USING AI CHATBOTS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Today, voice-based assistants are everywhere. The more famous ones such as Siri or Alexa are now part of our daily lives. Consumers can use these services through their phone, computer or a smart device and ask them for information or let them perform simple tasks such as turning on the lights of your house. While these services in itself can also be performed by a personal computer, they introduced chatbots to a worldwide audience. Now, the time has come for their "intelligent" companion and successor, the AI-enabled chatbot, that offers huge opportunities for businesses everywhere.

THE RISE OF AI CHATBOTS

AI-enabled chatbots have taken chatbot technology to another level. Whereas "simple" chatbots such as Kik, Facebook Messenger and WeChat have limited capabilities, AI-enabled chatbots can do much more: they understand natural language very well, are sensitive to context, dialog flow, allow integration with text-to-speech and vice versa. This makes them an interesting tool for businesses, who can use it to expand their services offerings, among others.

Foremost, AI-enabled chatbots can act as assistants that can interact with clients, improving their experience by answering attendees' questions on-demand, collecting feedback, driving interaction and deliver personalized notifications. Because consumers are already used to interacting with their smart devices using voice commands, using a chatbot feels natural to them. Over time, chatbots will be able to offer personalized experiences to customers and unlock insights that make each interaction better than the last. This is another trait of AI: a chatbot uses algorithms that are self-learning, which means they improve over time and learn from each new interaction.

SAVING TIME AND MONEY USING CHATBOTS

By integrating chatbots into their own architecture, businesses will be able to all sorts of tasks, such as automating customer support, improving customer service, collecting information about users, reducing overhead costs and organizing meetings. This way, chatbots enable businesses to save time and money and operate more efficiently. For example, chatbots can answer questions from customer much quicker than humans do, thereby raising overall productivity. There's a large incentive for businesses to adopt chatbot technology as well: experts have pointed out that people are leaving social networks in favor of messenger apps. This means that the audience for online businesses is inside of these messenger apps. And this is only the beginning: Gartner, the world's leading information technology research and advisory company, forecasts that over 85% of customer interactions will be handled without a human in 2020. This is why businesses should develop a strategy for using social media channels and AI chatbots.

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MEET UP

CHATBOT FRAMEWORKS

Technology companies offer products and services to help you build your own chatbot. Code-based chatbot frameworks offer a way to store data, produce analytics and incorporate AI in the form of Natural Language Processing (NLP) tools and open-source libraries. Frameworks that are not code-based let you develop a chatbot through a graphical interface. Let's have a look at some of the most popular chatbot frameworks that are currently available:

LUIS

Is an acronym of Language Understanding Intelligent Service. Now simply called Language Understanding, LUIS is a machine learning-based service to build natural language into apps, bots, and IoT devices. LUIS is meant to be used together with Microsoft's Bot framework for building and connecting intelligent bots.

MYCROFT

Is an open source AI voice assistant. It uses Python as the primary coding language, which makes it easier to extend the project for others.

AMAZON LEX

Is an AWS service for building conversational interfaces for applications using voice and text. It enables any developer to build conversational chatbots quickly, using the same conversational engine that powers Amazon Alexa.

IBM WATSON

Is a robust platform that allows users to collaborate in building conversational AI solutions. The platform offers a graphical UI, powerful NLP and developer features that allow the rapid creation of simple chatbots and complex enterprise grade solutions for customer service and more.

GOOGLE ASSISTANT

Is the name of Google´s intelligent personal assistant that integrates various inhouse and third-party services that can be managed through voice commands using Google Home, a set of smart speakers also developed by Google.

MOTION AI

Is a cross-platform technology for creating website chatbots, via SMS, on Facebook Messenger, Slack, and others, without any programming skills. The framework uses a graphical interface that is easy to manage, but lacks advanced functionality.

WHY YOUR BUSINESS SHOULD USE CHATBOTS

In this meetup, we investigated how chatbots can improve businesses. AI-enabled chatbots are able to hold intelligent conversations, that can be used by businesses to improve and automate customer support, raise productivity, gather client information and improve over time. Because humans are already used to interacting with voice assistants such as Siri and Alexa, there's a large opportunity for businesses to develop AI-enabled chatbots to interact with customers using messenger services. As more and more customer interactions are expected to be handled without humans, businesses should investigate in ways to deploy chatbots to automate and improve customer support.