS, live chat, a company's app, and a company's Facebook page. Internally, Quiq integrates into the Oracle Service Desktop, as well as with Zendesk, Salesforce, NetSuite, and standard UI and data integration frameworks. It also integrates with reporting systems and synchronizes the output to external systems. Built-in collaboration allows managers to deliver coaching when necessary or to escalate to voice for more complex problems, all while exchanging content or video via the messaging platform.

Metrics visualization is a critical component in agent messaging and communications, so Quiq Messaging also offers a manager dashboard that displays response time and can monitor several conversations at once. "Sometimes an agent might drop into order fulfillment and drop outside of our app, so it's an interesting challenge to measure conversations," said CEO and co-founder Mike Myer.

To solve that challenge, Quiq defines a single conversation as response to resolution when the agent hits "end." If the customer fails to respond, Quiq ends the conversation after 24 hours. Pricing models are aligned to conversations, and customers can purchase monthly blocks of conversations from 10 to

the tens of thousands. Quiq Messaging can be purchased as a standalone customer channel, or companies can deploy one of the pre-built CRM integrations.

Additional features for agents include the following:

- Multiconversation UI – enables agents to manage multiple conversations simultaneously
- Text snippets – offers reusable text blurbs retrieved with simple keyboard shortcuts for on-the-fly responses
- Collaboration – allows managers to watch the conversation and lend advice to the agent in the background
- Emoji sharing – creates personal interactions between agents and customers
- Adaptive response time coaching – Measures the customer's level of engagement and coaches the agent, suggesting which conversation needs the next response
- Image and video – enables video and image sharing when necessary

Notable features for managers include the following:

- Rerouted conversations – automatically reroutes ongoing conversations when agents go off-shift
- Real-time monitoring – shows aggregate metrics such as current load, number of customers waiting, wait times, and individual agent performance, including the number of conversations handled, average response time, and times unresponsive
- ACD-like conversation handling – keeps incoming demand at manageable rates with auto-responses delivered to customers when queues overflow
- Unresponsive agent timers – automatically puts a conversation back in the queue to be handled by another agent if an agent fails to respond within goal thresholds
- Conversation observation – provides visualization of the entire conversation thread, provides whisper advice, and, if necessary, takes over the conversation without interruption in the conversation
- Historical statistics – can send conversation statistics in real time to other systems for cross-channel reporting and BI analysis

Background

The company was founded in October 2015 by two customer service industry veterans, CEO Myer and Vice President of Engineering Bill O'Neill, both formally from RightNow Technologies. Their collective experience and awareness of the issues agents and customers encounter with messaging systems guided their development and eventual launch of Quiq Messaging in September 2016. They wanted to provide an intuitive way for customers and companies to communicate that mimicked the way consumers communicate daily with their friends and family.

In August 2016, they closed a Series A funding round for \$6.5m from Venrock and Next Frontier Capital. Danielle Wanderer, also formerly of RightNow Technologies, joined the company in November 2016 as CMO.

Current position

Customer service experience is Quiq's competitive differentiator. Quiq is also prolific with its product updates, which occur weekly. A couple of the more recent releases have included web chat and IVR integration. The IVR integration is focused on offloading inbound phone calls to messaging, particularly when there are extended wait times. Web chat was also added to Quiq's messaging platform, combining messaging and live chat into one digital experience interface, which has been of strong interest to small and midsize companies. In mid- to late 2017, the company plans to roll out additional contact center features, skills-based routing, bot integrations, and more messaging app integrations, such as WeChat and Line. In early 2018, Quiq plans to release AI-assisted bots that will offer blended AI support to enable automation and assist with agent deflection during times when contact centers experience spikes in service, enabling clients to escalate from the messaging platform to live agents.

Quiq's customer base spans large enterprises to small/midsize businesses like TSheets, Jackson Hole Mountain Resort, and Gogo. TSheets, the leader in time tracking and scheduling, delivers its solution via an app, and Quiq has tied into and runs alongside that app for users to receive customer service. Since users are on their mobile devices, clocking in and out, it makes sense for messaging to be a primary support channel. Jackson Hole Mountain Resort strives to deliver superior Western hospitality and has made Quiq Messaging omnipresent on its mobile website to expand the reach of its concierge services. Gogo is deploying Quiq Messaging to ensure that travelers on the ground have an easy way to reach the company for any customer service and support issues.

Data sheet

Key facts

Table 1: Data sheet: Quiq

Product name	Quiq Messaging	Product classification	Customer service messaging
Version number	Continuous delivery	Release date	September 2016
Industries covered	All industries, with dominance in retail, travel/hospitality, high tech, consumer electronics, insurance, and online services	Geographies covered	Globally
Relevant company sizes	Enterprise and midmarket	Licensing options	SaaS
URL	www.goquiq.com	Routes to market	Direct
Company headquarters	Bozeman, Montana, US	Number of employees	30 and growing

Source: Ovum

Appendix

On the Radar

On the Radar is a series of research notes about vendors bringing innovative ideas, products, or business models to their markets. On the Radar vendors bear watching for their potential impact on markets and could be suitable for certain enterprise and public sector IT organizations.

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