

ChatFin relaunches WhatsApp car licence renewal service in Western Cape

ChatFin has recently relaunched its ChatBack vehicle licence renewal platform in the Western Cape, enabling motorists to renew their licences via WhatsApp Business API.



The company initially unveiled the service in Gauteng and the Western Cape in November 2019 which enabled the WhatsApp Business API platform for ChatFin. The platform was successfully rolled out in Gauteng but had a rocky start in the Western Cape.

ChatFin director Jan Kotzé explains the company initially worked with a partner to do renewals in the two provinces. Unfortunately, the partner could not cope with the huge volumes in the Western Cape, prompting ChatFin to scale back the service in that region.

"The initial uptake was huge, but we had to withdraw from the Western Cape. Instead, we decided to build our capacity and drive the entire business process ourselves. We launched ChatBack again in the Western Cape on 1 February this year and the service has been working extremely well," says Kotzé.

Kotzé says that ChatFin is leveraging off a very good relationship with the Western Cape licensing department, enabling the company to service the entire province from a single point in Cape Town.

First for South Africa

Lauded as a South African first, the vehicle licence renewal service runs on ChatFin's ChatBack application, which integrates into WhatsApp Business API via an integration point provided by Infobip.

The service allows vehicle owners in South Africa to renew their vehicle licence over WhatsApp. The renewal process through the app takes less than two minutes and saves vehicle owners ample time by removing the hassle of having to wait in long queues.

"ChatBack was specifically built to alleviate the frustrations that car owners face when renewing their license in an effortless experience over WhatsApp. It was important for us to choose the right WhatsApp Business API provider," says Kotzé.



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He notes that the uptake of the service has been extremely strong in Gauteng since its inception in November 2019, with more than 150,000 transactions coming through the ChatBack app thus far.

"We have a better conversion rate than e-commerce sites and currently do about 2000 transactions a month. This is despite us reducing our marketing due to Covid-19," says Kotzé, adding that last year's hard lockdown impacted the service as licensing departments were forced to close.

Responding to Covid-19

"Lockdown forced us to reconfigure our model somewhat and establish new relationships with officials at licensing departments when they eventually reopened at limited operating capacity. However, at the moment, we are the largest queuing service in Gauteng, and are in discussion with a few companies to form more partnerships."

With 12 million registered vehicles in South Africa, ChatFin already has the biggest provinces in the bag - Gauteng, with six million, and the Western Cape, with two million. The company is targeting KwaZulu-Natal next, with some 1.5 million vehicles and then the smaller provinces.

"With the possibility of a third wave of the COvid-19 pandemic arriving soon, we want to have the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal up and running properly in the event of another outbreak. Our target is to reach 10,000 transactions per day," says Kotzé.

Users can click [here](#) to start the process in WhatsApp or add ChatBack (+27 66 202 6685) to their contacts and then text 'renew' over WhatsApp to get started.