WHY CHOOSE A CHATBOT?

Hear from Larry McAteer, Business Improvement Project Manager at Northern Ireland Water

CX company
part of CM.com

northern ireland water

Delivering clean, safe drinking water to approximately 840,000 households and businesses.

What was your initial use case/challenge faced?

The challenge was to reduce the number of calls into the call centre by providing adequate information on line, thus allowing our agents to concentrate on more complex, but value added customer contacts

Why was a chatbot solution a possible fit/what other solutions were proposed?

- We did look at setting up a Q&A database but that wasn't able to provide good insights to customer usage and the success rate
- The chatbot was chosen because it provided us with very powerful analytics on customer interaction. Reports on what questions we were able to respond to and more importantly where we needed to improve
- The chatbot also uses NLP and AI to better the customer's experience

What did you know about chatbots before embarking on the project?

- Initial learning through webinar and research
- Talking to various suppliers

Any concerns relating to technology/users/ROI/stakeholders

This was new and innovative to NI Water so time was spent on bringing on stakeholders to the concept and benefits of using the chatbot instead of basic web Q&A

APPROACH

How did you go about planning the project?

Delivery manager

- Planning
- Operations

Content

- Building, maintaining and optimising content

Front-End

- Consultancy design and technical implementation

Business Intelligence

- Data and statistics

Support

- Maintenance and monitoring DigitalCX

Development

- Further development DigitalCX

What considerations and concessions were made?

Increased the delivery tie to allow for more in depth design and build of dialogues instead of straight Q&A

Advice for go-live and attracting users

Soft launch on web site

Benefits, ROI, feedback from customers/agents

- Customer experience as we obtain circa 80% recognition rate and 90% questions answered
- Deflecting over 2.5k contacts per month
- Customer insights
- Less general Q&A into call centre

CHALLENGES

Share any lessons learnt/highs and lows during the project

- Ready to launch but although stakeholders were happy with the work done they felt that there was a need to ensure a better customer experience was obtained – build dialogues instead of offering simple Q&A
- Invest in time with the wider business to develop Q&A / dialogues
- Launch internally 1st to get experienced staff to provide feedback on content and style

What was your our biggest hurdle and how did you overcome it?

- Getting time with wider business to provide Q&A
- Reducing responses to be more succinct and easy to read

If you were to go about it again, what would you do differently?

Clear acceptance criteria from stakeholders – did basic Q&A for launch but they wanted full dialogue for launch. Caused project timelines to be extended

How has Covid19 affected the chatbot usage?

Steady increase but difficult to attribute this to Covid19

OUTLOOK

Improving and adapting the solution

- Currently in talks to implement new functionality
- Long Q API (takes out the main points), auto dialogues and answers through AI
- Contextual FAQs are FAQs which are related to the customers question and presented underneath the answer that the bot gives. Typically 2 or 3 FAQs will be shown
- Page-Related FAQs are FAQs which will show underneath the bot answer and are related to the page that the user is on

Future use cases

I can see an increase smart speakers usage and would consider exploring how we can use that to interact with the chat bot

EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER CONTACT