



Brussels, 6 February 2018

Chat with us using WhatsApp

Today (6 February 2018), we're the first financial institution in Belgium to offer its customers the ability to chat with their bank and insurer through WhatsApp. This will be using the number 09 331 78 16* and is part of our aim to be even more accessible to our customers.

The service is intended for quick, straightforward questions about our services. These will be answered by our KBC Live staff, just as quickly as if you called us. The service is available on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. and on weekends from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

WhatsApp is a widely used messaging app. Studies into possession and use of media & technology in Flanders by leading Belgian nanoelectronics and digital technologies R&D centre, IMEC, have shown in their recent 'imec.digimeter report' that the number of:

- Daily users of WhatsApp in Flanders rose from 25% in 2016 to 31% in 2017 and the increase is noticeable in all age groups
- Over-75s using WhatsApp has doubled from 7% to 15%
- Users making daily landline calls remained stable at around 19%, compared to 42% on mobile networks
- Over-65s using WhatsApp has even tripled
- Twenty-somethings who think their smartphone is indispensable is as high as 54%

We're delighted to be the first Belgian financial service provider to launch this service. Our customers will be able to interact with us through WhatsApp just as easily as with their circle of friends. WhatsApp for Business has been available in Belgium since 30 January. We're the first financial institution to integrate this special business version of WhatsApp into our live chat service for quick help with general questions. Customers are helped by our KBC Live team, as easily as by telephone call and with the same respect for privacy.

We're seeing a steady rise in the number of chats and calls with our KBC Live service. Providing our customers with yet another way to contact us makes us more accessible than ever before.

- The **number of video chats** was around 2 000 per month for 2017 and that number is increasing (in the closing months of 2017, it was heading towards **3 000 per month**)
- The number of **ordinary chat sessions** was around 2 500 per month in the first half of 2017, but had soared to roughly **7 500 per month** from September on

- The number of **appointments** with KBC Live is increasing systematically and is now around **4 000 per month** (there were almost 50 000 remote appointments between 1 June 2016 and the end of November 2017)
- More than 7 000 non-life insurance policies and almost 3 000 home loans were sold through KBC Live in 2017

Karin van Hoecke, General Manager of Mobile First, explains: *‘Our customers have been able to chat with us for some time. WhatsApp is a very fast and easy to access chat app that’s already familiar and intuitive to many of our customers. Now that it’s technically possible to use it for business purposes, we’re proud to be the first to offer it to our customers so they get even better service and availability from us. We’re testing it first with our Dutch-speaking customers, before expanding to the other official languages in Belgium and English. We want to give our customers the ability to contact us in a variety of ways. From good-old-fashioned branch or insurance agency visits to contact through our website, Mobile and Touch apps or KBC Live for online banking, we want to be there for them. Messaging services like Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp fit right in.’*

How it works

- Customers add us a contact on their phone with the telephone number 09 331 78 16 (they only have to do this once), enabling them to contact us by WhatsApp message

We would take this opportunity to strongly remind our customers to:

- Never share privacy-sensitive details this way (as with all social media)
- Remember that we will not send messages of our own accord this way and will only respond to messages sent to us
- Contact us or consent to us contacting you a different way for matters that are more complex or require advice

* Support in French, German and English will follow at a later stage

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