

Chatbots: the next big thing in customer-business interactions



Major tech companies like Microsoft, Apple, and Facebook have been working for several years to infuse artificial intelligence into their devices and platforms. This allows users to communicate with their devices which in turn can infer meaning and “speak” in a way that replicates human speech. These are called chatbots and they’re not some fad here now and gone tomorrow. Chatbots are the future of customer-business interactions.

The implications of chatbots

Chatbots are digital entities programmed to communicate with people and automate various tasks and processes that we would usually have to do ourselves. For instance, if you’re hungry and in the mood for pizza, you could ask a chatbot to place an order for you. You could also make dinner reservations, book a flight, get a weather update, or reschedule a dentist’s appointment. What makes chatbots so exciting is that they’re getting smarter and more accurate. They use machine learning and natural language processing to infer what users are asking them to do. They’re also gaining the ability to cross platforms more effectively which means they can communicate with other apps to find information and/or complete requests.

Chatbots and customer service

Another popular use for chatbots is responding to and resolving customers’ problems. Many businesses are seeing the value of having chatbots on social media platforms since it frees up their call center associates to work on only the most difficult situations. Customers experiencing a problem or customers that have a question can communicate with a chatbot instead of waiting on hold to speak with a human. Customers can pose their question or explain their problem and chatbots will provide the appropriate response or guidance or transfer the person to the appropriate customer service agent.

The value of chatbots

Chatbots will never lose their temper with customers. They also learn from each customer-interaction which means they are always drawing from an ever-growing database of information to better assist customers. Though their ability to understand verbal speech is not yet on a level with human customer service representatives, their ability to immediately access vast stores of information is unparalleled. Chatbots will also provide businesses with insights into their customers since they track behavior and interactions. This will enable businesses to offer customers a more personalized experience.

Furthermore, chatbots are available 24/7, highly flexible, and inexpensive to develop. They free up human resources and increase productivity and they provide a fun and interesting way for customers to engage with brands.

Chatbots and the future

As machine learning and other AI tools become more advanced and as older generations give way to younger ones, the popularity of chatbots and their usefulness to businesses of all sizes is only going to grow. The day will come when chatbots will be playing an integral part of our day-to-day lives and virtually every business will be employing them.

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