

THE LAST MILE:

nexmo®

The Vonage®
API Platform

Digital Transformation in Global Logistics

Customer Experience is More Than Delivery On-Demand:
What You Need to Know



The Retail Consumer Landscape

E-commerce platforms have conquered the consumer market. The convenience of online and on-demand shopping is fueling their growth with total global e-commerce sales expected to reach [\\$4 trillion in 2020](#). For today's consumers, managing personal and professional lives has never been more effortless and convenient. Armed with their mobile devices and an endless array of apps, consumers are connected 24/7. Not only are they connected, but they're also shopping online more often. Consider this: "Between 2008 and 2018, online sales quintupled from [\\$290.4 billion to \\$1.6 trillion](#)." And they're shopping online on-the-go, anytime and anywhere, using their mobile devices. Virtually all mobile devices—approximately 99%—will be connected to the internet by 2022, which is expected to fuel a [\\$2.4 billion spend on internet retailing](#). Consumers still shop at brick-and-mortar shops, but they love the convenience of shopping online and on-the-go. As a result of consumers' shift to online and mobile shopping, their expectations have changed. At the same time, these new consumer expectations are continuing to reshape the way logistics and retail commerce companies operate.



Logistics Are Another Step in the Customer Journey

Consumers are no longer willing to wait at home for days on end, with no real idea of when to receive their parcel deliveries. Anywhere and anytime fulfillment services are the new normal for the customer journey. With consumers in the power seat, they are setting the expectation as to how and when they will receive their purchases—including last minute delivery changes.

The idea of “free two-day shipping,” made commonplace by Amazon Prime, has changed the landscape of the logistics industry. Convenience, speed, and accessibility are few reasons why Amazon Prime is so successful across countries. The thought of ordering something and receiving it in a day or two and effortlessly returning it makes it appealing. But equally important is how they manage the last mile and how Amazon logistics vendors make this experience more seamless. Now, when you check out online, you expect options: free shipping, faster shipping, etc. And when you choose an option, you expect to receive your package accordingly.

Logistics companies must be able to deliver on a different set of expectations, including the ability to empower consumers with a parcel delivery service that allows them to determine the details, including how, when and where their deliveries will occur. Consumers today demand secure, 24/7 delivery options, including pickup or drop off locations and lockers, and greater flexibility through a range of delivery time options (instead of focusing solely on delivery speed). Behind each of these new expectations that empower consumers with greater delivery control, location options, and flexibility, there are key interactions or touch points that give logistics and retail commerce companies the opportunity to elevate the customer experience.



It could be a **voice call** that saves a customer from a parcel delivery mishap.



A **message** that anticipates a tricky moment and seamlessly overcomes it.



A **notification** that avoids future frustration.



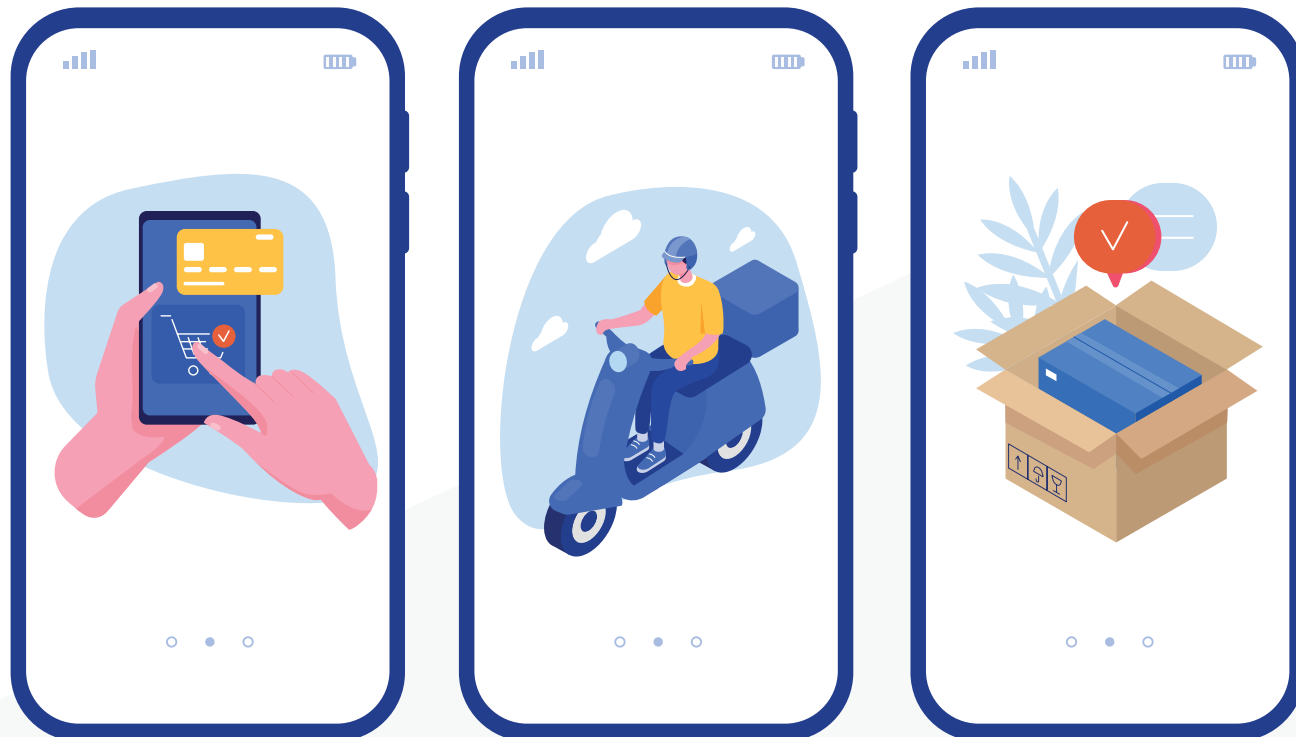
Or a **video call** when nothing else can replace human interaction.

No matter the scenario, conversations that strike at the right moment, on the right channel, can meet any challenge and pave the way for great customer experiences and memorable journeys. While logistics and retail commerce companies previously were more focused on details like delivery fulfillment and speed, they now have to shift their focus to meeting customer expectations. Logistics is truly a part of the customer experience, and it matters just as much as every other touchpoint.

Communications APIs: The Technology Behind Customer Experience

So what's the key to optimizing your delivery service to meet rising customer expectations?

It's the same important differentiator that makes the difference in any customer-service industry: communication. The right communications technology tools are key to providing customers with intelligent interactions at every touch point. Communications APIs are the technology of choice used to power customer interactions across the customer journey for logistics and retail commerce companies. They make it easier for developers to add communication channels like voice, video, and messaging into any application or service. In fact, communications APIs are playing a larger role in reshaping the customer experience by helping companies deliver the best possible experience, from the point of sale through the entire customer lifecycle—without sacrificing that human touch.



Three Opportunities in the Delivery Process to Impress Your Customers

Listed below are the top three customer challenges that logistics and retail commerce companies can change to opportunities through communications APIs.

1. Parcel Delivery Delays

Consumers want to know what they can expect. Everyone is busy. People have jobs, family, friends, and full lives to lead. Very few would enjoy waiting without having some clue as to how long they must wait—for anything or anyone. Once upon a time, the postal service was a mystery—you might order something and then wait weeks to receive it, and when it did arrive, it was a pleasant surprise. But the world has changed, and the “I don’t want to wait” factor now affects parcel deliveries as much as anything else in the customer’s journey.

Consumers want to be informed, aware, and in control, every step of the way. Consider the busy mom ordering a last-minute birthday gift because she just found out the party is this weekend. Or the Etsy shop owner who desperately needs supplies not found locally to complete an order for his own customer, who is also waiting. What about patients awaiting medical deliveries, be they medication or equipment?

Remember the last time you ordered a new appliance, a dishwasher or refrigerator? Coordinating the delivery and installation for such a large purchase has the potential to become a major source of frustration if unexpected scheduling delays occur. In each of these cases, delays would cause inconvenience at best and calamity at worst; this is not the type of experience anybody wants for their customers.



How Shipment and Delivery Notifications Help Transform the Customer Experience with Social Chat Apps (WhatsApp, FB Messenger, WeChat), SMS, or MMS:

When logistics and retail commerce companies can provide shipment and delivery notifications, they can save their customers a great deal of time, frustration, and even money. Your competitors are already doing it; are you? Through automated shipment and delivery notifications delivered to customers over social chat apps like WhatsApp, FB Messenger, WeChat, SMS, or MMS, a better path is paved towards a positive customer experience. You’re giving them the info they want and need, when they need it, and where they prefer it.



2. Returning or Exchanging a Product

There are many reasons why a customer may prefer to return or exchange a product or parcel. In some cases, a parcel is damaged. As a result, the product within the parcel is also damaged. Other times, a consumer may have changed their mind, realizing a product didn't meet their needs or expectations.

24x7 Customer Service and Support Over AI-powered Video, Voice, and Chatbot:

Gone are the days when you could keep your contact center open 8 to 5 and call it a day. People expect their concerns to be addressed now. The good news is, you don't have to employ three times the number of agents to keep things running 'round the clock. AI is making big strides in the customer support field; with natural language processing, many of your customer problems can be addressed, and the customer left happy, without ever utilizing a human agent. Real-time sentiment analysis offers the bot or agent immediate insight into the customer's state of mind; if an AI-powered voice bot, for example, detects frustration or anger in a customer's voice, it can go into escalation mode, asking the customer to hold for a moment while an agent is connected to the call. And when that agent is connected, they'll have a record of the call so far, along with all of the pertinent info to address the customer's frustration directly and immediately through voice or video calling.

Returning or Exchanging a Product Through Social Chat apps, SMS, or MMS:

Returns and exchanges can even be accomplished through the least intrusive methods of communication: messaging. Especially if you've already been communicating with your customer via SMS, MMS, or a chat app like Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp, it's a logical next step to enable returns and exchanges (and all customer support, really) the same way. AI can help here, too. Chatbots can generally handle the entire transaction in the case of a standard return, collecting the needed data and providing a link to a return label, for example.

3. Rescheduling a Parcel Delivery

If a customer decides to change the delivery address after the delivery service was confirmed and the information was entered into the system, a redirection will lead to a different delivery time and thus, a delayed delivery. Note that even if the new address is very close to the initial one, the information still has to be changed in the courier company's system and reprocessed, which can lead to a change in the delivery date as well.

Rescheduling or Redirecting a Parcel Delivery Over Social Chat Apps, SMS, or MMS:

Once again, you can turn to AI-powered chatbots and voice assistants, and SMS or chat app messaging to keep the lines of communication open and keep the customer fully informed every step of the way. Communication is the differentiating factor in all these common use cases. You need a simple, easy-to-use platform on which to build your customer conversations.

Other Use Cases

These same principals can be applied across a number of situations and use cases in transportation and logistics. Some of the other communication touch points you can automate or vastly improve with Communications APIs:

- Delivery tracking updates
- Changes in pickup or drop-off location, including change of address
- Selection or change of time slot for scheduled deliveries
- Change of delivery method (pickup/delivery)
- Specific delivery instructions (e.g. "Please leave it at the front desk" or "Place package behind the gate, not in front.")
- Rate/duty calculations
- Proof/confirmation of delivery
- Shipping load confirmation/scheduling (truck loads)
- Driver/user private communications
- 2FA verification
- Notifications & status updates
- Live customer support



The Aramex Story: How We are Helping the Logistics Giant Stay Ahead of the Curve

A global leader in logistics and transportation, [Aramex](#) operates in over 65 countries with 16,500+ employees. Competing with traditional logistics operators, Aramex has made a point to differentiate through the use of technology, specifically in the “last mile” stage—delivering the package to the customer.

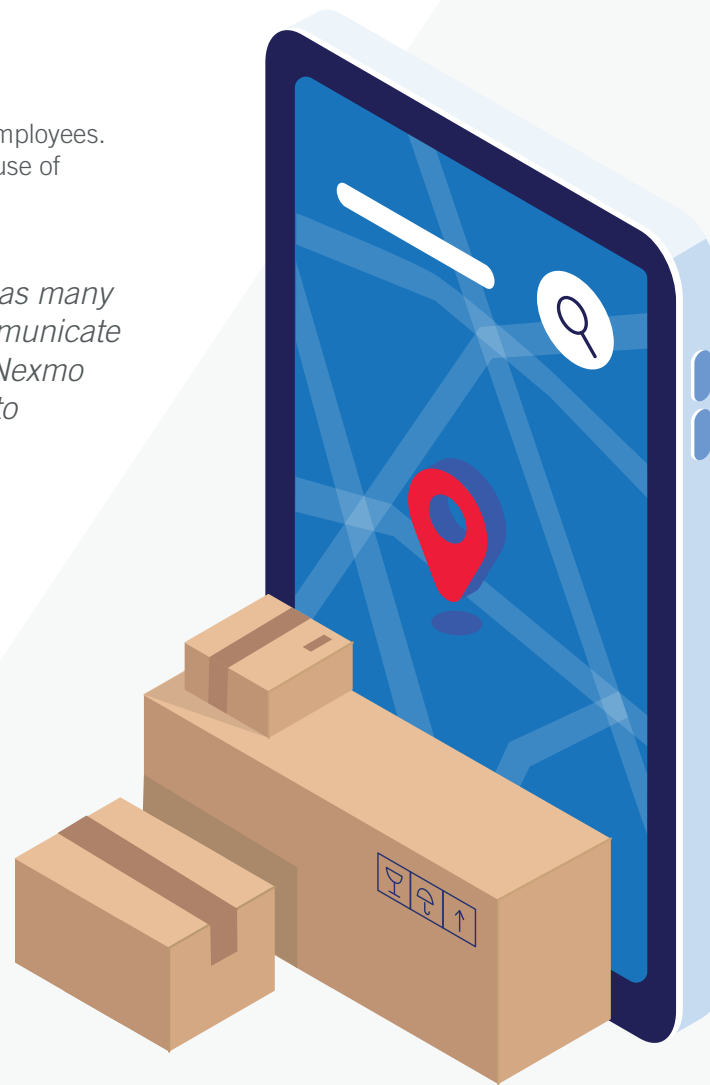
“The more mobile we become and the more digital we become, we need to access as many channels as possible to connect with our customers,” said Sleet. “We need to communicate with them through the apps that they currently use and enjoy. Our integration with Nexmo not only enables us to use WhatsApp, but the Nexmo Messages API also allows us to give our customers the ability to use other preferred communications apps.”

- Mohammad Sleet, Chief Digital Officer at Aramex

Through Nexmo’s Messages API, customers are able to choose from SMS, MMS, the WhatsApp Business solution, Facebook Messenger, Viber, and more. According to Sleet, “Instead of having to integrate each channel or communication center separately, Nexmo provides the access we need to use a variety of different communications channels, leaving the choice in the hands of the consumer.”

Aramex was able to reduce incoming call volume to their contact centers by 19% after implementing WhatsApp Business; 41% of all shipment inquiries are now processed via WhatsApp, leading to a decrease in call volumes and contact center costs. [Read more about how Aramex is raising the bar in last-mile delivery with Vonage’s APIs.](#)

aramex



Build a Winning Customer Experience with Vonage Business APIs

Your business is unique and so is your customer journey—with Nexmo [communications APIs](#), you can program any conversation to strike at precisely the right moment, on the right channel, to create the seamless experiences that drive customer acquisition, engagement, and loyalty.

With Vonage's flexible communications APIs and global platform, it's now easier than ever to reimagine the customer experience—and your organization—with digital communications. From growing startups to established organizations, companies such as Aramex, Alibaba, and Uber rely on Vonage to power seamless, secure, and innovative customer interactions.

Get up and running fast with our team of experts and flexible plans that can scale to meet your business needs. Choose from simple pay-per-use pricing or add the services you need, including our [Enterprise Plan](#) with hands-on support, consulting expertise, accelerated integration, and platform SLAs.

Building Blocks

Here are the communication building blocks you can use to make every interaction count:

Voice API - Build powerful voice products and engaging in-app voice experiences with the easy-to-use Nexmo Voice API and Client SDK.

Video API - Integrate video directly into your website or mobile applications with the Nexmo OpenTok API.

AI-Powered Chatbot - Reduce the contact center call load for greater efficiency and better customer service, enabling live agents to focus on more complex inquiries.

Messages API - Integrate multi-channel messaging, including SMS, MMS, and popular social chat apps including WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, WeChat, and Viber, into your applications with Nexmo's Messages API. Build engaging in-app messaging experiences as well with the Nexmo Client SDK.

Speak to an expert about implementation and best practices in healthcare.

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