Why APAC businesses are riding high on the social commerce wave

With social commerce services such as SKYBOX entering the region, firms have more opportunities to diversify their e-commerce solutions

Social media is booming in the APAC region, there’s no doubt about it. A [**report**](http://wearesocial.sg/blog/2015/03/digital-social-mobile-in-apac-in-2015/) released earlier this year by [**We Are Social**](http://wearesocial.sg/), a social media agency, states that the current number of social media users in APAC is slightly over a billion. Mobile social media users are also at an all-time high at 900 million, a 32 per cent jump over the past year and it is expected to increase to one billion by the end of the year.

The same report highlights growing mobile e-commerce penetration in APAC. South Korea emerges at the top of the list with 37 per cent of its population making online transactions via their mobile devices, followed by Taiwan and China at 27 per cent respectively, then Singapore at 23 per cent.

### Messaging, shopping and more

Many companies such as China-based messaging app [**WeChat**](http://e27.co/tag/wechat), and Japan-based messaging app [**LINE**](http://e27.co/tag/line), have capitalised on the rise of social media and e-commerce, enabling the convergence of these two platforms.

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This allows companies to generate more revenue, as well as extend their market reach and branding influence.

WeChat allows users to make mobile payments, book taxis as well as conduct money transfers. At LINE, businesses using the app can engage directly with their customers. A feature called ‘LINE Business Connect’ also lets businesses broadcast customised messages to followers on the platform. South Korea-based messaging app [**KakaoTalk**](http://e27.co/tag/kakaotalk) offers a similar service, connecting businesses to customers, allowing them to push content such as coupons, product information and media files.

Businesses who have leveraged on these inexpensive services have seen significant tangible benefits. For example, a [**SingPost**](https://www.singpost.com/) e-commerce client pushed a [**Black Friday message**](http://www.specommerce.com/how-social-commerce-drives-your-online-business-in-asia-pacific/) on KakaoTalk to reach its 100,000 subscriber base, resulting in an almost 100 per cent jump in hits on the client’s site – from 11,637 to 20,110.

China-based computer technology MNC [**Lenovo**](http://e27.co/tag/lenovo), in an effort to drive up smartphone sales in Indonesia, launched a marketing blitz on Facebook, resulting in a reach of [**23 million, and a 61 per cent increase**](https://www.facebook.com/business/success/lenovo-indonesia) in referral to lenovo.com.

### Integrating social media with delivery services

SingPost isn’t the only delivery service that has partnered up with social media. [**ATT**](http://www.attbangkok.com/index.aspx) Bangkok, a one-stop provider of services such as bills payment and shopping, and [**aCommerce**](http://www.acommerce.asia/), a Thailand-based end-to-end e-commerce solution provider have recently launched [**SKYBOX**](http://www.attbangkok.com/shopping/).

***Also Read:***[***5 e-commerce marketing tips for physical retailers***](http://e27.co/5-e-commerce-marketing-tips-physical-retailers-20150402/)

Utilising [**aCommerce**](http://e27.co/tag/acommerce)‘s logistics and technology delivery services, businesses can send and deliver their parcels at kiosks placed at six of Bangkok’s public Skytrain network’s (BTS) stations. Customers will then use these kiosks to pay and collect packages. It currently only serves boutique or small merchants such as Instagram shops to allow customers to collect their packages, but it will soon open up to larger retailers.

This service is pivoted towards users who are pressed for time, tapping into a hitherto unexplored market of users who would prefer to conduct business while on their daily commute. It also offers 24/7 online customer support on major social media platforms — Facebook, LINE and Instagram.

“With the BTS transporting around 650,000 people a day and the [**boom of Instagram and LINE shops**](http://markbivens.com/m/archives/instagram-line-commerce-thailand) as a place for C2C commerce, our objective is to make e-commerce accessible to smaller sellers in Thailand,” Phensiri Sathianvongnusar, Regional Operations Director at aCommerce said in a [**statement**](http://www.acommerce.asia/bts-service-skybox-acommerce/). Thailand currently has about [**1.7 million Instagram accounts**](http://syndacast.com/infographic-online-marketing-thailand-the-state-of-social-media/) and it has [**33 million registered Line users**](http://www.statista.com/statistics/250927/number-of-registered-line-app-users-in-selected-countries/).

“If you are a young urban entrepreneur with a successful Instagram shop, you need a service that is not only affordable, but also accessible and complements your busy lifestyle. We hope that SKYBOX offers that,” she added.

[**SKYBOX**](http://e27.co/tag/skybox) claims to be able to offer businesses more affordable delivery rates than its competitors like [**UPS**](http://www.ups.com/) Mail Box by applying a different formula when it comes to delivery charges. It prices the delivery charge based on their sizes – small, medium and large – as opposed to pricing it based on its weight. It also offers flexible payment options, customers can pay using cash or their BTS transport card – [**Rabbit Card**](http://www.rabbitcard.com/en).

### Social media platforms as a base for e-commerce

Since its launch barely a month ago, SKYBOX has seen positive results, which it attributes to its partnership with social media platforms.

“SKYBOX just had its soft launch earlier this month to test the needs of SMB sellers relying on social and mobile commerce such as Facebook, Instagram and LINE, etc. to sell online. The response has been encouraging and we’ve already seen 1,000 plus parcels sent out daily,” Phensiri Sathianvongnusar told **e27**.

http://e27.co/apac-businesses-riding-high-social-commerce-wave-20150710/