



Getting Started with

# THE NEW API for INSTAGRAM DMs

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Already familiar with messaging automation on Instagram?

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# 01

## Introduction

### Finally, Businesses Can Scale Conversations on Instagram

During this year's annual F8 Refresh conference, Facebook announced that its new Messenger API for Instagram had exited beta testing and is now available to any consumer brand looking to forge deeper relationships with their customers through scalable, 1:1 conversations.

This update enables brands to move their DM conversations into their existing workflow tools, and design automated conversations using features like images, quick replies, ice breakers and all of the features that are available on Facebook Messenger.

This latest development is a natural evolution for Instagram, which has increasingly become the default platform for online product discovery and shopping, with over 80% of users discovering, researching, or considering products through the platform.

**Through the new API for Instagram Direct Messaging, eCommerce brands can now provide customers with guided shopping experiences, FAQ responses, and post-purchase order management experiences — contained entirely within Instagram.**

While there is plenty of excitement surrounding this new capability, few industry leaders have a clear vision on how best to get started with automating Instagram Direct Messages. That's why Quiq has prepared this guide, which will help CX and customer service leaders learn:

- [Instagram's Strategic Opportunity for Retail Commerce & Care.](#)
- [How Consumers are Messaging Brands on Instagram.](#)
- [Challenges Brands Face When Managing Instagram DMs Manually.](#)
- [Use Cases for Incorporating DM Automation Throughout the Customer Journey.](#)
- [Key Tactics for Getting Started with Automated Messaging on Instagram.](#)

# 02

## A Strategic Opportunity for Commerce & Care

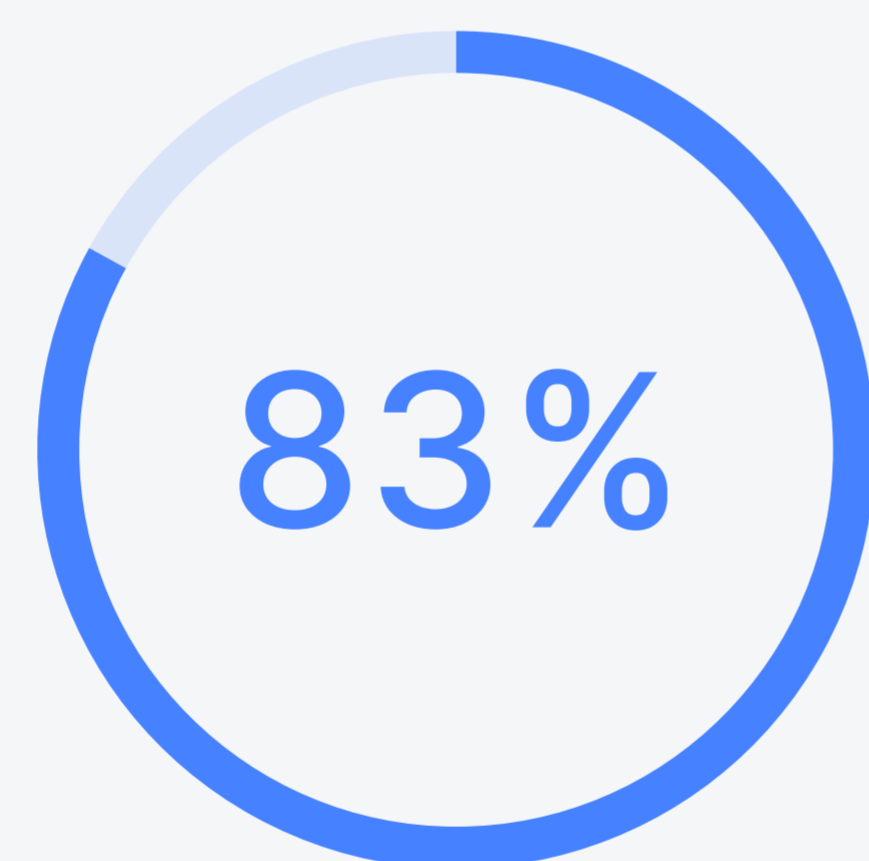
When it comes to interacting with brands, 67% of consumers prefer messaging businesses over speaking with a representative.

As more consumers transition away from traditional channels like phone support, a significant number of people are turning to Instagram as their preferred method for conversing with brands. **In the past year alone, conversations between people and businesses on Messenger and Instagram grew over 40%.**

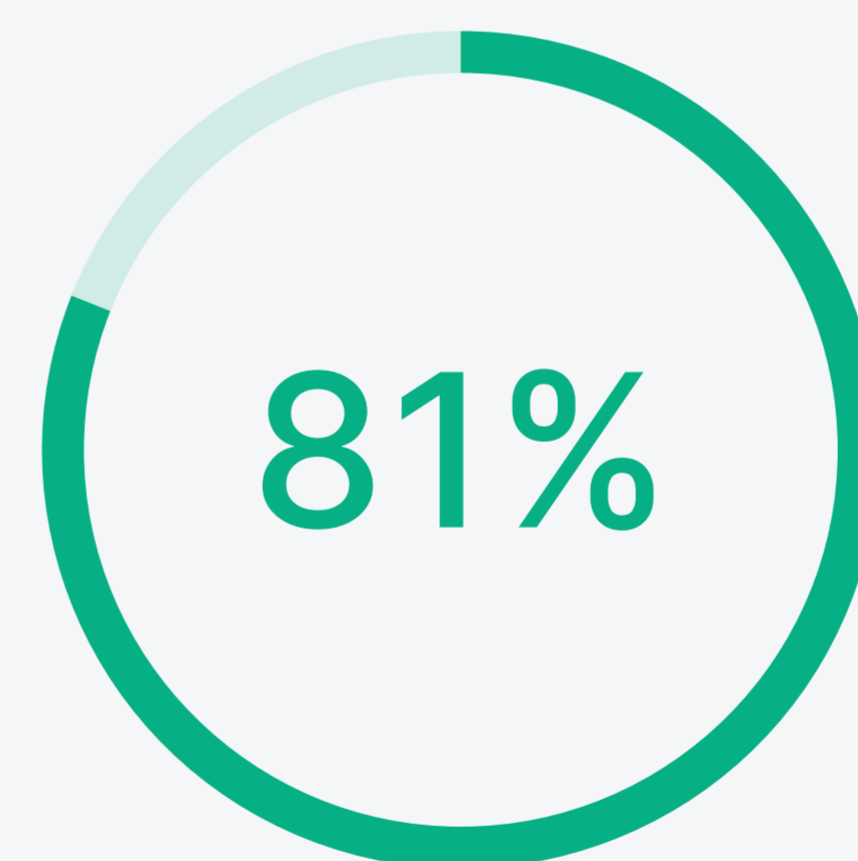
Equally as important as the volume of consumers flocking to Instagram are the reasons **why** they are messaging businesses there.

People surveyed say Instagram helps them with the following:

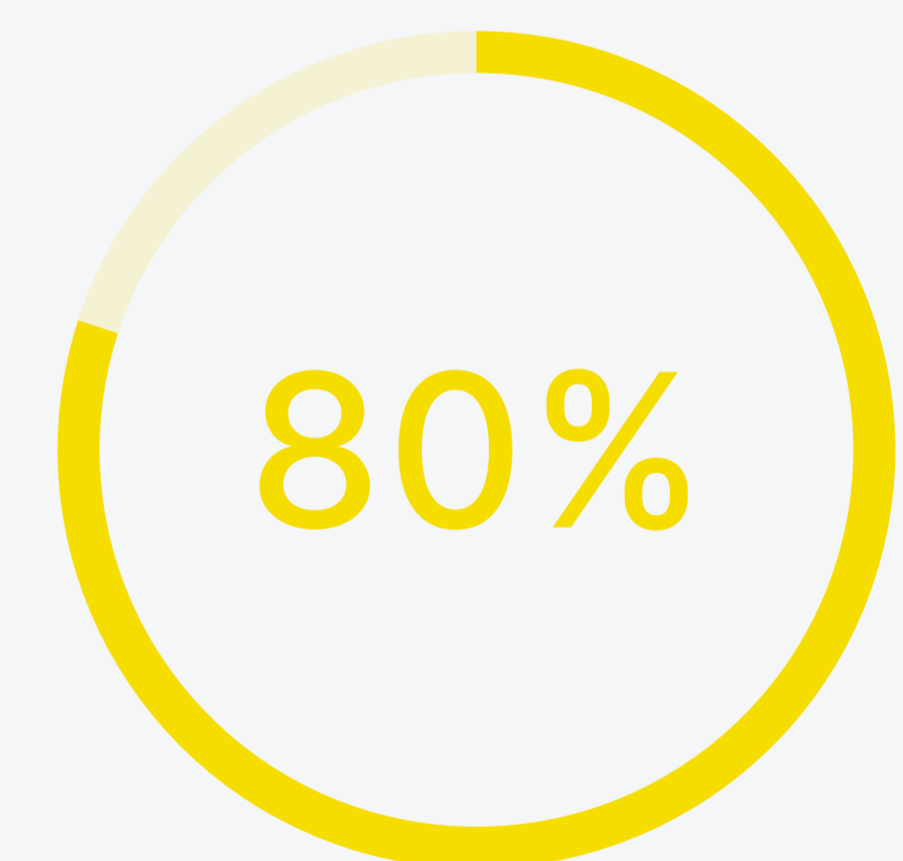
**Brand content on Instagram helps potential shoppers**



**Discover** new products or services



**Research** products or services



**Decide** whether to buy a product or service

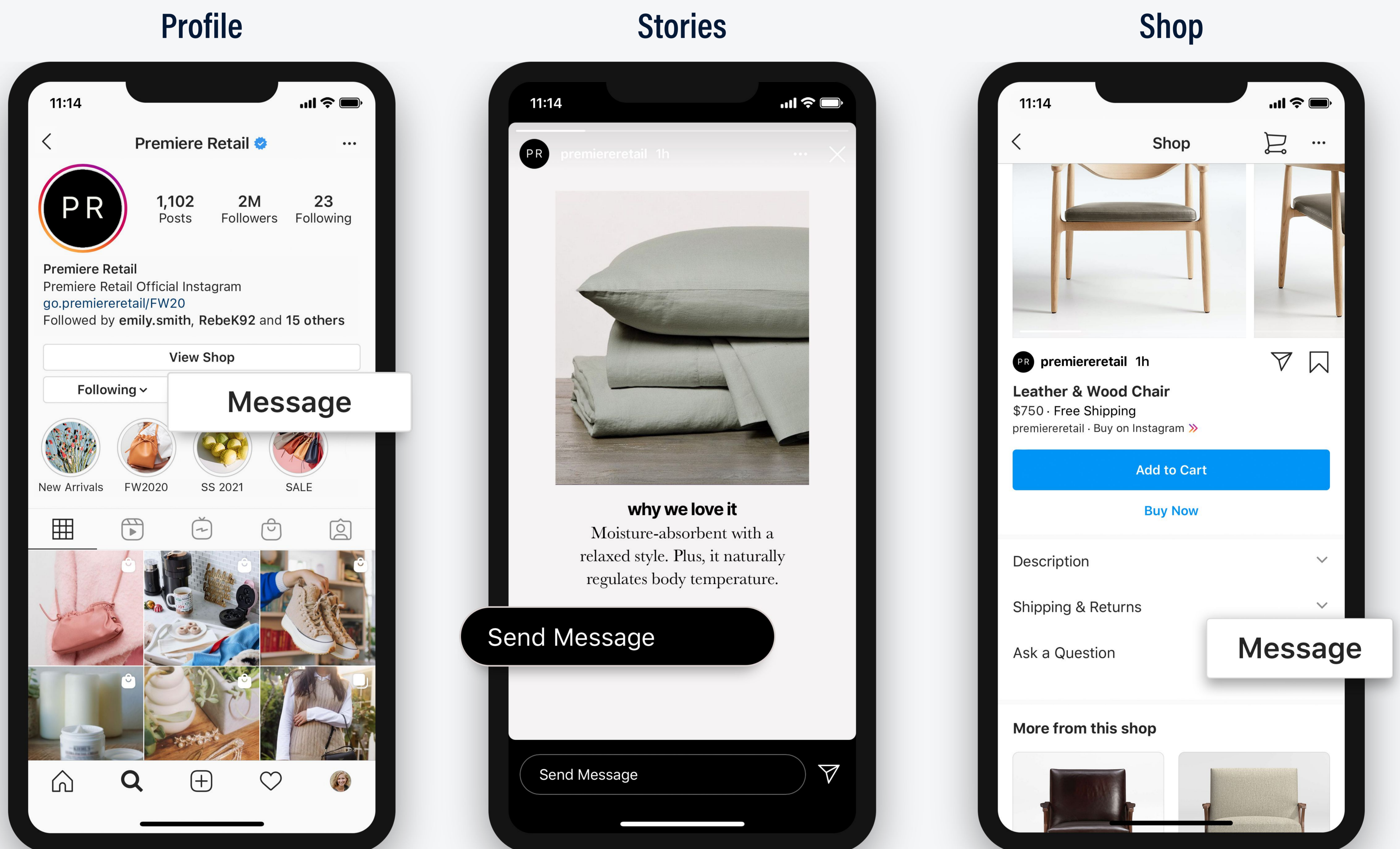
Source: Facebook IQ

# 03

## How Consumers Message Brands on Instagram

Within Instagram, consumers are provided with a variety of entry points for starting conversations with brands and asking questions related to commerce and care.

- Customers can start conversations with businesses through the brand's **Instagram profile page**.
- **Instagram Stories** also provide shoppers with the opportunity to message brands and initiate a 1:1 conversation.
- Customers browsing **Instagram Shops** can also start conversations with brands when they have product or shopping-related inquiries.



# 04

## Challenges Brands Face When Manually Responding to Instagram DMs

With multiple entry points and ways for shoppers to initiate conversations with brands, customer service teams have become inundated with a high volume of inbound inquiries through Instagram.

Most enterprise retailers, however, have no standardized process for handling inbound volume on Instagram, and are missing a strategic opportunity to deliver modern shopping experiences that consumers prefer, while simultaneously increasing operational efficiency.

### Reference: A Global Fashion Retailer's Response to 200+ Daily DMs (Direct Messages)

In 2020, an SVP in charge of global social media and customer care at a global fashion brand approached Quiq after her team began receiving over 200 Instagram DMs per day.

With no process for handling the volume, her team simply assigned a single employee to manually comb through the company's DMs, on a mobile device, for several hours each day.

#### Due to this tedious and inefficient process:

- Shoppers' questions about modeling, partnering, or influencing would often go unanswered.
- Response time varied based on each questions country of origin.
- The brand frequently missed sales opportunities when shoppers would ask product specific questions like "where can I buy jeans like this?".

To help address these missed opportunities, the global fashion retailer turned to conversational automation as a way to improve agent efficiency while ensuring consistent and timely responses to their shoppers' inquiries through Instagram.

## 04 Challenges Brands Face When Manually Responding to Instagram DMs

By combining **Conversational Automation with Instagram DMs**, the brand was enabled to:

- Respond to FAQs: When customers DM the global fashion retailer with basic questions, their automated assistant provides correct answers from their knowledge database so that agents don't have to.
- Handle Influencer Requests: When influencers DM the fashion retailer looking to collaborate, instead of agents having to manually respond, the automated assistant provides specific information on policies and gathers the right information if necessary.
- Engage in Fan Small Talk: When fans DM the brand to express admiration, the automated assistant is able to deliver a custom set of 'small talk' responses.
- Augment Agent Handoff: When customers DM the brand with questions that require agent responses, the assistant collects key data points like name, email, etc. so that agents have the information that they need to resolve the issue.

Brands like **Piaget** and many others are already deploying conversational experiences like these in order to reduce their total time to issue resolution and enable their agents to focus on more complex cases. Request to learn more.

[Request to learn more →](#)

Here are some ways they're leveraging the new API for Instagram DMs.

# 05

## Use Cases of The New API for Instagram DMs (Across Customer Journey)

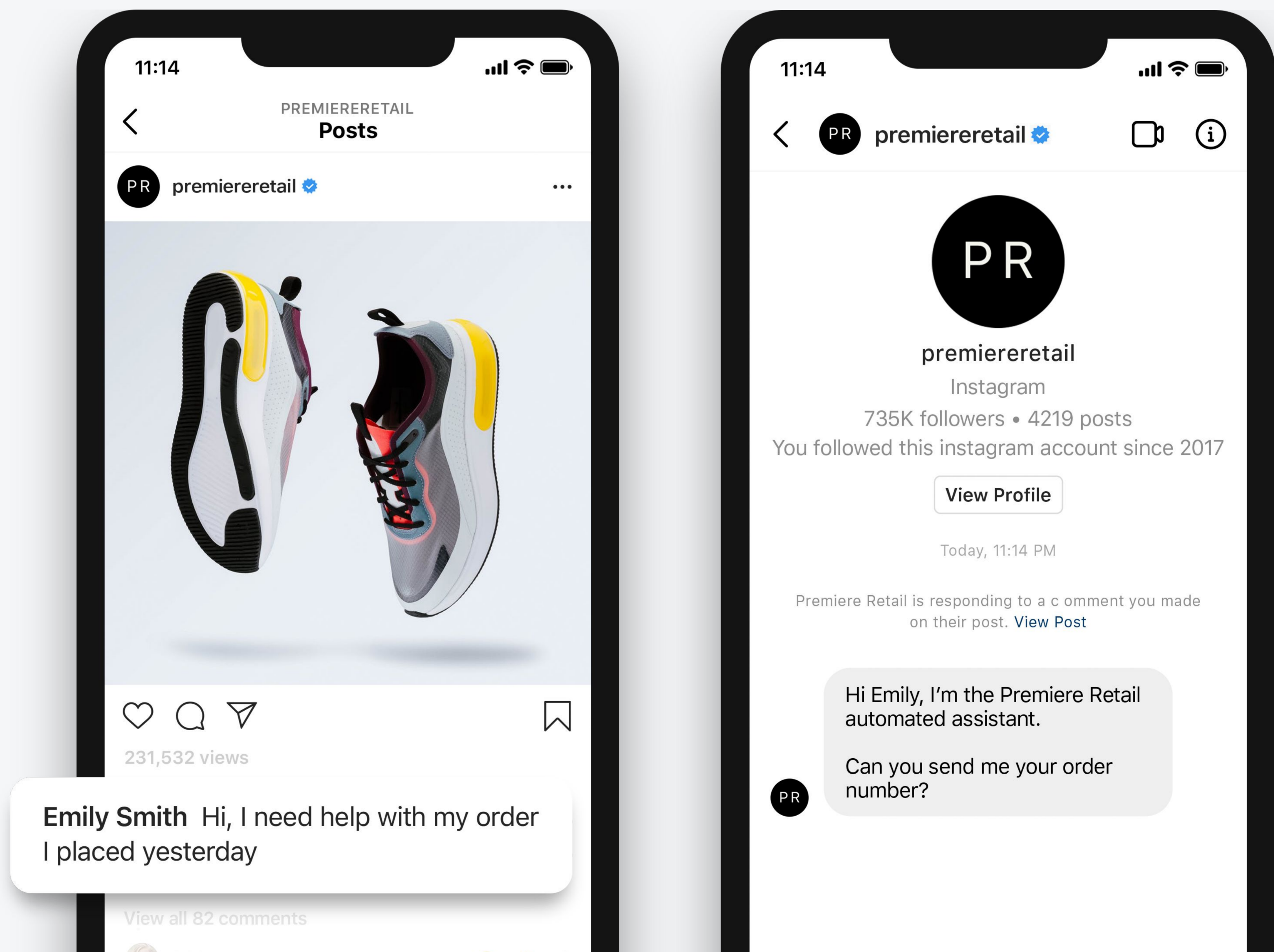
By integrating Messenger's API Support for Instagram with Conversational Automation, eCommerce brands can support conversational experiences at natural points along the customer journey

Here's how they incorporate automated messaging at each stage of the buying process.

### Engagement

People like to be engaged, not acquired. So now eCommerce brands can engage shoppers where they communicate today – Instagram DMs – by initiating 1:1 conversations when they leave questions and comments on brands' posts.

### Private Replies



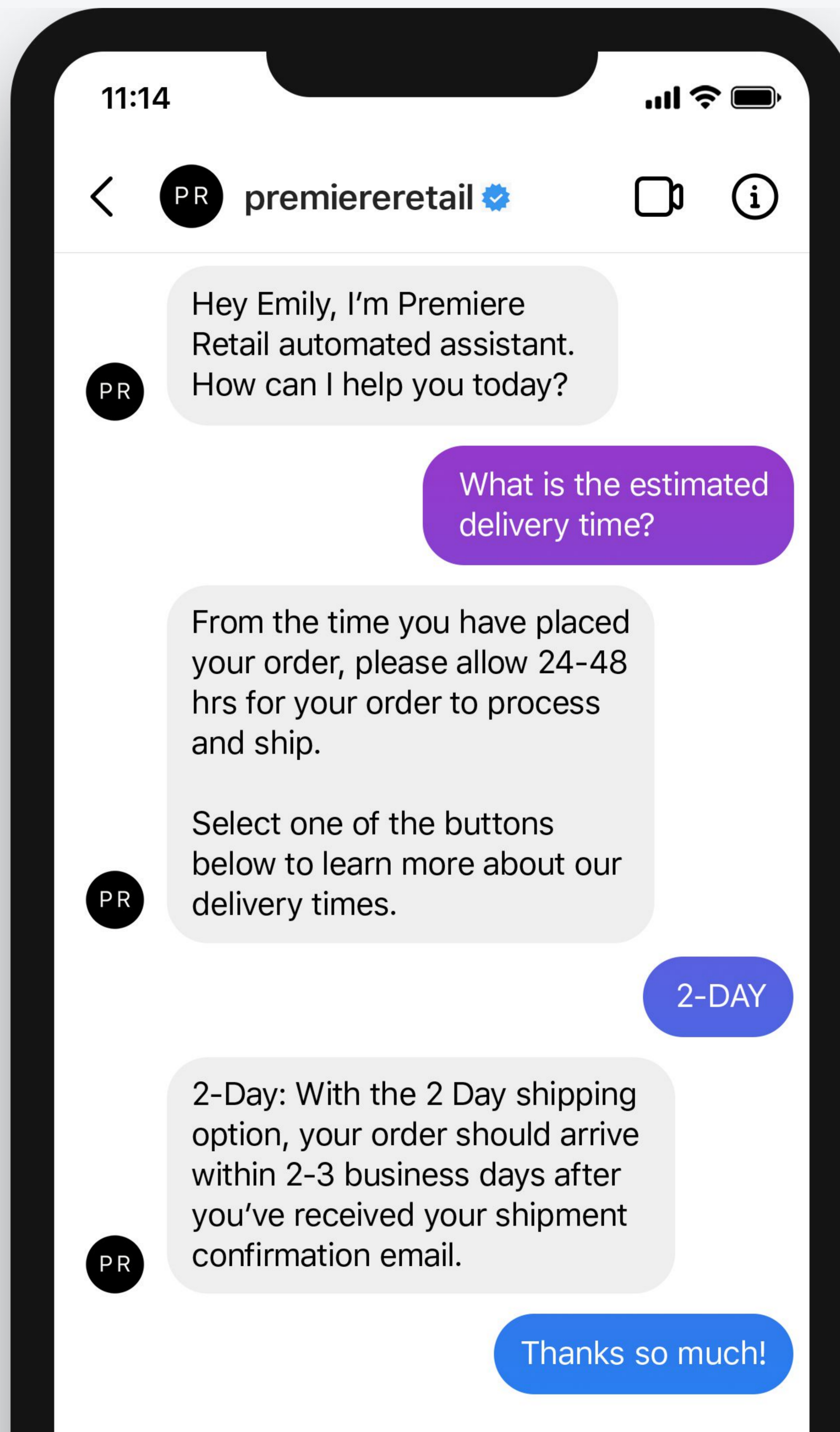


# 05 Use Cases of The New API for Instagram DMs

## Consideration

As most customer questions happen right after purchase, brands can finally keep their customers informed about orders, answer FAQs and any product related questions all within Instagram; thus, supporting their customer's journey during the consideration stage.

### FAQs

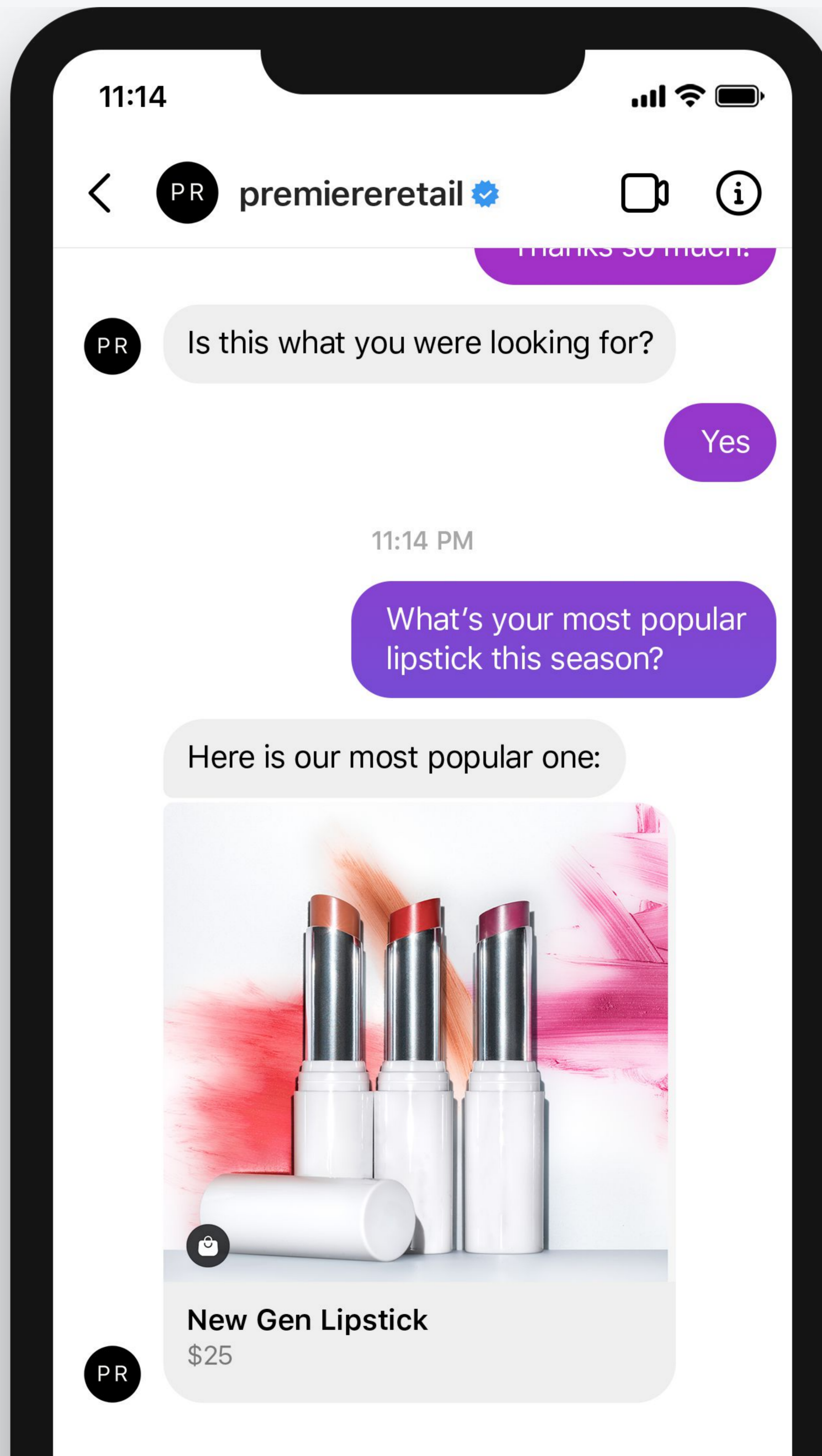


# 05 Use Cases of The New API for Instagram DMs

## Transaction

One of the critical benefits of the new API for Instagram is that it helps shoppers buy faster. Many customers have questions before they buy, with Conversational Automation brands can make it easy for Instagram users to discover products and get immediate answers to pre-purchase questions. At any time.

## Product Search



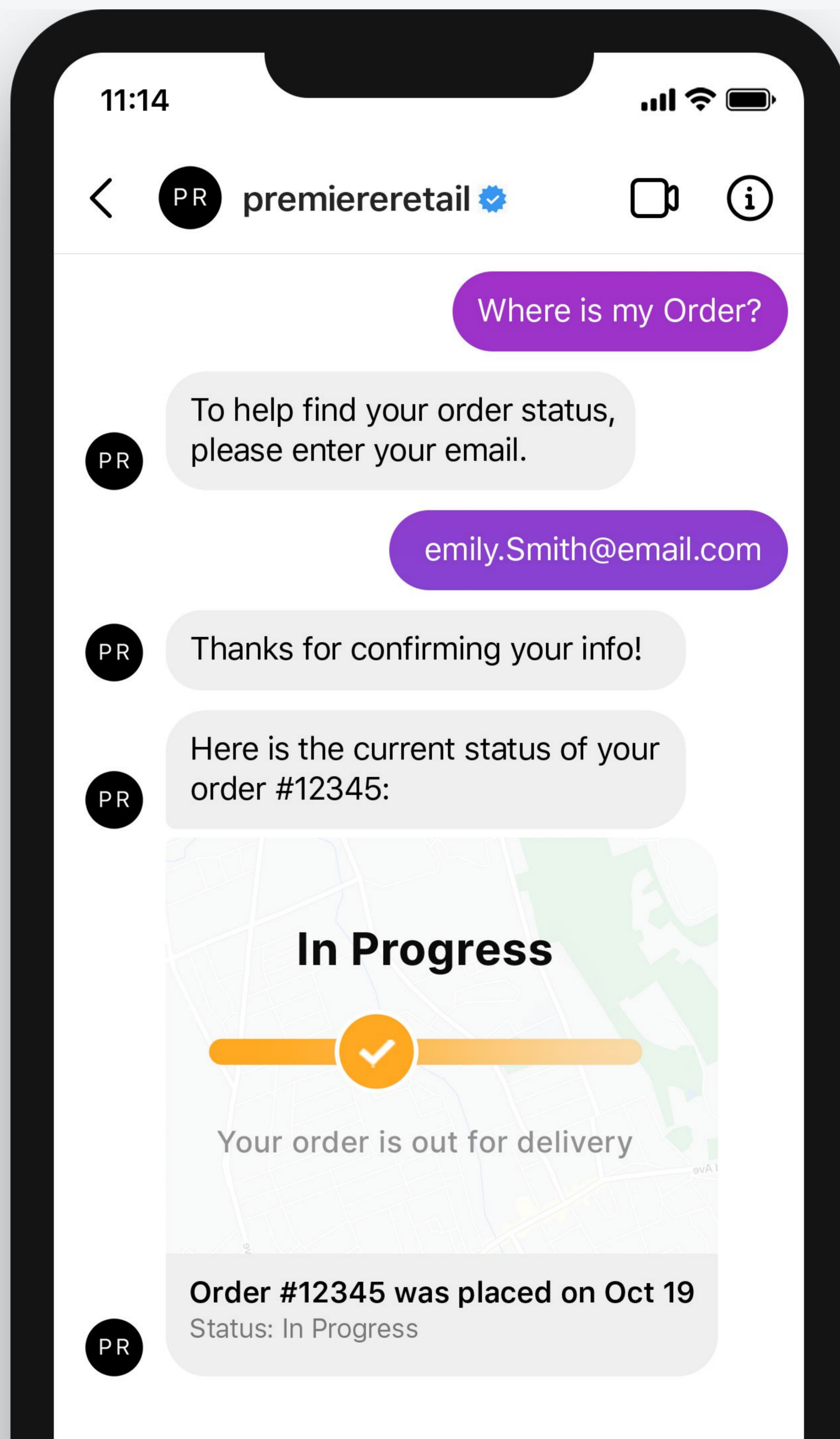
## 05 Use Cases of The New API for Instagram DMs

### Resell Advocacy

Lastly, this new capability enables brands to deepen their customer relationships further and create more brand advocates.

Combined with Conversational Automation, the new API helps recognize shoppers and their preferences and provide 24/7, contextual assistance while human agents focus on more complex or higher-value inquiries.

### Order Status Lookup



# 06

## How to Deploy Automated Messaging on Instagram

After developing a firm understanding of how Conversational Automation can improve messaging experiences on Instagram and how leading brands are leveraging it, you'll be ready to get started deploying for your own business.




### To do so, brands must:

1. Determine if their brand qualifies for automated messaging on Instagram.
2. Partner with a conversational automation provider.
3. Grant Instagram account access to automation partners.
4. Strategize & execute a phased deployment.

### Determine if Your Brand Qualifies

First, before getting started with Instagram's new API, it's important to ask yourself if Conversational Automation is a good fit for your business.

#### Does your brand:

-  Have Shops enabled on Instagram?
-  Use Instagram stories on a frequent basis?
-  Receive a high volume of DMs (100+ / day) on Instagram?

If you answered yes to all three of these questions, Conversational Automation on Instagram could be a good fit for your brand.

## 06 How to Deploy Automated Messaging on Instagram

### Partner with a Conversational Automation Provider

The next step is for brands to partner with a trusted, conversational automation provider.

Facebook requires new adopters of automated Instagram messaging to partner with one of their approved enterprise-level automation vendors that have the capability to manage a variety of complex consumer interactions.

### But what are the important things to look for while evaluating automation partners?

When our enterprise clients describe what has enabled them to be successful, we often hear that messaging partners must:

- **Be an Official Facebook Alpha Partner**

Over the past several months, Facebook has partnered with a select list of conversational automation providers on Messenger's new support for Instagram as prerelease Alpha and Beta partners. These brands have worked directly with some of today's leading retail brands, as well as Facebook, to learn how to drive higher response rates, reduced resolution times, and deeper customer insights.

- **Deploy highly-personalized AI-powered conversations**

Modern consumers demand personalization in their online shopping experiences and interactions with AI-powered digital assistants are no different. Gartner recently found that brands that deploy personalized messaging can expect a 16% greater impact on commercial outcomes than retailers who deploy basic automation that is incapable of personalizing their experiences.

- **Deliver actionable insights that empower every team**

When engaging in thousands of automated conversations with customers, eCommerce retailers generate a significant amount of customer data that has limitless potential and value for their various teams. Without the assistance of an experienced automation partner, however, this valuable data and insight simply goes to waste.

By partnering with an enterprise-tier partner, retailers can ensure that they are properly gathering consumer insights through conversational automation and are able to synthesize that information into practical insights for different teams across the entire organization.

## 06 How to Deploy Automated Messaging on Instagram

- **Provide hands-on support through a team of award-winning automation experts**

Conversational Automation is a complex undertaking for any enterprise business and hands-on support is vital for ensuring its success. An effective automation solution is the result of a collaboration between internal teams and a proven, experienced team of conversational experts that can consult on strategy, integration, conversational design, and ongoing optimization.

- **Leverage an Advanced NLP Engine**

Advanced NLP engines enable eCommerce brands to map every consumer message to an intent, which enables them to measure historical response rates and conversational precision. Training and simulation tools of an advanced NLP engine also allow brands to see, in real-time, what intents that historical utterances are mapping to, and train their model using real user utterances. By measuring precision rate eCommerce brands are enabled to develop a true perspective on AI response accuracy.

### **Grant Your Automation Provider Access to Your Instagram Account(s)**

After establishing a partnership with a Conversational Automation provider, retail brands must take a few more initial steps before they can begin using the new API.

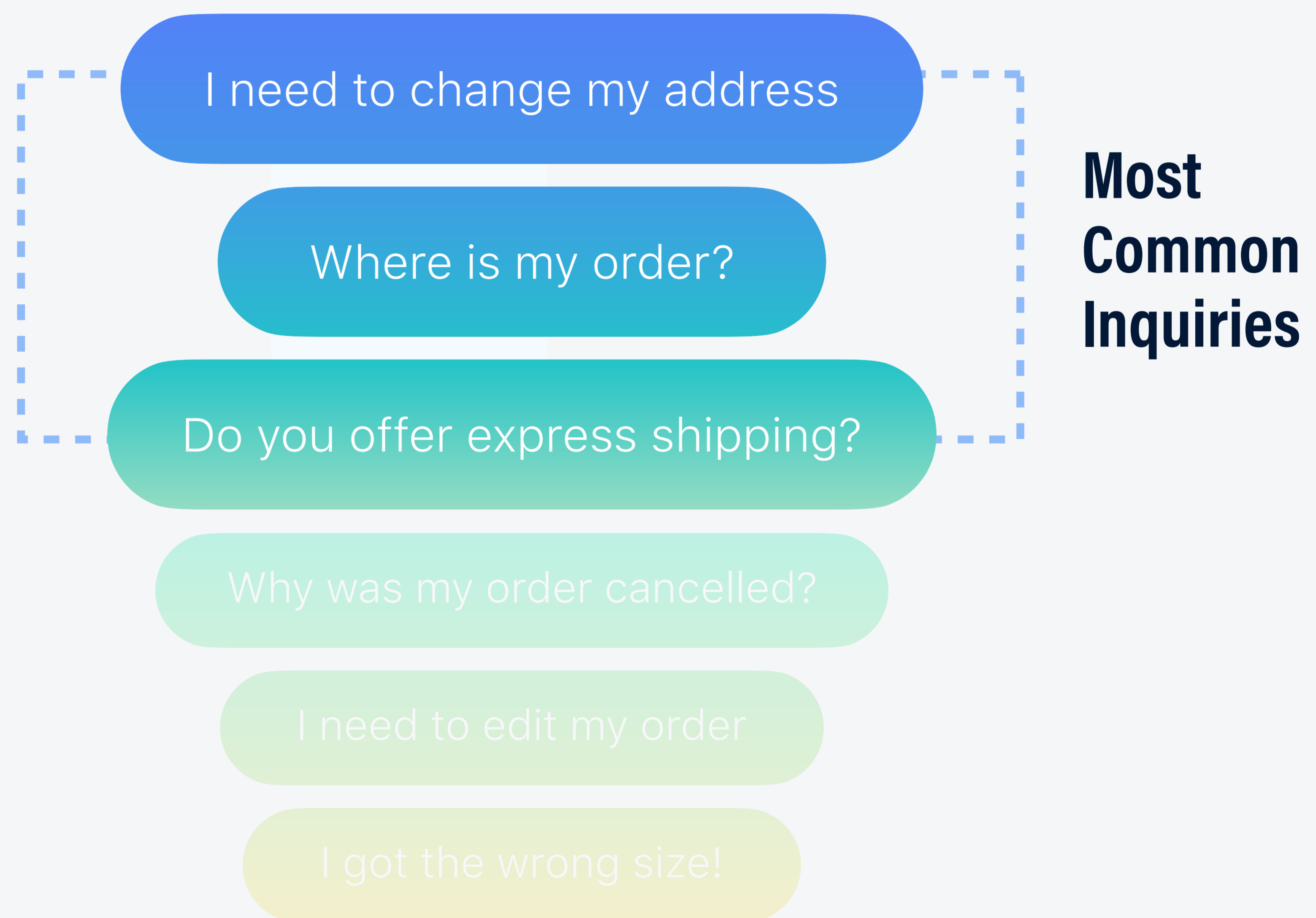
1. Ensure your brand's Instagram account is included in Facebook Business Manager.
2. Add your automation provider as a new partner in Facebook Business Manager.
3. Grant your automation partner access to the Instagram accounts in which you would like to deploy messaging automation.

## 06 How to Deploy Automated Messaging on Instagram

### Strategize Initial Deployment

When getting started with the new API for Instagram, we recommend adopting a **phased approach** that focuses on addressing the most business-critical customer needs first before gradually escalating into more niche and complex use cases.

1. **Initial deployments** might prioritize resolving customers' most common FAQs before moving on to more complex conversations that can support end-to-end conversational commerce.
2. The **next step** is for brands to develop a firm understanding of what customers are already asking their customer support teams. Take a close look at why users are currently reaching out to support teams, what they're asking, and why they're asking.
  - What questions do call centers hear all the time?
  - What are the most common customer support emails related to?
  - Do support teams receive a high-volume of "where is my order?" and other order management inquiries.



By developing this list of most pressing, common customer inquiries, brands can ensure that their initial automation deployment is tackling the most basic, high-volume issues that are coming through Instagram DMs.

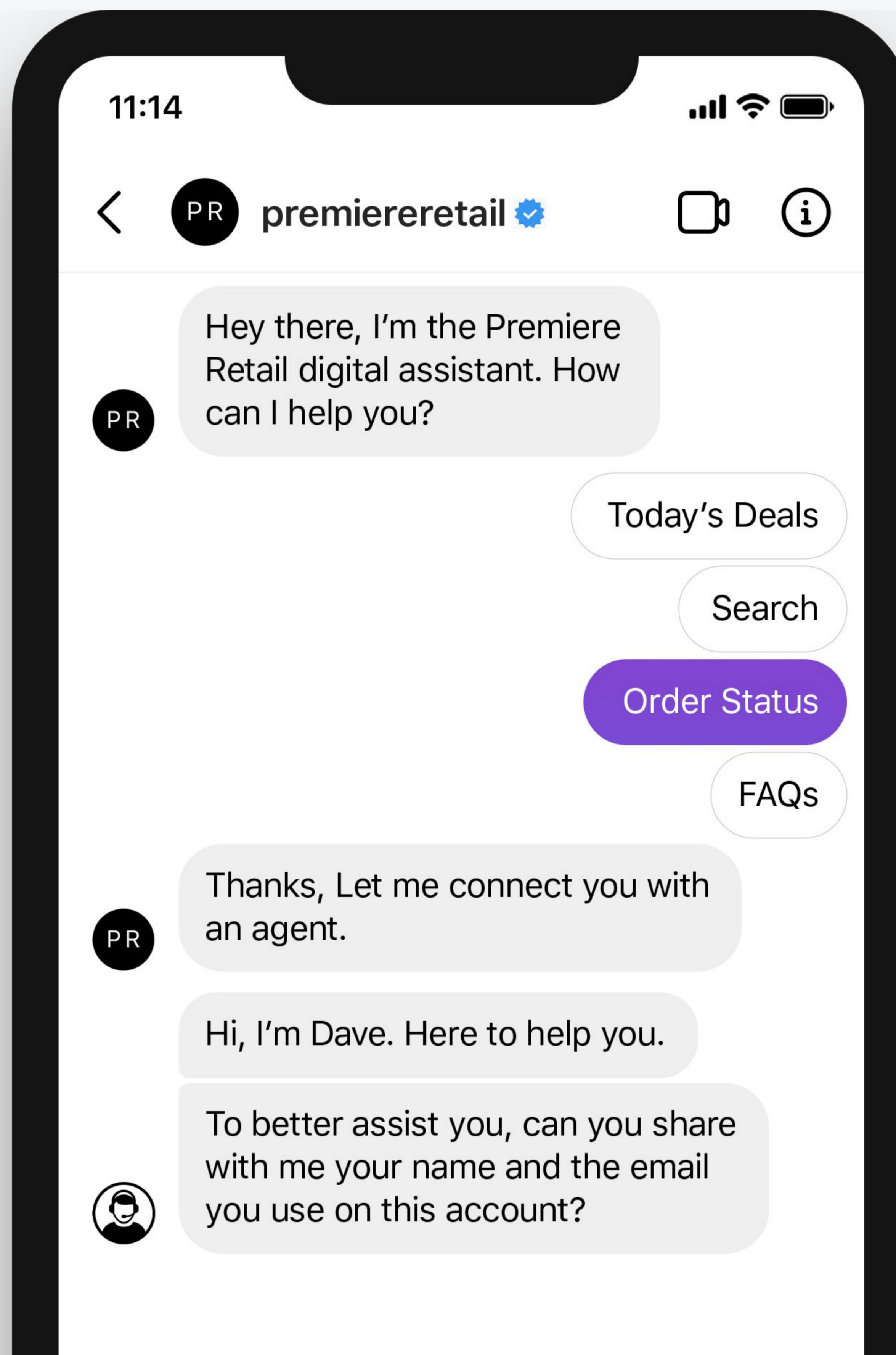
## 06 How to Deploy Automated Messaging on Instagram

### Consider the Bot vs Human Agent Relationship

Brands must also consider the role that automation plays in their Instagram messaging experiences and when it can be the most effective.

In some instances, brands can simply leverage automation as a routing mechanism to hand off issues to human agents that span a variety of departments.

#### Level 1: Simple Routing + Intent Identification



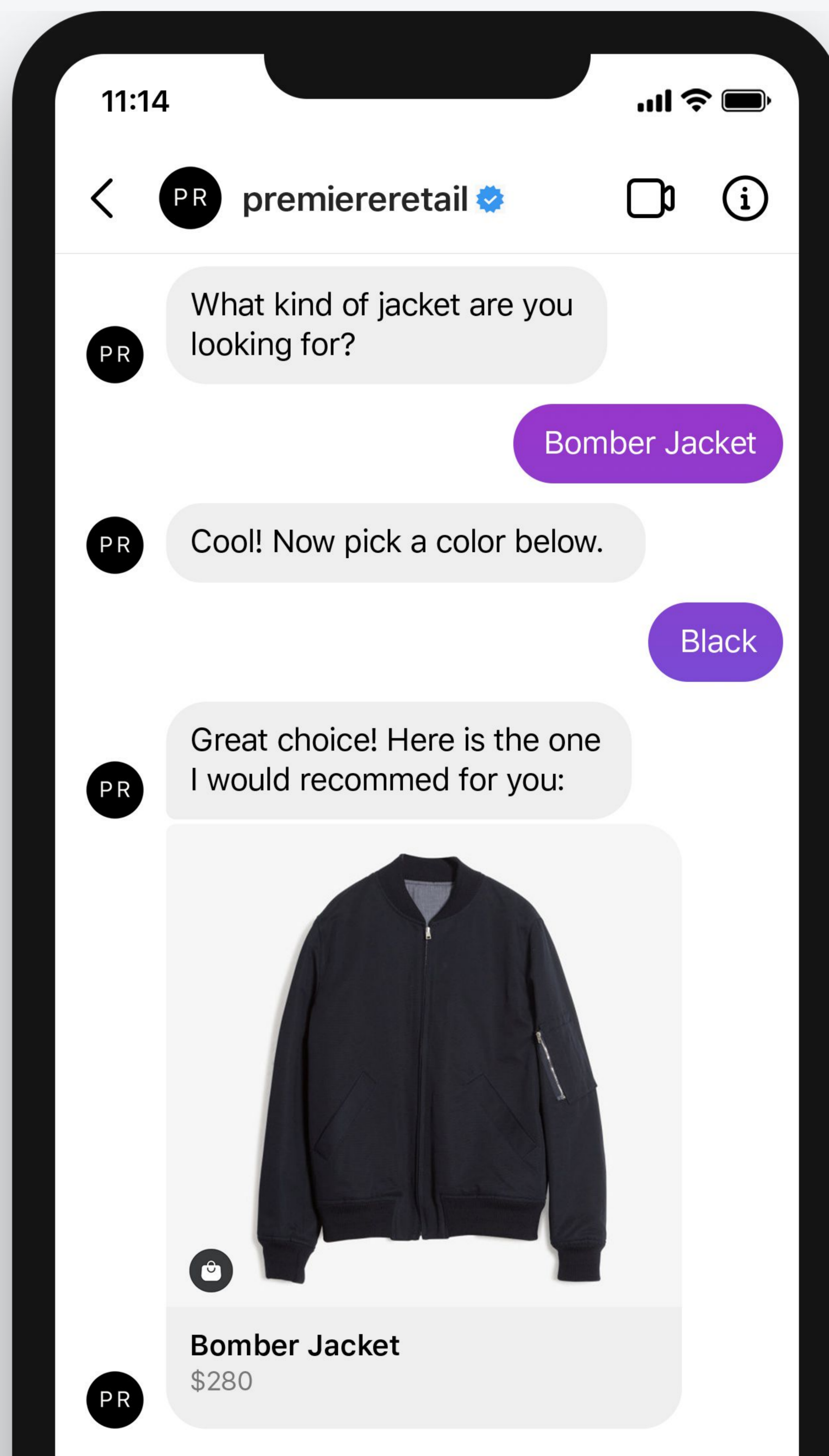


## 06 How to Deploy Automated Messaging on Instagram

Conversational Automation, however, has far greater capability beyond routing. In many cases, it can provide better, faster results when compared to that of a human. Conversational AI can even contain the end-to-end customer experience without ever having to involve a live agent.

From the conversation below, you can see that shopping journeys are a great example of this. After receiving a few inputs from the shopper, the automated agent can instantly surface suggested product listings.

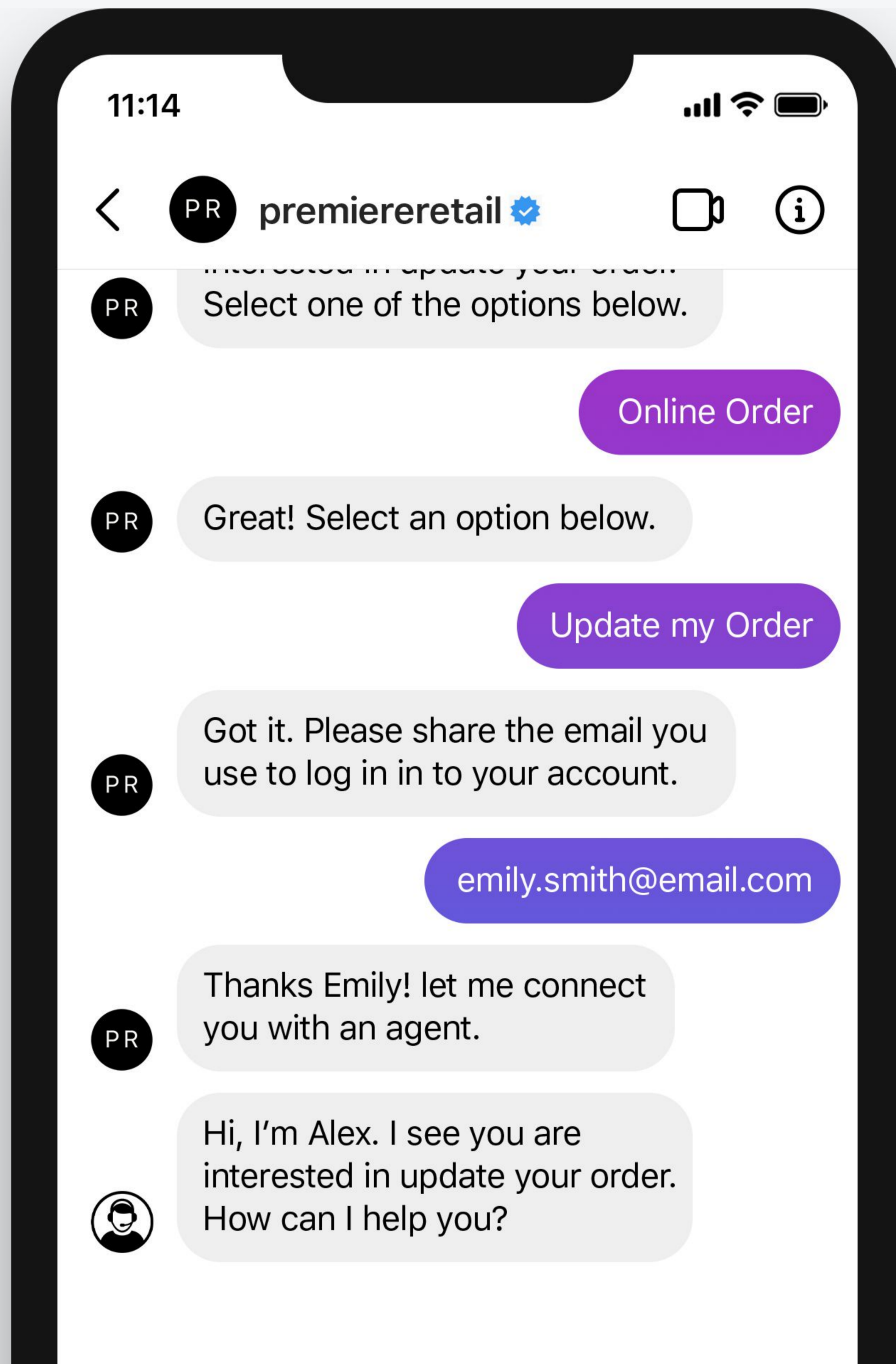
### Level 2: Automated Self-Serve Experience



## 06 How to Deploy Automated Messaging on Instagram

However, it is important to distinguish the role humans play in the messaging experience. Considering that there will always be situations in which a user needs to speak to a live agent, it is a best practice to have them ready and available to help support more sophisticated or complex user journeys.

### Level 3: Complex Automation + Augmented Handoff



In those instances, like the example above, it's best to collect the necessary customer information and/or context with your bot experience, and then handover the conversation to a skilled live agent.

# 07

## Conclusion

Ultimately, while the arrival of Instagram's new API for DMs provides online retailers with a significant opportunity to connect with their customers on a deeper level, it has to be deployed in the right way to leverage its full capability and avoid common pitfalls and complications.

If you are interested in learning more about getting started with the new API for Instagram DMs, [schedule a free consultation with one of Quiq's Instagram Messaging experts](#) today.

### About Quiq

Quiq is the Digital Conversation Company, enabling businesses to engage with customers across the most popular digital messaging channels.

Quiq is enterprise-grade SaaS software that supports SMS/text, Apple Business Chat, Google's Business Messages, webchat, Facebook, Twitter, call-to-text, Chatbots, and more.

We are improving customer communication one conversation at a time by building software that modernizes business conversations with their customers. Learn more at [quiq.com](https://quiq.com).

**Get in touch** to talk through why we believe Conversational Automation across the entire customer journey can take eCommerce CX to the next level.



Visit [quiq.com](https://quiq.com) for a demo today!