

Shopify Chat Apps: The Speed Cost

Gorgias vs Intercom vs Tidio vs Crisp. Blocking time measured, pricing verified July 2026. By Kaspian Fuad.

The five most stores pick

Intercom	220ms
\$39-139 per seat. Heaviest chat app measured.	
Gorgias	150ms
\$10-900. The Shopify-native helpdesk.	
Tidio	130ms
Free to \$39. Chat plus Lyro AI bot.	
Crisp	110ms
Free to \$295. Lightest third-party.	
Shopify Inbox	90ms
Free, native, lightest of all.	

The whole chat category

Intercom	220ms
\$39-139	
Drift Chat	180ms
not listed	
Zendesk Chat	170ms
not listed	
Gladly Helpdesk	160ms
not listed	
Kustomer Chat	160ms
not listed	
Gorgias	150ms
\$10-900	
LiveChat	150ms
not listed	

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Ada Chatbot	140ms
not listed	
Tawk.to	140ms
Free	
Tidio	130ms
Free to \$39	
Help Scout Beacon	120ms
not listed	
Re:amaze	120ms
not listed	
Crisp	110ms
Free to \$295	
Shopify Inbox	90ms
Free	

The budget you are spending

Google flags at	250ms
Total for ALL third-party code on the page.	
Intercom alone	220ms
Leaves 30ms for every other app you run.	
Shopify Inbox	90ms
Leaves 160ms for the rest of your stack.	
Chat median	145ms
3rd heaviest of 18 categories measured.	

Make any widget faster

1. Idle-load it
Defer until scroll, hover, or main thread idle.
2. Kill auto-open
Costs the blocking time AND interrupts.
3. Scope the pages
PDP, cart, support. Not the homepage.
4. Verify on field data
kaspianfuad.com/tools/shopify-cruх-grader/

Pricing gotchas

- Gorgias overage
\$0.40 per extra ticket on the \$10 Starter plan.
- Intercom is per seat
5 agents on Expert is not \$139. It is \$695.
- Crisp is per workspace
Seats included. Different bill at 5 agents.
- Tidio auto-open
Free tier default. Turn it off.

Pick by the job

- Need a helpdesk
Gorgias. 150ms buys tickets tied to orders.
- Need chat only
Shopify Inbox. Free, native, 90ms.
- Need light + free tier
Crisp. 110ms, free forever at 2 seats.
- Run B2B or SaaS
Intercom earns its 220ms. On Shopify it does not.

The rule

- Paying more buys nothing
The free native option is the lightest.
- Judge on what it earns
A widget closing refunds is worth 150ms.
- Never on ms alone
Revenue per ms is the metric that decides.