Bot Government:
How Bot Can Empower the People

SnatchBot

Conversational Government:
The New Voice of the People

As the popularity of chatbots continues to soar, more use cases are emerging that demonstrate their value across nearly every industry sector. Already bots are changing the face of customer service, e-commerce, hospitality, air travel, healthcare, and much more.

Now the power of bots is being applied to the governmental sector. Several government institutions around the world have already begun to adopt bot technology to streamline processes, make information more readily available and improve services for their people.

Traditional interactions between citizens and government can be wearisome and unreliable. Government is, typically, one of the last sectors to adopt new technological advancements in a way that is relevant to general interest; case in point, even after nearly two decades into the twenty-first century, Americans are still contacting their local representatives via phone or fax.

There are a great number of use cases for chatbots in government, some that are already in place, and others that have only been conceived and have yet to be fully realized. Below we're going to explore some of these avenues, but first, let's take a closer look at what chatbots are and some of their capabilities.

The Chatbot Solution

In the simplest terms, chatbots are programs that use NLP (natural language processing) and artificial intelligence to converse with a user via text or voice. Chatbots are able to be applied to any number of channels, from messaging platforms like Skype or Facebook Messenger to more traditional outlets like web, email, or SMS.

Chatbots use context and machine learning functionality to reply to a user's input in a way that is quick, simple, and efficient. In short: chatbots turn what might ordinarily be a one-way interaction into a two-way conversation.

As a simple example, let's say that a resident wants to know when the road construction outside their home will be completed. Ordinarily, they might navigate a website (a one-way interaction), or they might send an email and wait for a reply. They might call the local office, which could involve a lengthy hold time or, in most cases, leaving a voicemail and waiting for a call back.

Alternatively, the resident could simply send a text message to the local government's chatbot via their preferred channel. The chatbot would immediately and accurately reply, using context to recognize the question and giving an answer drawn from a database.

Not only is this fast and efficient, it also presents the people with a self-service option. On the opposite end, it alleviates stress on government employees by reducing their workload and allowing them to focus on other tasks.

Bots and Political Outreach

Despite the popularity of chatbots, we've still only touched upon their full capabilities, and new use cases are arriving daily. Now that we've better defined bots and given a simple example, let's take a look at some more complex ways in which chatbots can be and are being applied to the government sector.

As we mentioned earlier, political outreach is one area that is, unfortunately, in dire need of updating. In most cases, citizens are using voicemail or even faxes to contact representatives at nearly every level of government. Campaign offices are manned by teams of volunteers ready to answer phones and supply information.

A single bot, supplied with the necessary information, could replace a significant portion of these traditional means. An intelligent bot can answer frequently-asked questions, day or night; it could offer information about incumbents and candidates; it could even accept campaign donations via electronic transactions safely and securely.

During election periods, chatbots can inform citizens of where polls are located, what they will need to know or bring, and provide up-to-the-minute results. All of this is done in an engaging, conversational manner that gives residents the freedom of choice in channel.

Engaging with Citizens

Bots provide an innovative way for a government to better engage with its people through a method that we call "conversational government." This is the notion of creating a conversation between a legislative body and citizens, with chatbots being the integral link between them.

For example, some governments have already taken to using bots to keep their people informed about upcoming changes in policy and legislation. These bots are also capable of answering questions and issuing surveys. This information is then collated for analysis so that officials are able to determine, at a glance, the feedback and opinions of citizens before enacting policies.

This sort of efficacy is not only a faster, simpler solution to nearly any traditional means of collecting data, but it also gives each person a voice, affording them a personalized experience without the need for them to travel anywhere or be on hold for any amount of time.

A One-Stop Information Hub

There are a great number of possible inquiries that any level of government may encounter. As an example, consider a small town of only a few thousand people. Despite its relatively small size, the local government is likely still inundated with questions from residents, which may include a variety of things like: When does a particular public venue open or close? When will a construction project be completed? How are property taxes calculated? Who can they contact to report a pothole in the road? How can they obtain permits for a home improvement project? Those are only a few examples; of course there are many more.

A chatbot could answer all of these questions quickly and efficiently without the need for residents to navigate a website or make a phone call. Furthermore, this frees up government employees so that they may handle more important tasks and better provide for the citizens of an area.

Here are just a few other instances of how chatbots can aid government simply through supplying information:

✓ Keep citizens informed of their rights.
✓ Notify people of potential changes in policies.
✓ Answer tax-related inquiries.
✓ Allow access to public records, such as property surveys, marriage licenses, birth certificates and more.
✓ Inform people about employment opportunities.
✓ Direct citizens to resources pertaining to eligibility and applications for housing, grants, subsidies, and scholarships.

Even all of the above examples are very much the tip of the iceberg when it comes to supplying information, though all of these are things that chatbots in government can (and in some cases, already do) handle.

Health and Awareness

Many countries the world over provide free healthcare for their citizens, making government and medicine inextricably linked. This makes necessary an entire other realm of provision of information, and one in which chatbots can be put to work to answer questions, provide advice, and notify residents of available resources.

In the United States, the Affordable Care Act offers government subsidies on health insurance dependent on income; this would be an outstanding example of chatbot usage, one that eliminates the need to navigate a GUI-based website that has been notoriously unreliable.

Furthermore, bots are able to "learn" a particular user's preferences and needs over time and interaction, which gives them the ability to send only relevant data to any given person. For example, if an expectant mother has interacted with a chatbot regarding prenatal services, the bot can later send her information and advice regarding required vaccinations, childcare, or available services in her area.

This sort of streamlined service can equally be applied to health departments and ministries; bots can notify citizens of potential public health concerns, as well as updates to healthcare regulations and policies. With bots, this exchange of information goes both ways: residents can report potential exposure to infectious disease or hazards.

By working with chatbots, any government institution can strengthen the bond between citizen and leadership in a way that is efficient and personalized, granting each person a voice in the conversation. At Snatchbot, we strive to make the process of building a chatbot as easy and user-friendly as possible, regardless of the size of your user base.

Try to our Chatbot Templates and Start Building your Own
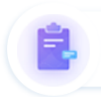
Survey Template Bot   GDPR Bot Template

About SnatchBot

SnatchBot's revolutionary platform streamlines business workflows and communications with a single message based interface. With SnatchBot's omni-channel platform, customers can specify the channels through which they'd like to connect. SnatchBot's tools support the entire lifecycle of a bot, from developing and testing to deploying, publishing, hosting, tracking, and monitoring. The platform provides robust administrative features and entreprise-grade security that comply with all regulatory mandates.

For more information about SnatchBot's bot-building platform,please visit our website at **https://snatchbot.me/**
If you don't know how to start building your bot contact us today and we will build your bot for you.
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