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Chatwoot: a shared team inbox for WhatsApp on your own VPS

WhatsApp & APIs

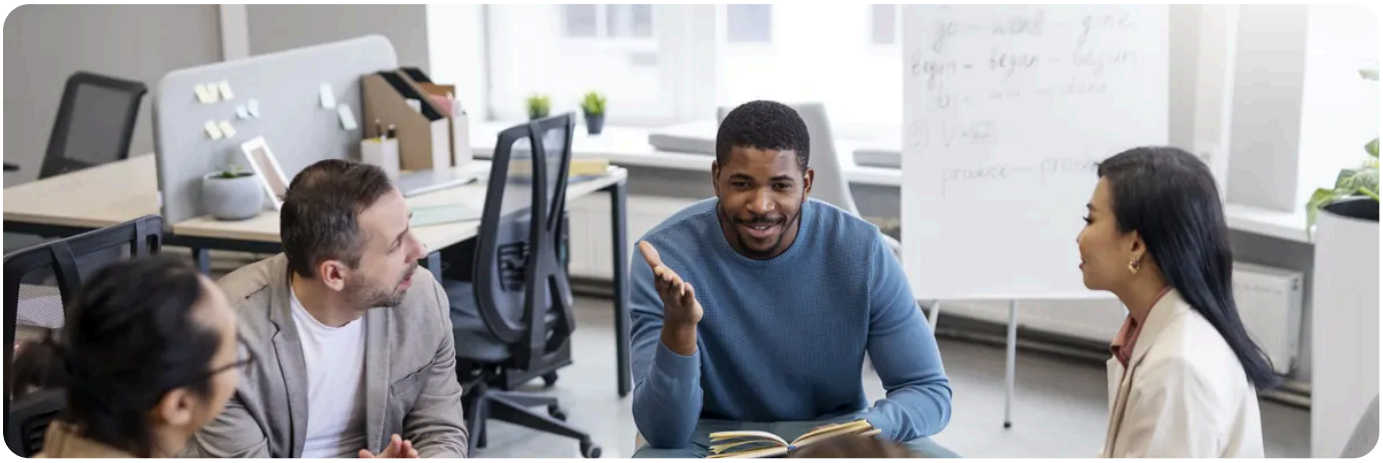
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Chatwoot: a shared team inbox for WhatsApp on your own VPS

WhatsApp & APIs | Created on **October 10, 2026** | Updated on **October 18, 2026** | 3 min read



Chatwoot is an open-source program that gathers the conversations of several channels (website chat, e-mail, WhatsApp) into one inbox and lets **several people** answer, with assignment, labels and internal notes. It is the answer to the problem the WhatsApp Business app does not solve: “who is replying to this customer?”. It is not a Interweb product: it is a third-party project that **you install on a VPS with root access**, and the upkeep is yours.

What it solves

Problem with the phone app	With Chatwoot
One person, one phone	Each agent signs in with their own user, in a browser.
Nobody knows who replied	The conversation has an owner, and the history shows who said what.
Notes live on paper	Internal notes the customer does not see, and labels per conversation.
The same replies typed by hand	Saved replies (“canned responses”, in the documentation) you call up in a moment.
Each channel in a different app	Website chat, e-mail and WhatsApp in the same list.

What you need

According to the project’s documentation, Chatwoot runs in **Docker** containers and needs a **PostgreSQL** database and a **Redis**, which the Docker Compose install already brings. It is heavier than a small tool like n8n: check the current requirements in the project’s documentation before choosing the VPS plan (**the VPS plans**).

The installation, in outline

1. **A VPS with root and Docker.** Install Docker and Docker Compose: **installing Docker on the VPS**. First steps and server security: **first steps with your VPS**.

2. **Get the installation files** from Chatwoot's official documentation (the Docker Compose file and the variables file), not from a random tutorial.

3. **Fill in the variables.** The ones that matter are the public address (the documentation calls it `FRONTEND_URL`), the application's secret key, the database and Redis passwords, and the SMTP details for e-mail notifications. Keep them in a vault: **environment variables and secrets**.

4. **Prepare the database and start it** with the commands the documentation gives for your version.

5. **Put HTTPS on a domain of yours** in front of Chatwoot: **Nginx as a reverse proxy**. Meta only sends webhooks to addresses with valid HTTPS.

6. **Create the administrator account, the agents and a WhatsApp inbox.** According to the documentation, Chatwoot connects to Meta's Cloud API; some people also use a bridge such as Evolution API, which is an unofficial connection with the usual risks (**the risk and the rules**).

On an unmanaged VPS, Chatwoot is yours.
The installation, updates, backups and security are down to you; Interweb support does not install or repair third-party programs. The line is drawn in **how far our support goes** and in the **Support Policy**.

Keep copies of the database and the attached files.
Your customers' conversations live there. An update without a copy, on a server with no snapshot, can wipe the history: **updating a Docker application without losing data**.

Personal data. Chatwoot keeps customers' conversations, names and phone numbers: it is a personal-data store, with what that implies for security, access and retention (consent for messages). Give each person their own account and remove it when they leave.

RECOMMENDED

Need a VPS with root for Chatwoot? Have a look at the plans.

See VPS servers →

SEE ALSO

- **The WhatsApp Cloud API: advantages, disadvantages and who it is for** →
- **Installing Docker and Docker Compose on a VPS** →
- **Running Docker on a VPS safely** →
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