

## How to Select the Best Enterprise Messaging App for European Businesses

### Introduction

The demand by businesses for our enterprise messaging app is strongly growing. On the one hand businesses are increasingly understanding the problems of using Whatsapp for enterprises communications. On the other hand in a mobile first world there are more and more important business use cases, scenarios and benefits of an enterprise messaging app.

Last year we wrote a first blog post on how to select an enterprise messaging app. In this white paper we now want to define the latest requirements, criteria and market trends, and focus on the needs of European businesses when they search for the best enterprise messaging app for their organization:

### User Experience like Whatsapp

Looking at the evolution and future of enterprise communication it is pretty obvious that a "Whatsapp for business" will be used for the messaging with colleagues and teams. People regularly use consumer messaging apps like Whatsapp and are often very familiar with these tools. Businesses need to select an enterprise messaging app that is available cross-platform for smartphones, tablets and desktops, but has a user interface and experience that is very similar to Whatsapp. Thereby the roll-out can be accelerated, employee satisfaction can be increased and support can be reduced.

Don't underestimate the resistance of users to chat and collaboration tools, which are also generally made for messaging use cases, but have a user interface different to Whatsapp. Employees want a "Whatsapp user experience" in an enterprise messaging app.

### Professional Group Messaging and Content Sharing

Group messaging is nowadays clearly one of the most important use cases in the enterprise world. Businesses require professional group chats or channels for different teams, projects, units and topics, that can handle at least 50 chat members or sometimes even more. To easily understand the status of messages and to follow up on the communication, an enterprise messaging app requires read receipts which should also work for group chats. Ideally the on-boarding of users can be accelerated with an active directory (or LDAP) import of groups to the devices.

Another core use case for businesses is sharing of digital content. Once again, due to their private WhatsApp usage employees expect an enterprise messaging app to have sharing features for photos, videos, voice messages, locations, calendar dates, links with previews and - of course - files. The sharing of files should at least cover office documents (word, powerpoint and excel) and PDFs.

## European Cloud or On-Premise

The recent election in the USA with its right wing movement and a republican win will increase mass surveillance and similar intelligence activities. Thus, european enterprises will be more and more reluctant to use clouds offered or accessible by US software vendors.

Due to regulation and data protection many european businesses require an enterprise messaging app with a cloud based in their country or in a state with strong privacy laws (e.g. Germany). For certain businesses with strong security requirements like e.g. financial services, life science or government organizations an enterprise messaging app with an on-premise solution can be the right choice.

## Leading Data Protection and Security Based on European Standards

While strong data protection and security should be a given among enterprise messaging apps, vendors significantly differ here. The weak data protection laws in the USA reflect the vulnerable offerings of some US vendors. However, also in Europe with its strong data protection laws there are considerable differences between the security feature sets of enterprise messaging vendors.

In general an enterprise messaging app should anonymize user data as far as possible, should not store address books and should use as little data as possible (including deletion if the data is not required to operate anymore). Furthermore, it is important that privacy features are offered by the enterprise messaging app like a multi-factor authentication and the disabling of push notification previews (in order to avoid that message contents are shared with Apple and Google).

An enterprise messaging app should have been built based on strong German and European data protection laws. Likewise an enterprise messaging app should provide businesses with order data processing conformable to European law.

## Strong Encryption Made for Businesses

An enterprise messaging app should apply strong encryption. Of course the transport of data between the app and server should be encrypted, and also all data stored on the server should be encrypted. These are the basics. In addition, the transport of metadata of all messaging should be encrypted between app and server. Also the messages should be encrypted by the sender and only decrypted by the recipient. These two measures help to protect against man-in-the-middle attacks. Since the devices carry a lot of data, it is critical that content of the app on the device gets stored encrypted as well. With all the encryption in place an enterprise still requires an audit-proof archiving functionality (in addition to backups) for all the messages and users of their organization.

## Company-wide Administration

An enterprise needs to be able to manage all their users in an easy, efficient and professional manner. An enterprise messaging app should provide an administrator portal

to invite, configure and manage all users of an organization. A professional access management should allow to white list users and to block the access of users and even single devices (e.g. in case of theft or loss). The administrator portal should feature company-wide communication rules, data protection settings and compliance policies.

Especially larger businesses require active directory (or LDAP) integrations that allow to quickly import or regularly synchronize the users and thus minimize administrative efforts. Larger enterprises also need a multi-tenancy and multi-domain capability for business units and subsidiaries in order to enable comprehensive administration of individual tenants. Bulk operations and filtering mechanisms can help an administrator hereby as well.

Businesses want to understand user activity and service availability of an enterprise messaging app. Therefore monitoring features and user statistics are of advantage. Besides enterprises sometimes require a revisor access to the administrator portal and audit logs.

## Leading Mobile Application Management

Due to the large quantity and increasing usage of mobile devices in the enterprise the mobile application management is key. The enterprise messaging app should enable automatic installations and roll-outs (without any user input). That helps to minimize support and accelerate deployments across the organization. It is important that businesses can prevent the usage of the enterprise messaging app on private or unmanaged devices, because the consequence could be security holes. The enterprise messaging app should also support secure tunneling in order to protect corporate resources and networks.

Company-wide policies should be available to configure the enterprise messaging app in accordance with compliance and data protection requirements. Thereby an enterprise can disable e.g. location sharing or copy/paste and can define durations for data retention on the devices. This ensures that confidential data can not be used or is not stored longer than required.

An enterprise messaging app should support leading enterprise mobility management solutions, which can protect access to apps with pass codes and remotely delete apps in case a device gets compromised.

## Secure Ecosystem Integrations for Industry 4.0

While currently enterprises primarily look for a „WhatsApp for business“ as part of the mobile office, the next essential step in the years to come will be the integration of the enterprise messaging app into the IT ecosystem. The connection of 3rd party software and services allows the acceleration and automation of processes and workflows, which can be very important as part of digitalization projects and industry 4.0.

An enterprise messaging app should offer an API for IT ecosystem integrations (e.g. ERP, CRM, HR, project management, accounting, etc.). The roadmap should focus on the

requirements of European businesses, because digitalization projects and industry 4.0 in Europe have specific needs with regard to technology, productivity and data protection.

An enterprise messaging app should provide a secure API to 3rd party software and services. The data should be transmitted to 3rd party solutions in a protected way and there should be no uncontrolled connections. That means the enterprise messaging app should make core integrations by itself and should not rely on unsafe 3rd party providers, which might lead to data leaks or unintended distribution of confidential business data.

## Next Steps

The market of enterprise messaging apps is quickly evolving. At first glance the offerings of enterprise messaging vendors might look similar, but turn out to differ significantly. If you are looking for the best enterprise messaging app for your business and have questions on the evaluation, please contact us for more detailed information.

## About Teamwire

Teamwire is a fast, intuitive and secure enterprise messaging app. Teamwire helps businesses to solve the Whatsapp problem, increase productivity and improve team communication in the messaging era. Users can send 1:1 and group messages, post status updates, exchange video and voice messages, and share photos, locations, calendar dates, files and much more. Teamwire fully complies with strong German and European data protection needs and is a completely encrypted solution. The service can be easily managed for the whole organization and ensures company-wide compliance. Teamwire is available for all mobile and desktop platforms as a cloud, private cloud or on-premise solution.

More information: <http://www.teamwire.eu>