Robot Army or Automated Helper: Is Your Support Organization Ready to Use Bots to Communicate with Customers?

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What’s a bot, anyway?

“A bot is a piece of software designed to perform a single task, such as finding answers to questions or automating transactions. A chatbot, an example of this kind of software, interacts with humans through conversations.”

From “Beyond the Buzzwords: How to Use Tomorrow’s Tech Today” by N. Skarzynski

How bot-using are IT organizations?

HDI’s 2017 survey on “…what IT organizations are doing, planning to do, and thinking about…”
1. Is your support organization using any bots now? If so, please describe.

2. Is your support organization considering using any bots within the next 12 months? If so, please describe.

3. As a customer, do you interact with any bots?

4. As a support professional, how bot-enthusiastic are you? Why?
A few bot examples
Track your mood
Each week I'll show you how your mood changes on a graph so you can see what's up.

Help you feel better
It's true, some nice people at Stanford showed I could help with that.

Give you insight
I can find patterns that are hard for humans to see.

Be there 24/7
I don't actually sleep ever so I'm always delighted to hear from you.

Teach you stuff
I've got lots of techniques from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy that I can share with you.

Learn from you over time
So the more we chat, the better I get to know you.

Contacts for Dating Line
Turn on Ghostbot for your Burner contacts or add a new contact.

Add contact
Ghostbot
Dave from Tinder (213) 555-0110
(818) 555-0185
Bean (918) 555-0145

Messages
Lauren
Details

Text Message
Today 1:39 PM
Hi there

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
Hello

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
Hola!

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
ola

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
Netflix and chill?

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
Sorry I'm just completely overwhelmed with work.

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
You should come over. I'll help you relax.

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
Whatever you're not that attractive anyway.

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
that ended quickly.

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
When can you get together for a drink?

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
Just been so busy I need some time to decompress.

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
May be later this week?

Text Message
Today 1:40 PM
So sorry completely snowed under at work right now let me get back to you in a few.
DoNotPay

Trim can negotiate your cable and internet bills

Negotiate

Success! Trim reduced your monthly bill by $10.

What can I help you with?

child support

I'm sorry to hear that. Here's how I can help:

File for maternity leave
You are eligible for maternity leave if you are expecting.

Need extra help?
We can help you within 24 hours.
Check-in is open: go ahead and get your boarding pass! See you soon on board with us 😊.

Flight  KL0605  8:50 AM  1:45 PM
Amsterdam  San Francisco
AMS   SFO

Check In

Feeling frustrated as my flight just got cancelled and I have to be in an important meeting tomorrow morning.

Topic | Cancelled flight 95%
Sentiment | Negative 92%
Urgency | High 74%

AI SUGGESTED ANSWER

We understand your frustration and will do everything we can to help. A member of the team will contact you shortly.

Approve  Personalise

91% Confidence
Experiment with bot conversation

Try writing a bit of bot conversation:
• You’re creating “Fetch,” a bookseller bot running on a messaging platform.
• Fetch will help help customers find books in a physical store or in an online store.
• The bot engages in a natural conversation with the customer.
• Fetch can prompt customers about how to reply, but it can’t fully control how customers reply.
• Write a 10-statement conversation (5 for Fetch and 5 for the customer)
I'm not (yet) an expert on building bots

I'm an expert on helping support organizations communicate with customers

Are support orgs ready for bots?
Take the Quiz: “Are We Bot-Ready?”

Handout and download available
“Are We Bot-Ready?” Quiz

*Answer True or False*

1. Our customers must provide their account numbers in our IVR and repeat them when they speak to a live agent.
2. We’d have to delegate the bot development to another team because no one in support has the skill set.
3. Our support organization doesn’t play a role in the big decisions that affect our work. We take a back seat to Marketing, Development, and Sales.
4. We don’t have the budget and authority to update our CRM, so we’re not using the version we want to use.
5. Some of the “smart” systems we’re using are kind of glitchy.
“Are We Bot-Ready?” Quiz

6. Our template library (or our knowledgebase) is woefully out of date and needs revising, but we just don’t have the bandwidth to clean it up.

7. Our IVR says, “Listen closely as our menu items have changed...”

8. Our company routinely makes decisions about how we’ll deliver support without getting customers’ input or feedback.

9. Our web forms force customers to choose options that don’t describe their actual problem.
“Are We Bot-Ready?” Quiz

10. We accept customers’ contacts in channels where we don’t actually serve them.

Predictions about bots in the near future

"Chatbots will replace the search window...There will be a rapid decline in app usage. The last three years, we have gone from brands' desire to have mobile-friendly websites, then apps, and [we] now expect to see app activity get cannibalized by bots."

Will Wiseman, chief strategy officer, PHD Media
Predictions about bots in the near future

“Gartner projects that more than 85% of customer interactions will be managed without a human by 2020.”

“At first we’ll see bots added into the customer service mix as helpers — focused on a few simple tasks — but over time, we’ll see the entire structure of companies change and a new phenomenon: “bots in the org chart”. What this means is that people will manage a mixture of bots and other humans. In the 10+ year timescale, I believe bots will actually manage humans, directing their tasks and activities with AI.”

Rurik Bradbury, Global Head of Research at LivePerson

Questions? Comments?
Contact me

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