

# Mobile Marketer™

THE NEWS LEADER IN MOBILE MARKETING, MEDIA AND COMMERCE

## American Express adds live video chat to iPad app for easier communication

By [Rebecca Borison](#)

February 14, 2014



American Express has added a new live video chat feature to its iPad application, pointing to the importance of real-time communication with consumers on mobile.

The feature lets eligible card members chat with a Customer Care Professional when they are connected to Wi-Fi. Allowing app users to immediately connect with customer service takes the Amex iPad experience to the next level of CRM.

"Over the last several years we've been on a journey to bring the power of personality and human interaction back to servicing," said Daniel Clayton, manager of public affairs and communications at [American Express](#), New York. "This capability allows us an even deeper way to build a relationship with the customer in a way that uses technology to heighten and harness the power of dialogue.

"When people call on the phone, we want them to find a person who can help them and deepen their relationship with American Express," he said. "The video servicing capability definitely does that in a way that is even more personal."

### Mobile Amex

The live video chat feature went live on Monday in Amex's iPad app. The company is testing the feature on the device to get feedback before expanding the feature to other platforms.

The technology for the feature is powered by Cisco and lets the video chat take place directly in the app without requiring the user to exit to browser or another app. It also means that customer service agents can have access to the consumer's actions in the app so that the consumer does not have to start from the beginning and explain the problem.

While some other companies have been dabbling with live video chat, most, if not all, only offer one-way chat where the consumer can see the customer service agent, but the agent cannot see the consumer.

American Express, however, decided to enable two-way chat. For security reasons, consumers have to opt-in and let the agent see them.

"This takes the power of human interaction to the next level," Mr. Clayton said.

American Express has a video service team of customer care professionals that were selected based on their results with standard customer service but also for their experience with face-to-face customer service. The video service hub is headquartered in Fort Lauderdale, FL, for now.

After each interaction, cardholders are asked to give feedback on the experience so that American Express can learn from the pilot and expand the feature.



*A screenshot of the app*

### **Call for help**

Amazon's Kindle has a similar feature called the Mayday Button that lets consumers connect with an Amazon tech advisor. The tech advisor can then guide the consumer by drawing on his or her screen, explaining what to do or doing it for the consumer.

Similar to Amex, the Mayday Button also requires Wi-Fi.

According to Keith Pearce, vice president of solution marketing at [Genesys](#), Daly City, CA, the Kindle Mayday Button creates a more engaging customer experience and results in shorter call times, lowering costs for Amazon.

Mr. Pearce is not affiliated with American Express or Amazon. He commented based on his expertise on the subject.

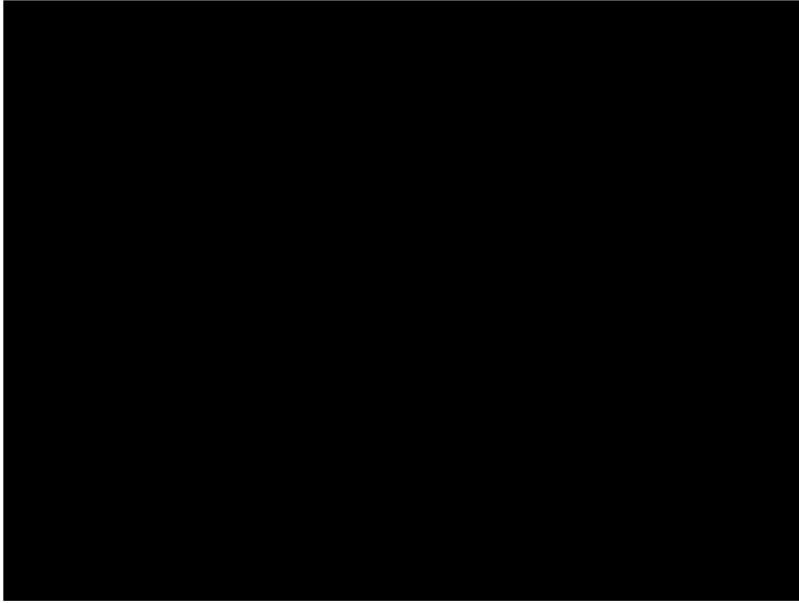
"For a long time, customer service has been waiting for this Jetson era of being able to see the person you're talking to," Mr. Pearce said.

"It takes the emotion out of the angst people have with customer service," he said. "When you can see the person you're dealing with it humanizes it, personalizes things.

"We think this is the next big thing around customer experience."

### **Final Take**

*Rebecca Borison is editorial assistant on Mobile Marketer, New York*



*Rebecca Borison is editorial assistant on Mobile Marketer. Reach her at [rebecca@mobilemarketer.com](mailto:rebecca@mobilemarketer.com).*