

CONVERSATIONAL (BOTS) UX BEST PRACTICES HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Objective of this document

The objective of this document is to relay best practices in the presentation and behavior of chatbots for a great user experience.

Intended audience of this document

This document is for anyone who is designing, developing or integrating a chatbot - or who is just curious about best practices in order to have a better user experience when interacting with a conversational user interface.

ABOUT CONVERSATIONAL UX

WHAT IS CONVERSATIONAL UX

The use of chatbots has been increasing in the past couple of years, in simple words: a chatbot is an application which allows a user to input information and receive an answer from a bot (O'Brien, 2017).

In contrast to other applications a chatbot has a very different interface and involves a lot of interaction from the user by means of auditory and textual inputs. This is the reason why having a smooth interaction between the application and the user is important.

The purpose of conversational UX is to make technological interactions easier and feel more natural to humans (Smith, 2018).

MAIN INTERFACE ELEMENTS IN CHATBOTS

For a better understanding on how to apply these guidelines, it is important to know the different elements in the interface of a chatbot. Here they are exemplified with a suggestion on how they can be best used.


In the next slides the elements are explained.

TEXT MESSAGE

This is one of the most common ways to communicate in a bot. It is simple and can be to the point.

Hi from CNN. I'm here to bring you the most important news of the day.

There's a lot going on in the world. I can send you daily updates with top stories, or you can message me directly about a topic you're interested in, like "politics" or "tech," and I'll send you the latest.

Ok, let's get started. Here are some options 



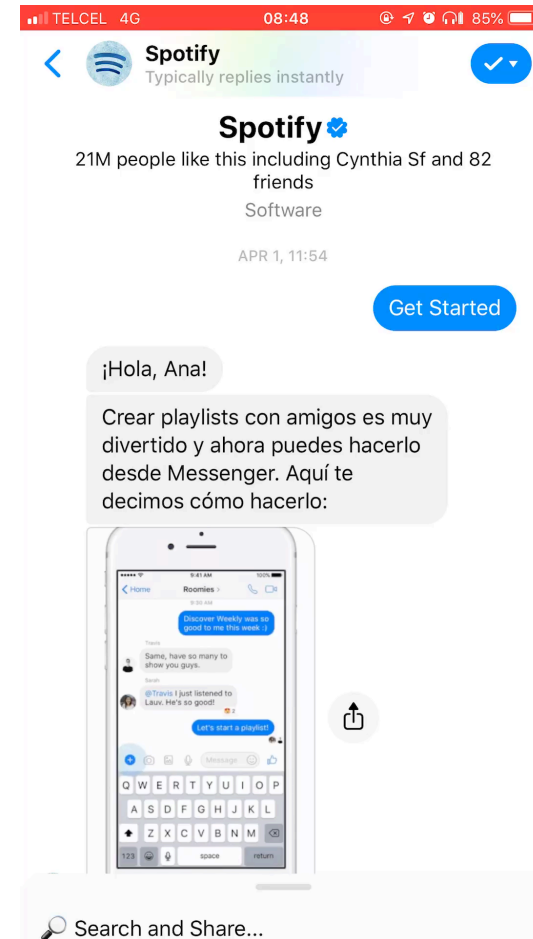
IMAGE

Showing an image which visualizes the message, helps the user to understand that message.



VIDEO

A video can show an example of how something works or should work.
Click on the image to see the video.

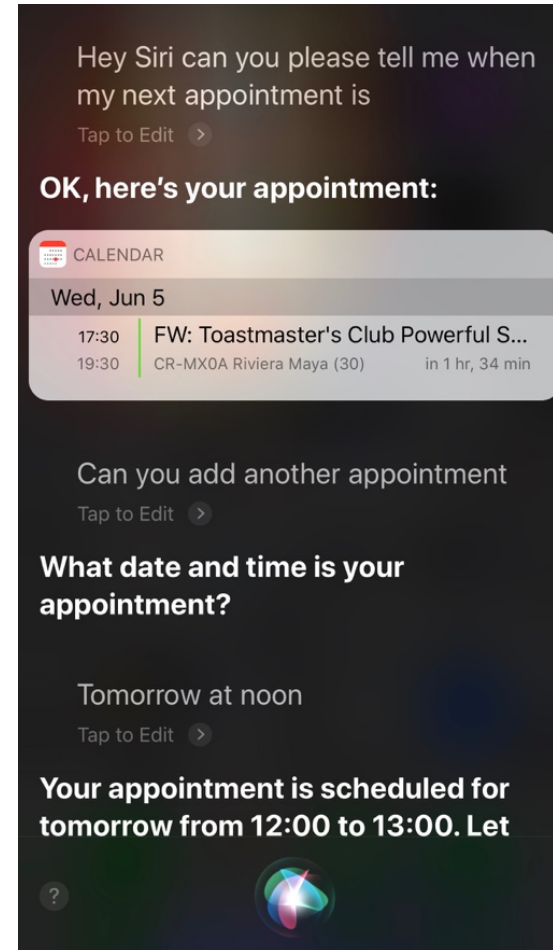


AUDIO

Audio is another way to connect with the user, in case a text message is no option.

It can also be used in combination with text, e.g. to have the text output of the bot be read out loud to the users.

The audio element is utilized when the bot is able to understand human voice and also reply with the use of voice. Some examples are Siri and Alexa.



BUTTONS

The buttons in the chat will help the user to choose from different options. It is advisable to show between 2-5 options.

Hey!

Samantha here from Hunt a Killer.

Wanted to make sure you saw our "killer" Black Friday deals.

Only 1500 are available, and they are going FAST!

Check them out below!

Sam

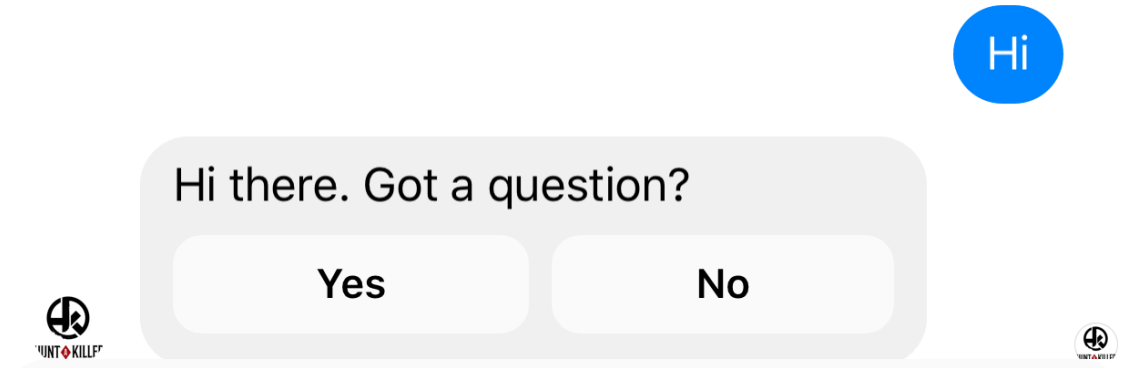
Show me those deals

No thanks



QUICK REPLIES

A quick reply will save the user time on typing. Different from the buttons, a quick reply only offers two options that are normally binary.



CAROUSEL GALLERY

A carousel gallery is a way to show the user different options that the user can choose from. They are illustrated with images and text. Ensure that your interactive elements are clearly shown as such.



Looks like you're planning a getaway from San Luis Potosi, Mexico. I'll hit you back with some great recommendations.



ive Music Cities

\$454+: Las Vegas, NV



World's Best Nightlife

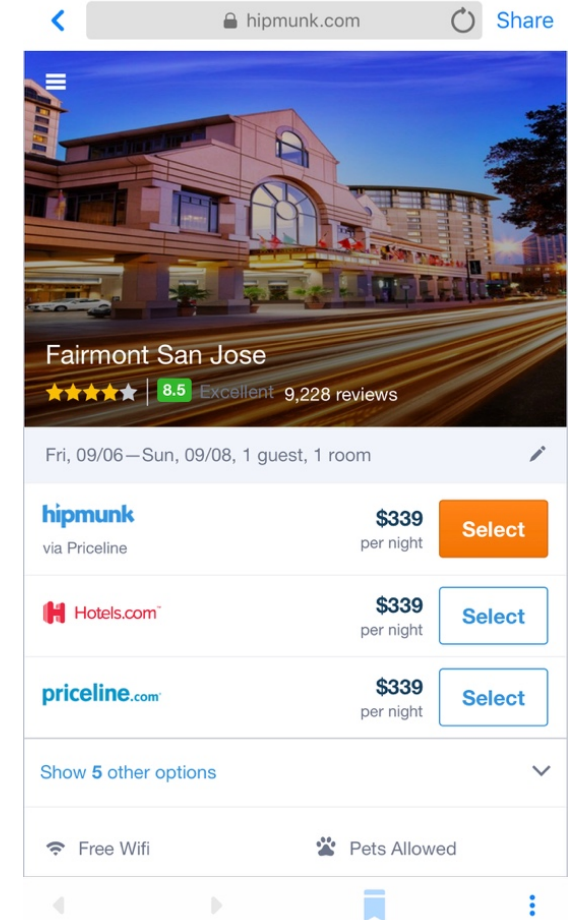
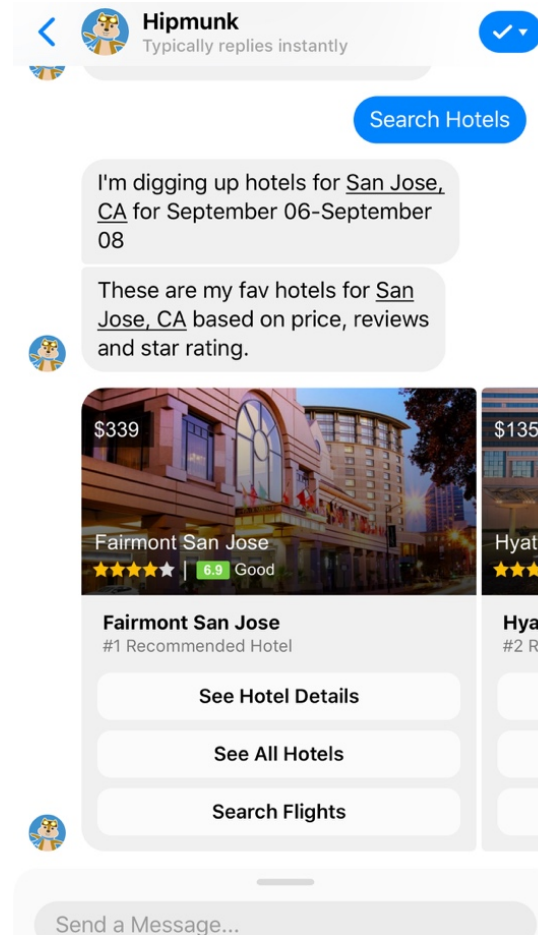
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LIST

Lists can be shown when there are multiple different things being presented to the user. Normally, a list is for display only, if you want the user to select something from the list, buttons, image carousel or links can be used.

LINKS

Links can be used within messages, carousel galleries and lists - and as button options. A link is used to redirect the user to another page. It is important to let the user go back from there to the bot with a back arrow or by not closing it when the page changes.



GUIDELINES

GUIDELINES LIST

1. Salutation

- Always be cordial and have a salutation

2. Robot Persona

- Create a persona for the bot
- Find the right voice for the chatbot

3. Politeness

- Ask for the right answer
- Request feedback through surveys

4. Language

- Use common language and recognize user typos
- Provide and understand different languages
- Follow rules of human conversation in interaction flows

GUIDELINES LIST

5. Interaction

- Find the best channel
- Understand different types of user input
- Redirect to a human agent
- Request follow-ups or alerts

6. Bot Reactions

- Show the user some tasks that the bot can perform
- The bot should understand the user's sentiments
- Have a delay in the response
- Be precise through the conversation
- Never dead end a user
- Offer different options to the user to select
- Avoid repetitive interaction

GUIDELINES LIST

7. **Understanding user's context**

- Show the information known about the user

8. **Recovery from errors**

- Cancel and undo any actions any time
- Request confirmation

9. **Closure**

- End the conversation with the bot at any time

CONCLUSION

As it has been shown in the best practices above, conversational UX is about simulating a human-to-human conversation. To that extent, if you encounter a situation during the conversation design that is not covered in this document, think about how a human would interact, react or answer and then apply it to the bot.

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