



Vonage to Power VIRA Vaccine Chatbot for WhatsApp

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COVID-19 vaccine information chatbot enabled by the Vonage Messages API brings real-time information to WhatsApp users worldwide

HOLMDEL, N.J., Jan. 24, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- [Vonage](#) (Nasdaq: VG), is partnering with WhatsApp to power the expansion of the COVID-19 vaccine [VIRA chatbot](#) to WhatsApp users.



[VIRA](#), short for Vaccine Information Resource Assistant, provides critical, dependable COVID-19 vaccine-related information on-the-go, to anyone around the globe. The VIRA chatbot was developed by the International Vaccine Access Center at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health with experts from the Bloomberg School's Department of International Health and Johns Hopkins Whiting School of Engineering.

"We're honored to partner with Vonage and Johns Hopkins to support this critical work connecting people with authoritative information around the COVID-19 vaccines during the biggest public health crisis of our time," said Christina LoNigro, WhatsApp Social Impact Initiatives Lead. "We are working with health ministries and governments around the world to help get their populations registered for vaccinations directly within WhatsApp."

Expanding from a web-based chatbot, VIRA will be a part of WhatsApp's robust global COVID-19 Program. Since the start of the pandemic, WhatsApp has partnered with over 350 health authorities on helplines to connect people to authoritative and life-saving information around COVID-19 and the vaccines. To date, over 4 billion messages have been sent over these helplines.

The [Vonage Messages API](#) seamlessly embeds the VIRA chatbot into WhatsApp, sending notifications, messages, and essential, targeted information users need, in real-time. VIRA is adaptive, using IBM Research technology by listening to questions and providing immediate, expert-vetted answers and responses regarding COVID-19 vaccinations. The chatbot understands and responds on a range of topics including vaccine effectiveness, safety, eligibility, and other mitigation measures, leveraging IBM Key Points adaptive technology to expand the range of issues covered over time.

"With the Vonage Messages API for WhatsApp, we are helping institutions like Johns Hopkins connect and engage with users from virtually anywhere, on-demand," said Joy Corso, CMO of Vonage. "Access to up-to-date healthcare and protective guidance information is crucial to staying safe and healthy. Vonage is proud to be partnering with Johns Hopkins on such an important public service."

Users can chat with VIRA on WhatsApp at +1 410-401-0306 or via direct link. [VIRA](#) is a chatbot developed by the International Vaccine Access Center at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Johns Hopkins Whiting School of Engineering with support from the Johns Hopkins COVID-19 Training Initiative and Bloomberg Philanthropies. VIRA relies on IBM Research technology, including Project Debater [Key Point Analysis](#). Learn more at [VaxChat.org/FAQ](#).

About Vonage

Vonage (Nasdaq: VG), a global cloud communications leader, helps businesses accelerate their digital transformation. Vonage's Communications Platform is fully programmable and allows for the integration of Video, Voice, Chat, Messaging and Verification into existing products, workflows and systems. Vonage's fully programmable unified communications and contact center applications are built from the Vonage platform and enable companies to transform how they communicate and operate from the office or anywhere, providing enormous flexibility and ensuring business continuity.

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