Infosys® | Finacle

CASE STUDY

Union Bank of India increases its digital footprint with Conversational Banking

Inspiring Better Banking
www.finacle.com
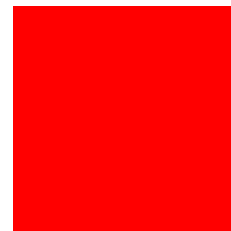
About Union Bank of India

Established in 1919, Mumbai-headquartered Union Bank of India (UBI) is one of India's leading public sector banks. It has a network of 8729+ branches and 11154+ ATMs across India, serving over 120 million customers. The bank was the first large public sector bank in the country to have implemented a 100 per cent core banking solution and has received awards and recognition for its prowess in technology, digital banking, financial inclusion, MSME, and development of human resources[1].

With today's digital-savvy consumer and competition posed by new fintech entrants, the expectation from banks is constantly evolving. The digital challengers and digital-first models have made it quite evident that customers are increasingly accessing the gamut of services that physical branches offer on existing and newer digital channels; thus driving home the criticality of a bank's digital strategy.
For banks to ace competition and grow in the current scenario, they need a digital transformation roadmap. They must expand and optimize digital channels to become a preferred banking partner for their customers. There is even a need to go one step further and integrate themselves into customers' everyday lives and embed banking services in their primary journey.

With both government and private sectors fueling the digital ecosystem, India is one of the fastest and largest markets for digital consumers. There are 487 million WhatsApp users in India as of 2021, making it the leading country in terms of WhatsApp audience size. Union Bank of India, being an early adopter amongst the public sector banks, saw a great opportunity here.

[1](Source: https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/english/aboutus-profile.aspx)
[2](Source: https://www.statista.com/statistics/289778/countries-with-the-most-facebook-users/)

Tap the untapped

With its objective of giving customers the best online and offline experience, UBI sought to provide a safer and faster way for customers to avoid visiting branches and get their queries resolved conveniently.

The bank decided to tap into and leverage the growth potential that a platform like WhatsApp offers by making its services available and responding to customer queries via WhatsApp with Union Virtual Connect (UVConn). UVConn gives its retail customers personalized banking services, at their preferred time, place, and in seven languages. The bank aimed to make key services available to the users, including door-step banking, lending, deposits, and grievance redressal amongst others, and cater to customers' inquiries related to accounts, cheque books, and lockers.

Embarking on a digital journey with Finacle

To get started, the bank conducted thorough due diligence and competitive analysis to select the right vendor. They decided to partner with Infosys Finacle given its experience in managing such projects.

Finacle Conversational Banking and Remote Banker allowed UBI to create, configure, and manage bots using GUI to create conversational flow for the users on any popular chat platform. The bank is now enabled with:

Channel Agnostic Chat Interface – UVConn is currently integrated with Bank's WhatsApp business number and can also be extended to other chat messengers such as Facebook Messenger, Signal, and Telegram.

Self-service Transactions – The bot supports both Non-Financial service requests and query resolution.

UBI has been working continuously to adapt to ever-changing customer demands and providing them with new-age banking at their fingertips. To meet this requirement, Finacle provided them with a solution that is not just state-of-the-art but also agile enough provide a continuous improved and seamless customer experience.

Implementation phase

The project was executed as a collaborative partnership between the UBI and Finacle teams. It was driven by an agile model design where the requirements from the bank would be quickly coded and iterations would get addressed immediately for enhanced functionality. The entire implementation, including installation, was done offshore due to the pandemic situation.

As a public sector bank with high security standards, Union Bank of India had certain concerns around WhatsApp banking. However, Finacle's security module enabled the bank to address these concerns by enabling multi-factor authentication using OTP, MPIN, and TIPIN.

The sweet taste of successful implementation

The implementation was done in a short span of 4 months. With enterprise-ready tools to manage the bot, Union Bank of India can now engage better with its customers on a channel of their choice. UBI has onboarded 5,17,901 customers and received 16,45,040 enquiries within 7 months of its launch. As social media gains more prominence every day, UBI has ensured that it stays relevant to the digital-first generation by introducing this new channel of banking.

Benefits include:

Safety – Customers can safely connect with the bank's official number via the end-to-end encrypted WhatsApp messaging interface from their registered mobile numbers, with added levels of authentication like OTP, MPIN, and more. Finacle offers comprehensive capabilities to customers for banking on the go on a device of their choice.

Faster onboarding - The bank can onboard new customers remotely and instantly, via secure messaging on WhatsApp in a quick, frictionless, and digitized manner.

Multiple platforms - Finacle Remote Banker is agnostic to any messenger interface and can work seamlessly with multiple messenger ecosystems. This enables the bank to extend conversational banking experiences to other popular chat messenger platforms as well.

Efficient banking – Bank benefits from smaller queues at branches, paperless banking, improved branch and teller performance, a documented history of customer interactions, cross-sell new products, and much more.

Real-time feedback - Banks can take quick action and improve their services based on customers' real-time feedback

With Conversational Banking, the bank offers 16 services and 6 enquiries listed below-

6 Enquiries –	**16 Auxiliary services –**		
1. Account balance	1. Door-step banking	7. Link Aadhar number	13. Branch search
2. Mini statement	2. U Mobile application	8. Account opening	14. SMC account
3. Cheque status	3. Apply for retail loan products	9. Check/register nomination	15. NPS account
4. Cheque book request	4. EMI calculator	10. Spin & learn	16. Grievance Redressal
5. Stop cheque	5. Interest rates	11. Cyber security tips	
6. Locker rent inquiry	6. Holiday calendar	12. ATM search	

The WhatsApp banking services have been launched in **seven different Indian languages** in UBI. The customers can select the preferred language at their convenience. The bank has plans to add more languages in the future.
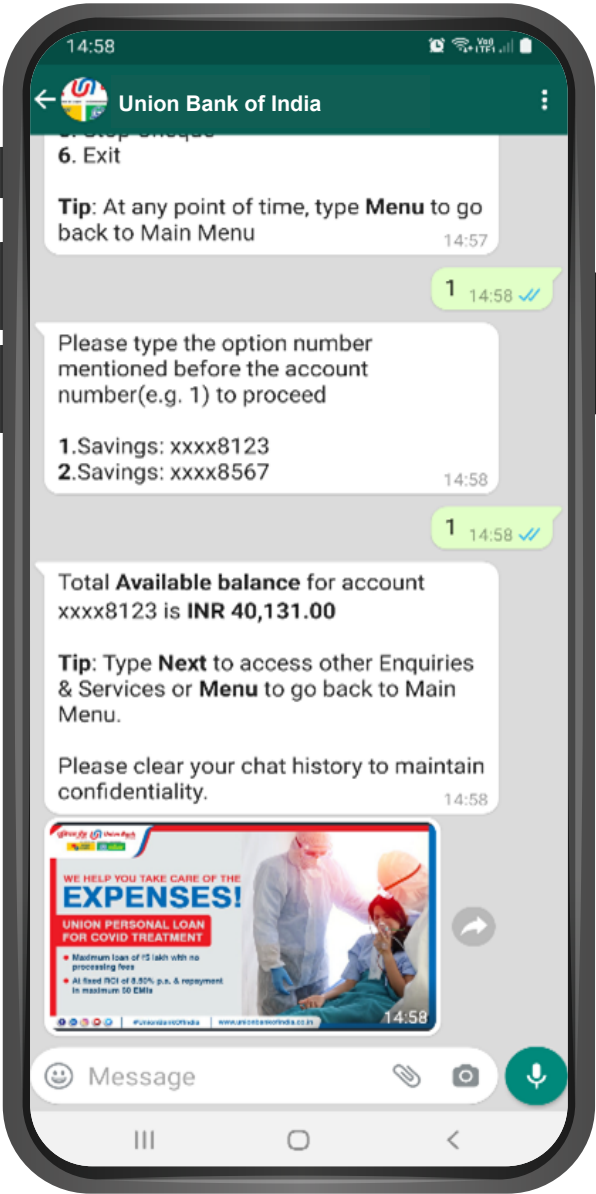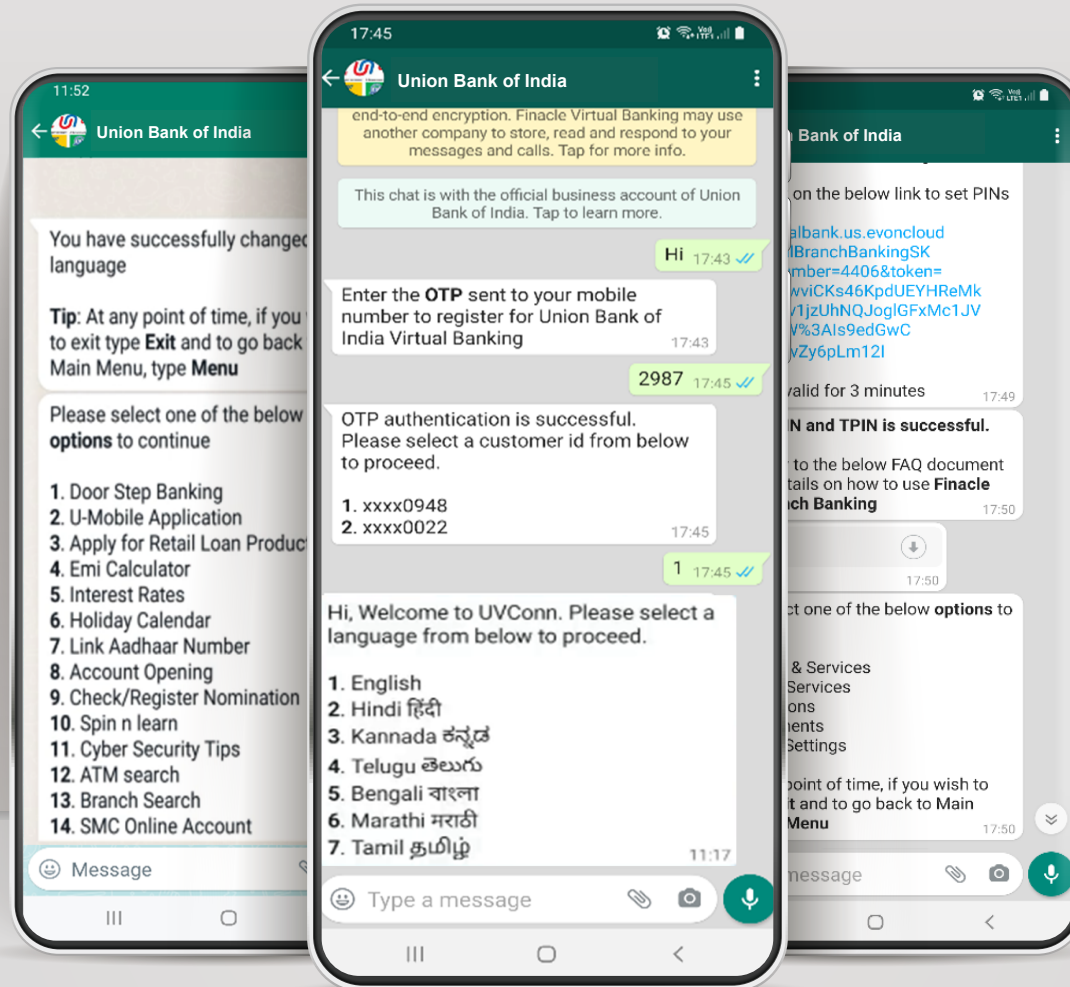
Bringing financial services into customer's primary journey
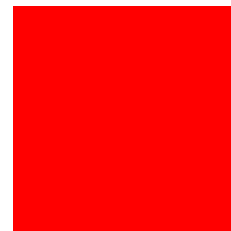
Finacle and WhatsApp

Finacle's collaboration with WhatsApp is focused on enabling Banks to drive deeper engagements with their customers in a conversational setup built on the WhatsApp Business Platform.

In 2018, WhatsApp introduced the WhatsApp Business Platform to help businesses connect with customers in a more convenient and trusted way. With over 2 billion users worldwide, WhatsApp is how people and businesses communicate in many countries -- it helps businesses meet their customers where they want to be met in a personalized way. It provides businesses with a higher ROI, drives engagement, and more efficient customer service, ultimately leading to increased customer satisfaction.

The WhatsApp Business Platform is used by leading Banks, primarily as customer communication and service channel and to offer customers more convenience in daily banking requirements.

Finacle offers banks a plug-n-play solution to enable a range of services on WhatsApp including:
- **Self-service Transactions** – Conversational banking services for a broad range of transactions
- **Assisted Banking** - Empowers bank employees to remotely advise and support customers

With the convenience of instant interactions, Finacle's solution offers a cost-effective and secure way for Banks to engage customers.

The new branch banking experience

As we witness the paradigm shift in the way people bank today, the brick-and-mortar branch network still offers a competitive advantage in many markets. However, the role of the branch in the channel mix must evolve. For instance, as all transactions and enquiries move to digital channels, the branch staff can start playing more of an advisory role.

Given the customer's experience on digital channels, there is a need to reimagine the branch experience and ensure it evolves. Branches need to adopt a phygital model where the staff may not be stationed at one place but equipped to move and interact with customers with their tablets or other devices. The branch can be reimagined as a new-age technology outlet with LED screens and digital kiosks rather than traditional queues and demarcated sections. Tellers, relationship managers, and agents can then easily easily engage with customers and service their requests in a more personalized manner.

With Finacle Remote Banker & Mobile Teller solution, Union Bank of India will also be able to transform its branch banking experience by optimizing branch and teller performance, minimizing queues, enabling relationship manager mobility, and improving operational efficiencies.

"
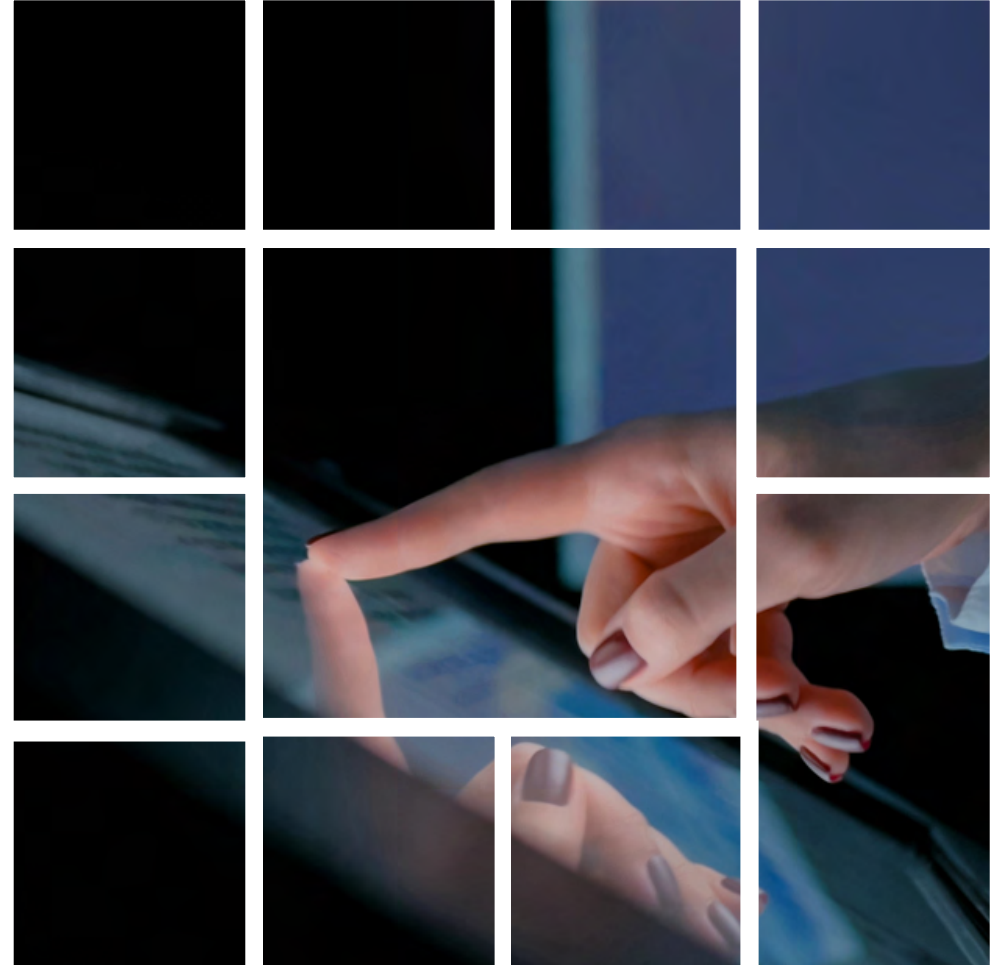
It has always been our endeavour to build lasting relationships with customers by offering simple, fast, and contextual banking solutions and experiences with improved convenience. In line with this vision, we have introduced this service on WhatsApp, one of the most popular instant messaging applications in the world. Our retail customers can execute a host of their banking requirements on their own, without visiting a branch, instantaneously and securely. With Finacle Conversational Banking and Remote Banker, we can now tap into the growing prominence of social media in everyday life. We expect this simple and convenient form of banking to add immense convenience to our customers and hope to see its rapid adoption in the months to come.

- A. Manimekhalai, Managing Director & CEO, Union Bank of India

"

finacle@edgeverve.com

www.finacle.com

www.linkedin.com/company/finacle

twitter.com/finacle

Infosys® | **Finacle**

For more information, contact **finacle@edgeverve.com**   **www. finacle.com**