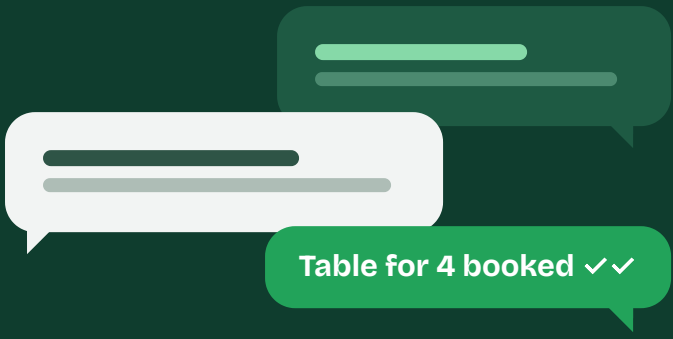
SAMWAD

WHITEPAPER · RESTAURANTS & RETAIL · 2026



Bookings, Orders and Regulars: WhatsApp for Restaurants and Stores

How Indian restaurants and retail stores use WhatsApp to answer customers, take bookings and orders, collect feedback and turn first-time visitors into regulars.

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5 stages
The customer journey, from first question to the next visit

3 automations
The first ones to switch on, step by step

6 metrics
A scorecard for owners and store managers

30 days
A week-by-week launch plan

samwad.tech

Arpneet AI Technologies Pvt. Ltd. · Built in India

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The phone rings at the busiest hour, and happy customers are never asked back.

Restaurants and stores in India take bookings and orders by phone, often in the middle of the rush. Customers who had a good time leave without being asked for a review, and there is no easy way to invite them back.

This guide shows how to run the customer journey on WhatsApp with SAMWAD: five stages from first question to the next visit, the first three automations, sample templates and a 30-day plan.

In this guide

- The five-stage customer journey, with one number to watch at each stage
- Three automations: table booking, order in the chat and feedback request
- Sample Utility and Marketing templates, with buttons
- A scorecard, common mistakes and a 30-day plan

WHY NOW

The case for WhatsApp

$1.09T

India's retail market in 2025, in US dollars[1]

$230B

organised retail projected by 2030 (US dollars), per a Deloitte–RAI report[2]

Sources. 1. IBEF (India Brand Equity Foundation), Retail Industry in India, 2026, ibef.org/industry/retail-india. 2. Same page, citing a Deloitte–Retailers Association of India (RAI) report.

The usual way

Phone calls and walk-ins. Calls go unanswered during the rush. Orders are noted on paper. Happy customers leave without a review, and there is no list to invite them back.

On WhatsApp

One chat, question to next visit. YARA answers hours and menu, customers book and order in the chat, feedback is asked for after the visit, and opted-in regulars hear about new menus.

THE FRAMEWORK

The customer journey on WhatsApp

Many restaurants and stores run WhatsApp from a personal phone. Run all five stages on one business number and every booking, order and review request sits in one shared inbox.

See the full customer journey:
samwad.tech/industries/whatsapp-for-restaurants-retail

Stage 01

Question

A customer asks about hours, the menu or the location.

SAMWAD: YARA answers; the Voice AI Agent answers WhatsApp calls; anything else goes to staff.

Watch: Questions answered without a handover

Stage 02

Booking

A customer wants a table.

SAMWAD: Table booking on WhatsApp; confirmation with time and party size; a reminder before arrival.

Watch: No-show rate

Stage 03

Order

A customer wants to order for pickup or delivery.

SAMWAD: Order from your menu or catalog in the chat; pay at pickup or through a payment link; the order goes to your team.

Watch: Orders taken on WhatsApp

Stage 04

Feedback

The visit or order is done.

SAMWAD: A feedback request; unhappy customers go to the manager; happy customers get your review link.

Watch: Feedback response rate

Stage 05

Come back

A customer could visit again.

SAMWAD: New menus, festive offers and loyalty rewards for opted-in customers; you choose who gets each offer, e.g. by past orders.

Watch: Repeat visits or orders

DESIGN RULE

Earn the opt-in at the table or the till. A regular who asked to hear from you is worth more than a list of numbers who didn't.

PLAYBOOK

The first three automations to switch on

01 · Booking

Table booking

Trigger: a customer asks for a table in the chat.
Message: date, time and party size in a WhatsApp form, then a confirmation.
Next: a reminder before arrival.

Watch: no-show rate

02 · Order

Order in the chat

Trigger: a customer asks for the menu or taps your catalog link.
Message: your menu or catalog, with pickup or a payment link.
Next: the order goes to your team with the full chat.

Watch: orders taken on WhatsApp

03 · Feedback

Feedback request

Trigger: a few hours after the visit or order.
Message: a quick rating with buttons.
Next: unhappy customers go to the manager; happy ones get your review link.

Watch: feedback response rate

SAMPLE TEMPLATES

What the messages look like

Illustrative examples. Each {{1}}, {{2}} is a variable filled in for each customer.

ILLUSTRATIVE

Hi {{1}}, your table for {{2}} at {{3}} is booked for {{4}}. See you soon.

Change booking

Cancel

Utility template · table_booking_confirmation

ILLUSTRATIVE

Hi {{1}}, we've received your order {{2}} for {{3}}. It will be ready for pickup at {{4}}.

Can you make the paneer tikka less spicy?

Utility template · order_confirmation

ILLUSTRATIVE

Hi {{1}}, our new {{2}} menu starts on {{3}}. Tap below to see it or book a table.

See the menu

Stop updates

Marketing template · new_menu (opted-in only)

Which template is which

Booking confirmations, reminders and order updates are **Utility** templates: booking and order information only, no offers. New menus, festive offers and loyalty rewards are **Marketing** templates, sent only to customers who opted in. After a customer messages you, you can reply freely for 24 hours; then you need an approved template.

SAGE, SAMWAD's AI advisor, checks templates against Meta's rules before you submit.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE

What good looks like

Track a few numbers from week one, so you can see what WhatsApp is doing for bookings, orders and repeat visits.

Your scorecard

WhatsApp bookings Tables booked on WhatsApp ÷ all bookings	Weekly
No-show rate No-shows ÷ tables booked	Weekly
WhatsApp orders Orders taken in the chat each week	Weekly

Feedback response rate Weekly

Customers who answered ÷ customers asked

Opt-in growth Weekly

New opted-in customers each week

Repeat rate Monthly

Customers with 2+ visits or orders in 60 days ÷ all customers

Common mistakes

- Running WhatsApp from a manager’s personal phone
- Asking for feedback a day or two too late
- Sending festive offers to every number you have, not just opted-in customers
- Taking orders in the chat without telling the kitchen or store team

Getting opt-ins

Put a QR code on the table, the bill or the counter that opens a chat. Ask once, say what you’ll send, and record the yes.

YOUR FIRST 30 DAYS

A 30-day launch plan

WEEK 1

Connect and approve

Connect your WhatsApp Business number. Add hours, menu or catalog and location for YARA. Submit booking and order templates to Meta.

WEEK 2

Book and order

Switch on table booking with reminders, and ordering in the chat with pickup or a payment link.

WEEK 3

Ask for feedback

Switch on the feedback request. Send unhappy customers to the manager and happy ones to your review link.

WEEK 4

Bring them back

Collect opt-ins with a QR code. Send a first new-menu or festive message to opted-in customers. Review the scorecard.

Before week 1: your systems

Connect your POS or ordering system through ready-made integrations, the API, webhooks or Zapier, or start with orders arriving in the shared inbox. Decide who answers WhatsApp during service.

BEFORE YOU GO LIVE

Consent and content checklist

- [ ] **Opt-in:** ask at the table, the till or in the chat, say what you'll send, and keep a record.
- [ ] **Template categories:** bookings and order updates as Utility; menus, offers and rewards as Marketing.
- [ ] **Opt-out:** add a "Stop updates" button to Marketing templates and act on it straight away.
- [ ] **Quiet hours:** send offers before meal times or in the daytime, not late at night.
- [ ] **Handover:** complaints, allergy questions and large orders go to staff with the full chat.

Five questions to ask any WhatsApp platform

1. Is it built on the official WhatsApp Business API?
2. Can customers book a table and order without calling?
3. Can staff reply from one shared inbox and a mobile app?
4. Can I choose who gets each offer, for example by past orders?
5. Will someone help me write templates and get them approved?

Take your next booking on WhatsApp this week.

Book a demo and we'll set up your first automation from this guide with you, or start a free trial.

Demo calendly.com/avaneet-techelligenceai/book-a-demo
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