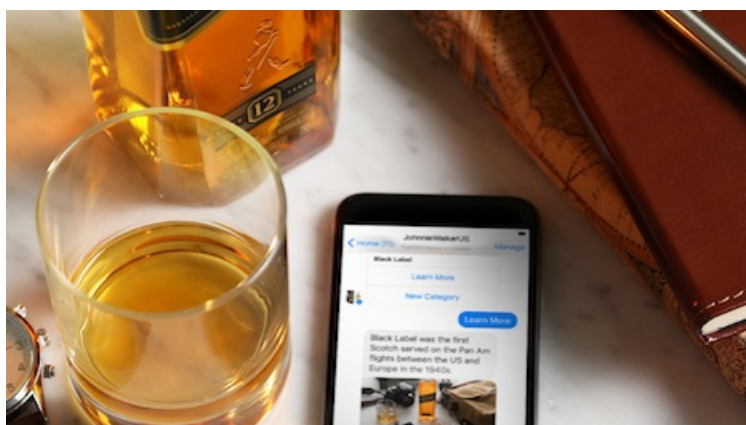


FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Johnnie Walker's multichannel mentorship program taps Amazon Alexa, chatbot activations

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Johnnie Walker is uncapping a slew of mobile activations

By [Alex Samuely](#) for [Mobile Marketer](#)

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Scotch whisky marketer Johnnie Walker's new digital mentorship program employs an on-the-go educational spin, enabling consumers to learn about the brand's history via an Amazon Alexa skill and receive cocktail recommendations from a Facebook Messenger bot.

The alcohol company is allowing fans to receive whisky education from the comfort of their homes with its latest initiative, which seeks to bring Johnnie Walker's history, products and heritage to life with a slew of mobile-first activations. In addition to letting fans experience its brand portfolio through an Amazon Alexa skill, Johnnie Walker is rolling out a Messenger chatbot that invites Facebook users to receive a guided tasting experience, cocktail recipes and blend recommendations, all on their smartphones.

"For us, mentorship is synonymous with education and we're committed to advancing our whisky education initiatives through emerging digital and mobile platforms," said Stephanie Jacoby, vice president of marketing at [Johnnie Walker](#). "The goal of our digital mentorship program, through our collaboration with Amazon Alexa and Facebook Messenger Bot, is to connect with our target consumers in a new and unique way, while allowing them to experience the brand anywhere at any time, even while on the go.

"The new digital mentorship program is an extension of our long-time commitment to sharing unparalleled whisky knowledge with consumers across the country," she said. "Whisky is a complex liquid, and at Johnnie Walker, it is extremely important for us bring our consumers into the vast world of whisky to experience the brand in a way they never have before."

Mobile shaken, not stirred

[Johnnie Walker](#)'s digital mentorship program was created in collaboration with VaynerMedia, Amazon and award-winning mixologist Jeff Bell.

The Amazon partnership includes an Alexa skill that lets individuals experience the entire Johnnie Walker portfolio, as well as the brand's history. Amazon Alexa application users can download the Johnnie Walker Skill to access guided and personalized tastings and practical whisky tips.

Alexa also enables consumers who launch the voice activation on their Amazon Echo, Echo Dot, Amazon Tap or Amazon Fire TV devices to receive blend recommendations that will appeal to their taste palates.

Cocktail fans can access a slew of branded recipes, which can be downloaded within the Amazon app and recreated at home.



Amazon Alexa Skills are gaining steam with marketers

Johnnie Walker hopes that consumers will be entertained by Alexa's whimsy as they sip and savor their alcoholic beverages.

If individuals do not have a bottle of whisky on hand, the Alexa skill will direct them to a nearby retailer that carries Johnnie Walker products.

Amazon Alexa has seen several early adopter brands leverage its platform.

Several months ago, travel search engine Kayak launched voice-enabled travel search on Alexa, underscoring the interest in the platform and the potential for natural language processing to support research for products and services ([see story](#)).

"While it's unlikely that a brand like Johnnie Walker will see overwhelming ROI (or even engagement) from a presence in the Alexa ecosystem, there's definitely something to be said for being an early mover into this space," said James McNally, director of digital strategy at [TDT NY](#).

"For brands and consumers to eventually arrive at some sort of tenable symbiosis in conversational commerce, it will take plenty of early movers to test, fail, refine and optimize," he said. "Talking to Alexa about whisky evokes a darkly comic dystopian future, but by moving early, the brand will be able to stand out."

Uncapping chatbot interactions

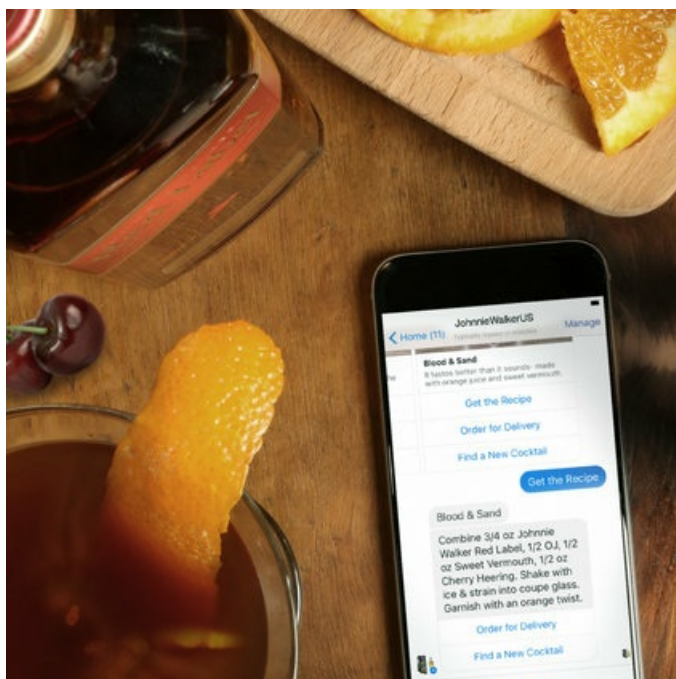
Johnnie Walker is also rolling out a chatbot on Facebook Messenger, which brings whisky education and tasting directly to consumers' fingertips.

Consumers can visit JohnnieWalkerUS on the messaging app to request a guided tasting experience, more cocktail recipes and help with purchasing branded items.

The chatbot enables individuals to order products through ReserveBar to procure an engraved bottle for someone a feature that could come in handy for someone needing a last-minute gift idea.

Additionally, the bot lets users make immediate purchases through ecommerce delivery service Drizly and see a list of nearby retailers that carry the brand's whisky.

Lastly, the bot is able to connect customers with Cocktail Courier, an experience that allows them to get all the ingredients needed to make a Johnnie Walker cocktail shipped directly to their homes.



Johnnie Walker's Messenger bot

The final component of Johnnie Walker's digital mentorship program comes in the form of a series of videos led by mixologist Jeff Bell. Mr. Bell demonstrates quick tips and tricks that viewers can leverage in their own whisky tasting experiences.

While the entire three-pronged campaign has significant potential to reach the beverage marketer's target audience, the Messenger bot is likely to provide the greatest consumer engagement and consequently, sales.

"Many of our target consumers are already spending a majority of their time online, using programs like Facebook Messenger, so launching a Johnnie Walker bot was a way for us to join the conversation and reach new and existing whisky fans," Johnnie Walker's Ms. Jacoby said.

"We are looking to engage with as many people of legal drinking age as possible, and we are excited to connect with consumers on the go, giving them access to the brand like never before."