Webex Connect: one CPaaS platform, seamless integrations

It's time to deliver the convenient, automated, end-to-end interactions customers expect. Discover how the flexible integration framework within Webex Connect can optimize your customer communication journeys and maximize ROI.

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Understanding the customer disconnect

A recent study by **Forrester** discovered that enterprises use an average of 367 applications and systems. This disconnected sprawl creates data silos that limit the shared visibility of critical information—including customer data.

Data silos are also a major obstacle to tracking customer behavior and unlocking the actionable insights required to personalize and connect customer interactions across all communication channels.

This ultimately creates friction between you and the customer as they must reckon with slow, disconnected interactions each time they engage with your brand - such as lack of personalization, having to confirm details multiple times, or having to manually re-enter information.

And when **76% of consumers are more likely to consider purchasing from brands that personalize** - delivering connected interactions and personalized experiences - in the right place, at the right time - is fast becoming a competitive necessity.

So, what's the solution?

76%

of consumers are more likely to consider purchasing from brands that personalize

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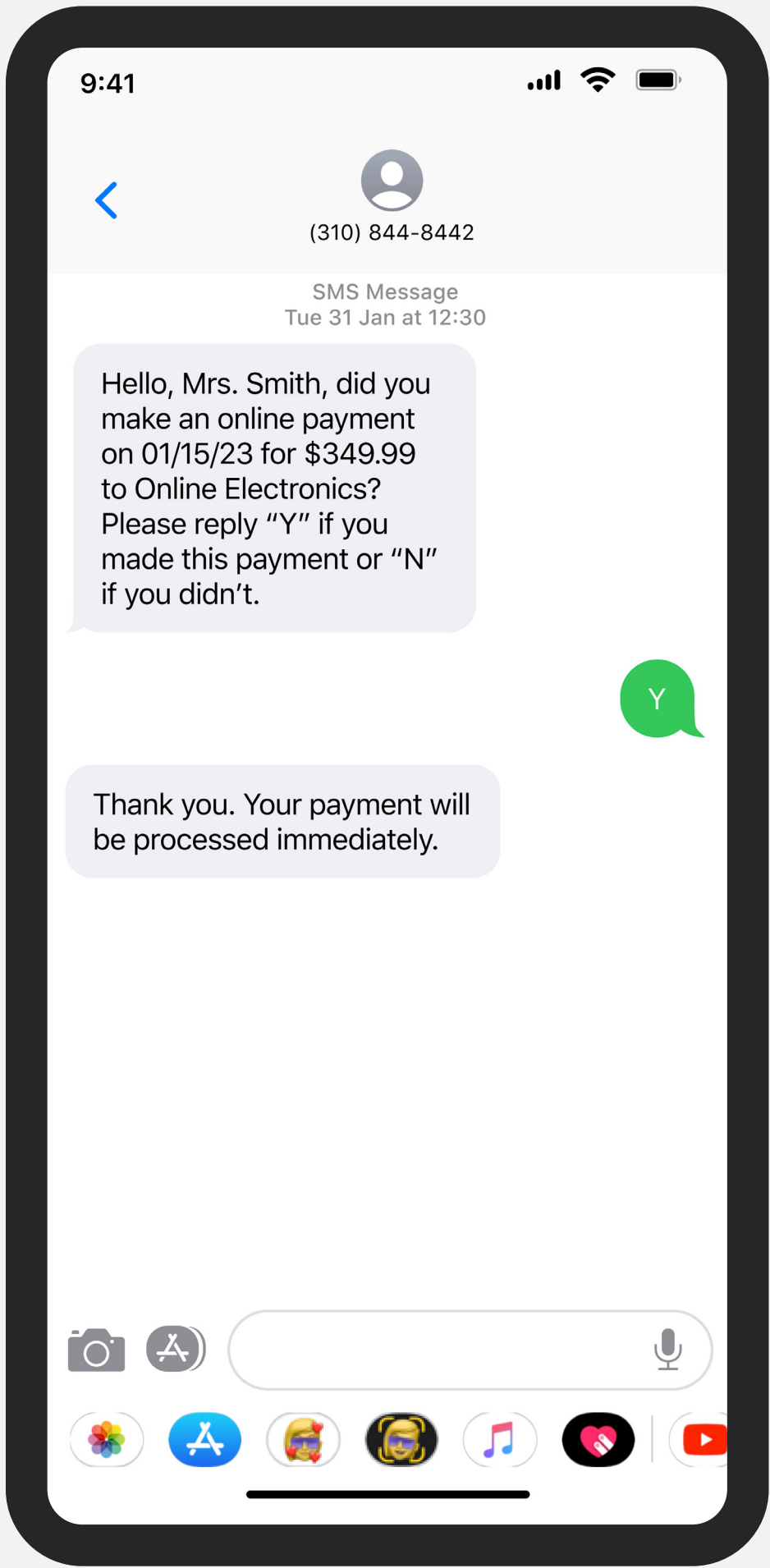# Seamless integrations that respect your legacy systems

With the right Communications Platform-as-a-Service (CPaaS), you can create and reuse simple integrations to connect the information in your existing backend systems with the latest communication channels. This lets you create and modify customer journeys based on the seamless exchange of data to and from your existing infrastructure. You can deliver seamless, contextualized experiences with business-friendly data visualization, drag-and-drop journey creation, and powerful automation tools with minimal IT intervention. Plus, there's no need to rip and replace your existing systems, which can lead to costly downtime and retraining.

For example, even when using customer relationship management (CRM) and customer data platforms (CDP), it's extremely difficult for enterprises to organize all their customer data in one place with shared real-time access. What's more, it's even more challenging to use that data to both trigger customer communications as well as receive back information to fulfill a desired customer action.

To illustrate this, imagine an uncharacteristic purchase triggering a fraud alert notification from a bank's fraud detection system. The customer is then able to respond and confirm it is fraudulent in-channel and immediately lock their credit card. With a legacy system, it may have had the ability to alert the customer of a suspicious transaction but required them to manually call the bank to escalate the issue. Allowing the customer to quickly respond in-channel and in real-time saves the customer extra time and effort while providing immediate peace of mind.

In this guide, we'll explore common communication challenges associated with using existing systems and how choosing the right CPaaS platform with a flexible integration framework can help transform customer interactions for a more connected, proactive future.

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9:41

(310) 844-8442

SMS Message
Tue 31 Jan at 12:30

Hello, Mrs. Smith, did you make an online payment on 01/15/23 for $349.99 to Online Electronics? Please reply "Y" if you made this payment or "N" if you didn't.

Y

Thank you. Your payment will be processed immediately.

Common barriers to seamless customer communications

Legacy systems

Many core legacy business systems – such as CRM, payment portals, and contact centers – were designed before omnichannel messaging and communication channels were easy to use. And adapting existing systems to support live and asynchronous channels like WhatsApp and Apple Messages for Business can be time and resource intensive.

Proprietary infrastructure

Many large enterprises use proprietary or custom backend systems that require custom integrations and connectivity. Due to the special requirements and configuration for these unique systems, enterprises struggle to integrate and leverage the data within for customer journeys.

Isolated customer data

Personalized communications and meaningful customer journeys are only possible when critical data points across relevant systems work together to create a connected view of the customer. However, because this data often lives in siloed legacy systems, it can be extremely difficult to automate communication flows and orchestrate fully connected customer journeys.

Resource constraints

Not every business has the developers, and IT staff required to adapt systems to support the latest digital messaging channels. And even if they do, they may not have the time, budget, or executive support to perform the necessary modifications. Plus, integrating siloed systems over time to work with new communication channels is a maintenance nightmare.

Data flow limitations

While many businesses have successfully expanded their customer communications, limitations may still remain. For example, not all have the capability to send communications to a customer from their backend systems and, alternatively, receive data from a customer and embed it back into their core business systems for later use.

Inefficient reporting

Connecting the right information – such as customer interaction histories – from across all customer touchpoints into your CRM or records system is required for efficient, compliant, and auditable reporting. Without the right solution, this may require a huge amount of manual effort.

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Accelerate your digital communication transformation

The best CPaaS providers offer many integration options to help you get started quickly and easily with "out of the box" ways to integrate as well as the ability to build and reuse custom components to meet your needs.

However you choose to integrate, you can:

Automate customer journeys

Apply business logic and use drag-and-drop visual flow builders to create automated journeys based on real-time actionable insights, such as triggering notifications in response to contextual customer actions or adding NLP/NLU bot to gather preliminary information.

Adapt your channels

Meet customers in the right place, at the right time - every time. Track channel engagement and user behaviors to adapt your integrations and ensure you support the channels your customers use most frequently. You can also orchestrate inbound and outbound messages, and real-time and batch messages, to automate two-way customer interactions end-to-end.

Unlock and apply data

Extract and use data from previously unused, disparate sources to initiate workflows, customer communications, and orchestrate customer journeys. And ensure that end users and back-office platforms - such as your CRM - are updated in real-time.

Simplify channel management

Introduce new digital channels into your customer journeys at scale and more easily manage channel updates and modifications without having to amend your backend systems - or code and re-program interactions for every use case. The right CPaaS platform can also streamline downstream processes like storing customer consent and encrypting data.

Leverage existing business systems

Continue using your existing core legacy business systems without making substantial changes to the backend or investing in new solutions to enable omnichannel messaging capabilities. Developers can also configure bi-directional integrations using REST/SOAP APIs and secure FTP.

SMS MMS Apple Messages for Business WhatsApp

Voice In-App Branded Text Email

Facebook Messenger RCS

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Introducing Webex Connect

Webex Connect is an enterprise-grade CPaaS platform that lets you orchestrate and automate customer interactions across multiple digital communication channels.

Webex Connect platform provides a simple framework for configuring custom integrations so users can configure and manage them centrally and reuse them at scale. There is a growing list of pre-built integrations that are available out-of-the-box to rapidly and easily build customer journeys with little to no IT support required. Plus, our low-code flow builder offers simple drag-and-drop visualization tools so that anybody - from IT to line-of-business teams - can build and automate powerful customer journeys while using data stored across multiple systems and locations.

Before unpacking the framework and additional integrations available, let's explore what makes integrating with Webex Connect unique.
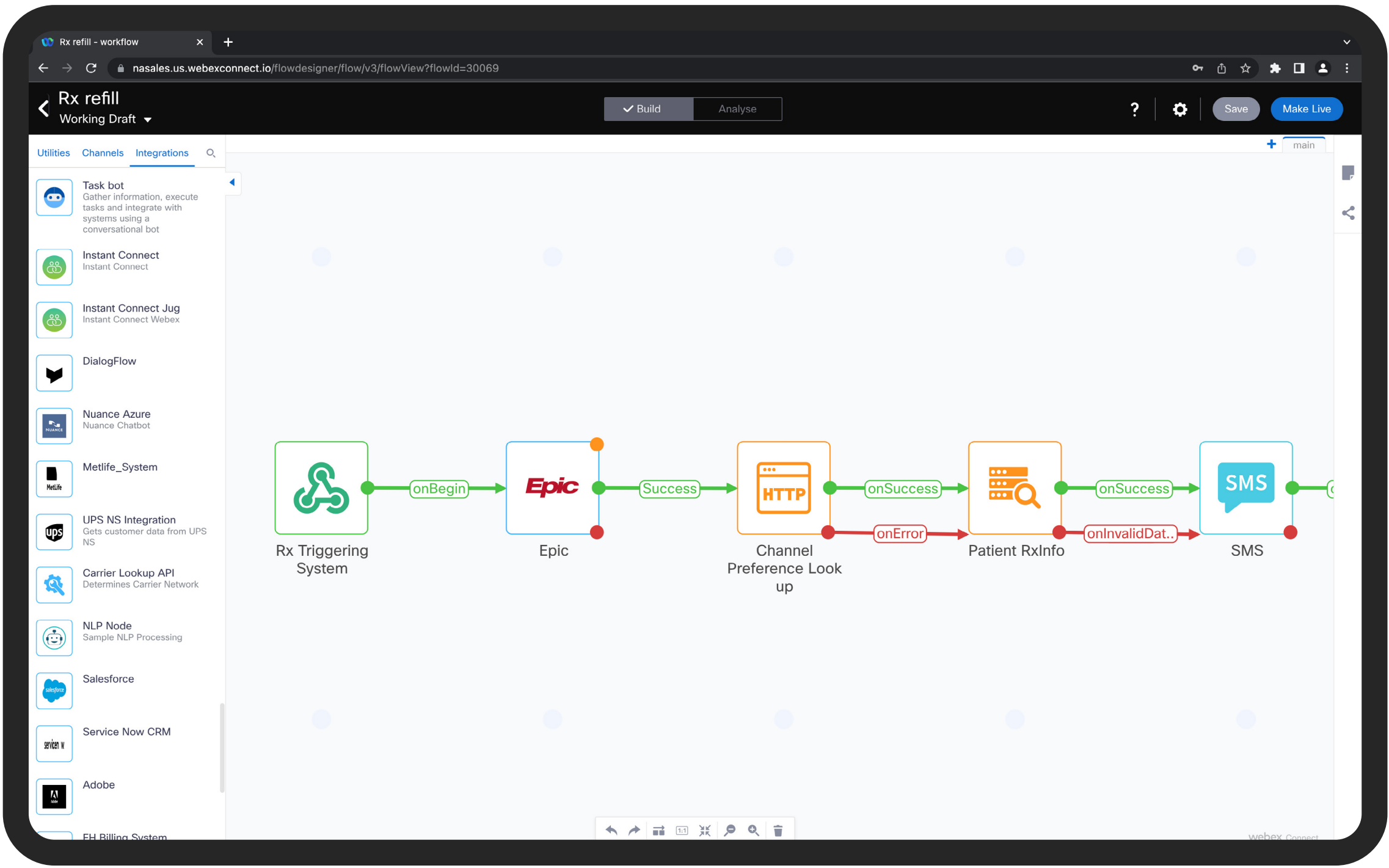
Example of a flow built with an integration with an Electronic Health Records system (EHR) to look up patient RX information and contact preferences to send a proactive notification that their RX is ready for pickup

As part of Cisco the product portfolio Webex Connect can integrate with the broader suite of Cisco products and services such as **Contact Center, Cisco Spaces, Meraki, Webex Instant Connect, Webex App** and **Journey Data Services**.

Why Webex Connect?

Integrate with confidence

Webex Connect offers an open integration framework that supports REST & SOAP APIs, SFTP-based integration, Webhooks, and out of the box SDKs for adding push notifications and 2-way chat capabilities in mobile (iOS and Android) and web applications. It can also parse and transform data from JSON and XML payloads.

Reuse custom integrations across journeys

Reduce the need for complex coding and re-configuration by reusing integrations across workflows, teams, and departments when creating customer interactions, − saving IT time, effort, and resources. Enforce security by ensuring minimum access and only exposing sensitive credentials or authentication tokens to those who need them.

Use prebuilt and custom integrations

Use the library of prebuilt integrations for the most popular business systems across multiple verticals, or integrate your proprietary and custom-built business systems.

Empower your developers

Enable developers to manage and update integrations easily in a single, centralized platform and apply changes across all instances without performing multiple, disconnected workflows.

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Seamlessly integrate with enterprise systems

Proactive outbound interactions

Enable third-party systems to trigger outbound customer interactions in Webex Connect via APIs or files based on contextual customer and business actions and events.

Outbound data system interactions

Push real-time data back into backend systems based on customer actions and responses using outbound webhooks. Files can also be used to push data into backend systems, though it won't be in real-time.

Contextual real-time inbound interactions

Receive data from customers and push that data back into your third-party business systems for real-time connectivity and visibility.

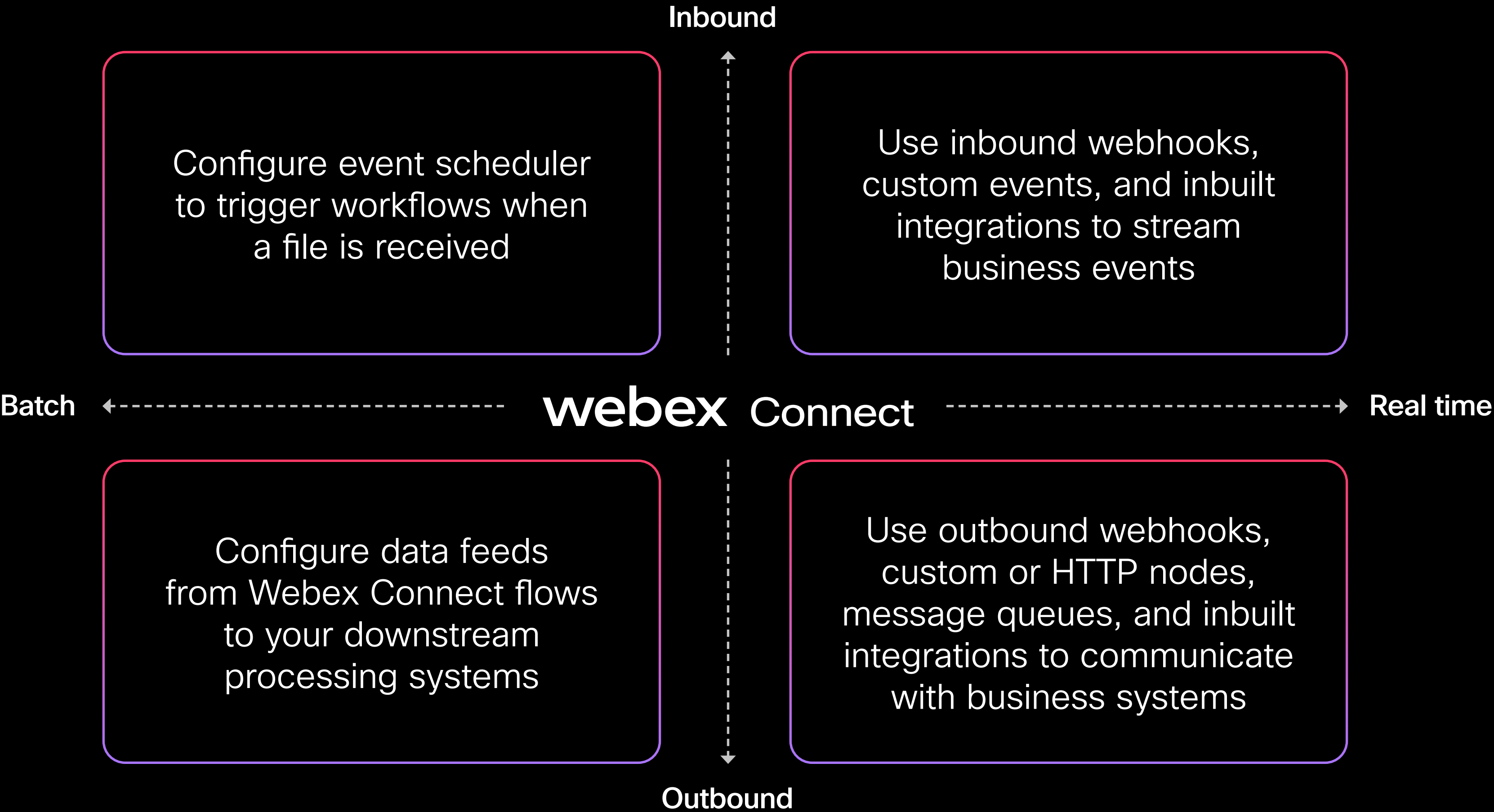### File-upload based outbound messaging

Upload and process large data files to send personalized batch messages to customers quickly and at scale.
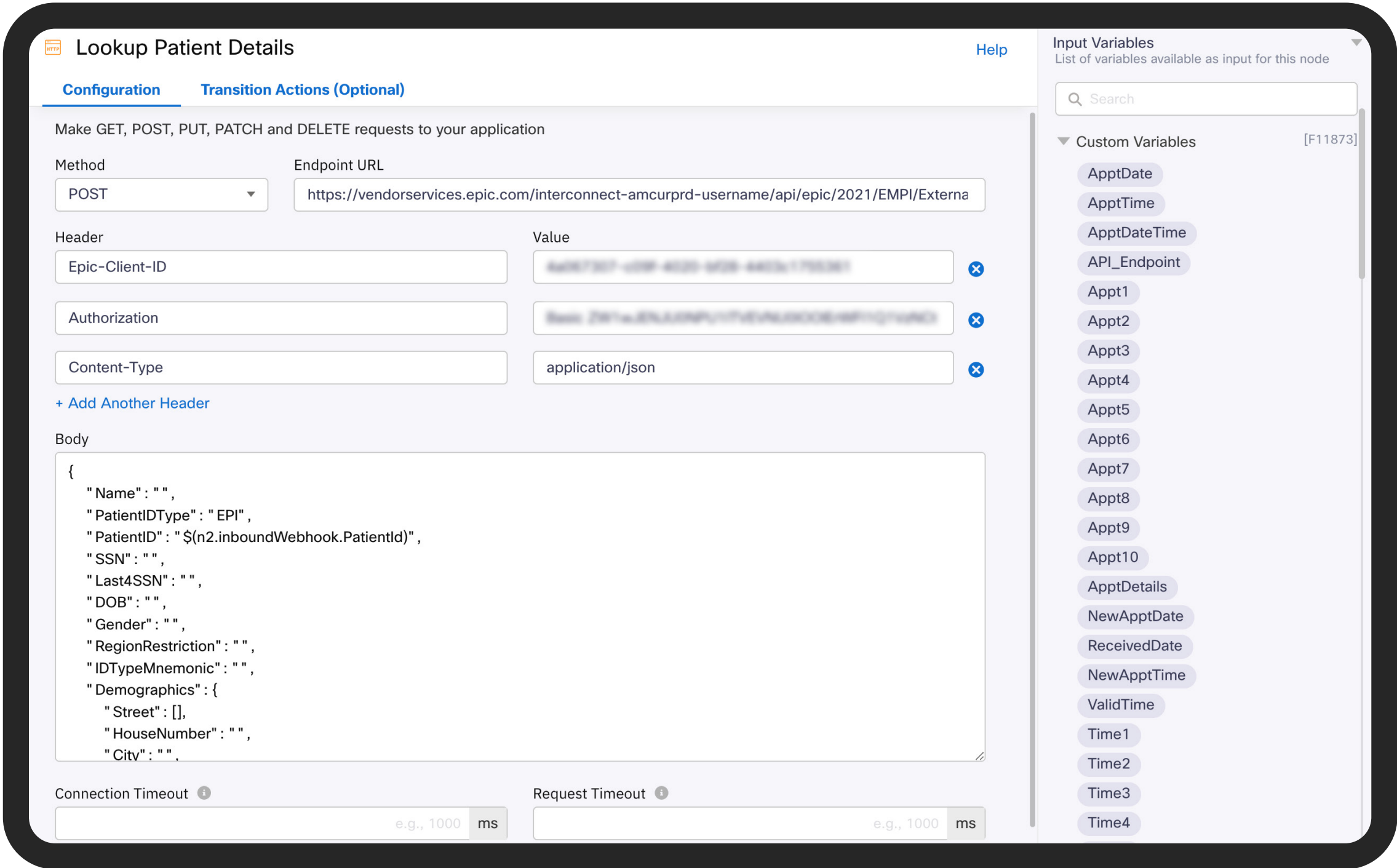
With Webex Connect, you can unlock powerful automation with inbound, outbound, batch, and real-time integrations

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Flexible integration options

Inbound

Configure event scheduler to trigger workflows when a file is received

Use inbound webhooks, custom events, and inbuilt integrations to stream business events

Batch ← — — — — — — **webex** Connect — — — — — — → **Real time**

Configure data feeds from Webex Connect flows to your downstream processing systems

Use outbound webhooks, custom or HTTP nodes, message queues, and inbuilt integrations to communicate with business systems

Outbound

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What systems can Webex Connect integrate with?

Webex Connect can integrate with any new or legacy system exposed to the public internet or Webex Connect via VPN, and accessed over standard HTTP protocols.

While these are the most common types of systems it can connect to, the possibilities are almost endless. Some of the systems that can be integrated include:

- Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
- Customer Data Platform (CDP)
- Content Management Platforms
- Workforce Optimization (WFO)
- Electronic Health Records (EHR)

- Electronic Medical Records (EMR)
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
- Automated chatbot systems
- Decisioning software systems
- Payment systems

- Billing systems
- Order management
- Language translation tools
- Robotic Process Automation (RPA) Tools

- Fraud detection systems
- Contact centers
- Appointment scheduling systems
- Product shipping systems

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Understanding prebuilt and custom integrations

Prebuilt integrations

Webex Connect contains a growing list of prebuilt integrations created, tested, and maintained by our expert team for out-of-the-box functionality - all you need is a valid license key for each platform you use.

Prebuilt integrations are available as nodes in the low-code flow builder, and include support for popular systems, including but not limited to:

CRM

salesforce | ZOHO | zendesk | AgileCRM

AI

Dialogflow

Helpdesk & Other

freshdesk | SAP

Contact Center

talkdesk | webex

Commerce

salesforce commerce cloud | Sycurio.

Healthcare

Epic

Database & Storage

amazon web services | S3

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Understanding prebuilt and custom integrations

Custom integrations

Alternatively, custom integrations let you build the exact integration you need based on your existing systems, business needs, and desired outcomes. A custom node can easily be configured to work with most proprietary and third-party systems.

If you have proprietary backend systems or have created customized versions of common platforms, custom integrations enable you to integrate these to unlock their data for customer interactions. The flexibility of Webex Connect means you can integrate these unique systems no matter how they are designed and constructed. And even if you use "out-of-the-box" integrations, you can still customize them to meet your specific needs.

Custom integrations only need to be configured once and can be reused by anyone in the organization to build new customer journeys in Webex Connect. In contrast, many other CPaaS providers require custom integrations to be configured each time they are needed for a new use case by duplicating and modifying the APIs.

You can also reduce redundant efforts by setting up REST/SOAP APIs. And for added simplicity, field validations and response data processes are handled inline without additional code.

Examples of previous custom integrations include, but not limited to:

clearstep   Microsoft Dynamics 365   servicenow   ORACLE Cerner   NICE   ZETA   ★ Trustpilot   SIEBEL   TEALIUM

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What can an integration with Webex Connect look like?

To help put CPaaS technology into an everyday working context, let's explore how a service provider like a wireless carrier might integrate multiple systems with modern communication channels to automate customer notifications and make real time changes when a customer's data plan is running low. By automating low data alert notifications, wireless carriers – or any other organization that needs to send alerts

– can increase operational efficiency, revenue opportunities, provide self-service capabilities, and enhance the customer experience.

It's important to note that while this type of customer communication may seem fairly simple and straightforward to the customer, it is actually a very complex back-end process to build out this type of journey.

A typical customer journey in action

Imagine that you are traveling and relying heavily on your mobile data plan to stay connected. However, you would rather not have to sign into your carrier's customer portal to repeatedly check your remaining data allowance.

Using CPaaS, your carrier can notify you on your preferred communications channel when you are running low on data and offer you the opportunity to top it up without having to leave the channel or sign into the portal.

All you need to do is respond with "yes" or "no" to accept or decline the offer to add more data to your account, and if "yes", define the amount you'd like to add.

This is a perfect example of how a fairly simple customer interaction involves multiple system integrations to work seamlessly.

A simple customer interaction can involve multiple system integrations to work seamlessly

Telecom Wireless ✓

Hey, Alex! You are currently running low on data. You have 5% remaining with 7 days left until your next billing cycle. Top up your account with 1GB of data for $22.22 (including taxes) with your saved card ending in 1234. To top up your account with your saved credit card on file, please reply YES. For any account changes or help, please reply CHAT.

YES

Thank you! We have successfully processed your payment and your account has been updated with an additional 1GB of data. Would you like to enroll in autopay now? We will bill your credit card on file ending in 1234 on the 21st of every month. To enroll in autopayments, please reply ENROLL.

ENROLL

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1 Low data detection

Your carrier's backend data usage monitoring system detects that you are running low on data and require more to ensure continued connectivity.

2 Trigger top-up flow

This backend system automatically triggers the launch of a customer journey through the CPaaS integration to send you a proactive notification.

3 Check customer preferences

Your customer data is retrieved from an integration into the CRM, with your preferred communication channel and social hours taken into consideration.

6 Process customer response

Your response is then processed and pushed back to the back-end system to take the appropriate actions and perform any updates in real-time.

5 Send proactive notification

Once initial checks are completed, the workflow engine on the CPaaS platform evaluates the responses from the other systems and determines the best content to send you in the notification alert, which you respond to in the same communication channel requesting more data.

4 Check and add tax

A tax database integration assesses if a confirmed transaction will have any tax implications.

7 Top-up customer account

Your account details are again confirmed through the CRM, and the integrated payment platform automatically charges your credit card the amount agreed based on your response.

8 Autopayment enrollment opportunity

With the payment complete, your account is topped up immediately, and you are offered the opportunity to enroll in autopayments. If you agree to enroll in autopayments, your response would be passed along to the backend payment system and is automatically updated to proceed with autopayments for future billing without requiring you to login to your account portal and make any changes to billing.

9 Data plan upgrade

This process can be further enhanced such that if the system detects that your data continues to run low on a regular basis, you will be automatically and proactively given the option to upgrade your data package to a higher one to avoid having to top up data each month.

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This simple, yet complex, customer journey demonstrates how integrating multiple systems to communicate with one another can deliver a superior customer experience. Building a customer journey such as this with the various system integrations can be a challenge.

The best way to develop automated, self-serve, personalized, and real-time customer interactions is with Webex Connect.

There is no CPaaS platform out there that makes creating customer journeys easier and quicker than Webex Connect.
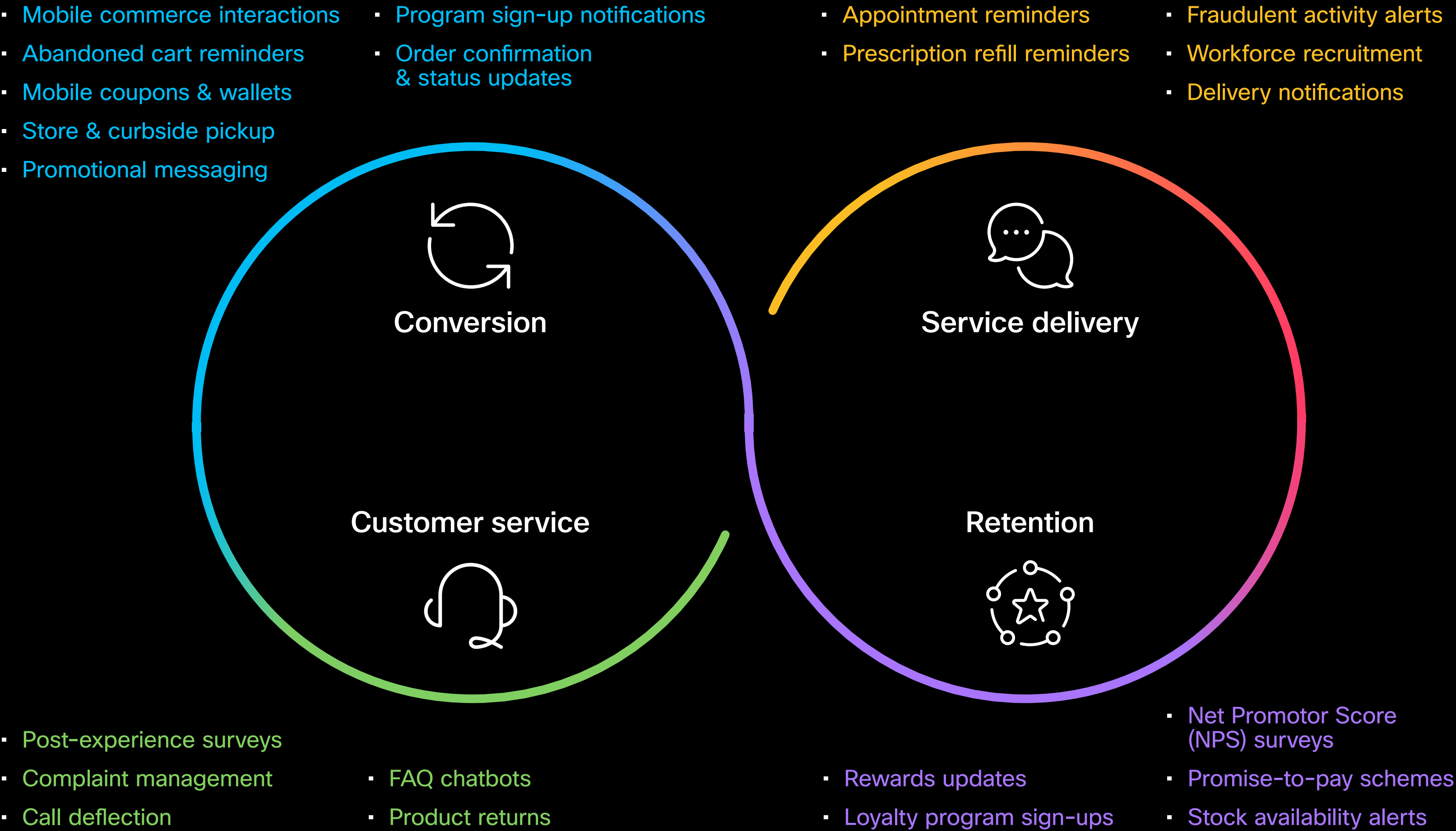
webex by CISCO
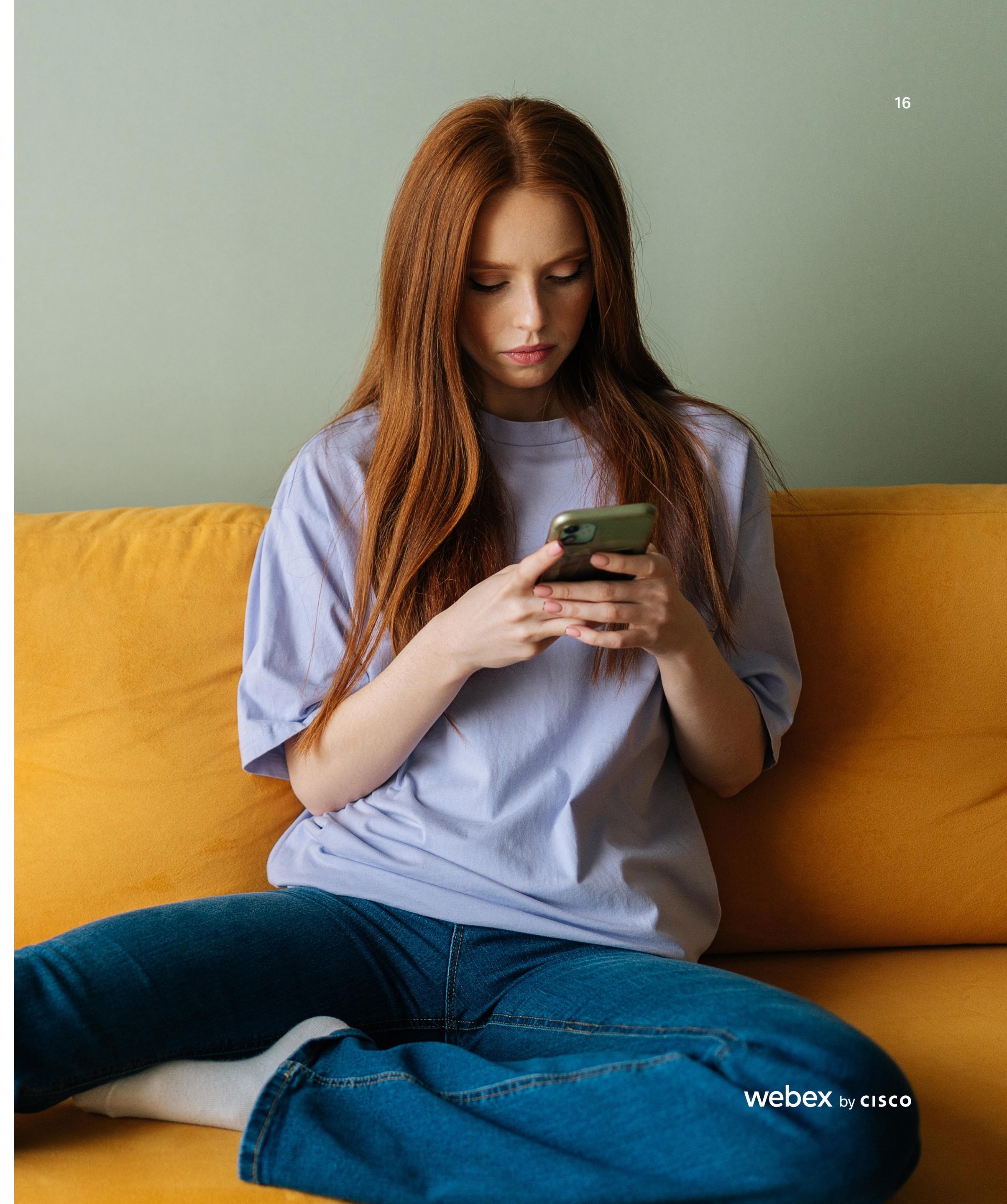
What use cases does Webex Connect support?

You can use prebuilt or custom integrations in Webex Connect to support any use case where the automation of a customer journey would benefit, where you want more personalized content or where the introduction of intelligent trainable AI would help. Integrations are best utilized in use case scenarios where data is required to trigger a customer journey and used to better inform the next actions.

We support use cases such as the following and many more:

- Mobile commerce interactions
- Abandoned cart reminders
- Mobile coupons & wallets
- Store & curbside pickup
- Promotional messaging

- Program sign-up notifications
- Order confirmation & status updates

- Appointment reminders
- Prescription refill reminders

- Fraudulent activity alerts
- Workforce recruitment
- Delivery notifications

Conversion

Service delivery

Customer service

Retention

- Post-experience surveys
- Complaint management
- Call deflection

- FAQ chatbots
- Product returns

- Rewards updates
- Loyalty program sign-ups

- Net Promotor Score (NPS) surveys
- Promise-to-pay schemes
- Stock availability alerts

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What's next for CPaaS and integrations?

Gartner estimates that **95% of global businesses** will use API-enabled CPaaS solutions by 2025, helping the CPaaS industry reach **a market worth of USD 100.9 billion** by 2030.

As demand for omnichannel communication solutions grows, CPaaS providers are fast expanding their integration capabilities and channel partners. This enables deeper integrations with popular business systems to deliver intelligent, personalized, and timely experiences when and where it matters most.

Plus, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) are gaining traction, enabling you to automate routine processes and interactions, and freeing employees to spend more time on value-adding tasks and challenging customer engagements.

ML algorithms can also augment the service agent experience by analyzing communication data to recommend next steps.

The future of CPaaS and integrations is looking bright, and we can't wait to see where our customers—and technologies—take us next.

95%
of global businesses will use API-enabled CPaaS solutions by 2025

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Getting started

Webex Connect helps organizations like yours orchestrate, automate, and personalize experiences that win customers, nurture loyalty, and drive competitive growth.

From contextual customer alerts to automated chatbot interactions and seamless omnichannel journeys, Webex Connect gives you the visibility and control to personalize, connect, and scale powerful customer interactions.

And together, we can help you seize the CPaaS opportunity while retaining your existing system investments. Our prebuilt and custom integrations eliminate the need to invest in costly "rip-and-replace" projects, so you can digitally transform while maximizing ROI.

Learn more about Webex Connect.
Speak to one of our experts to find out more.

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