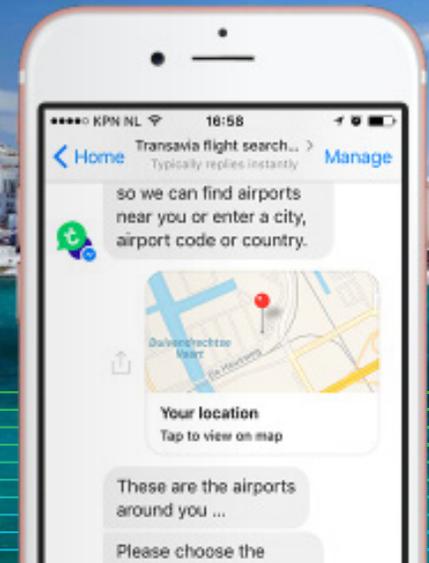


Bot Brings Transavia Airlines Closer to Its Customers



Mirabeau develops next-big-thing technology to meet fast-changing user habits

Competing in a digital world requires connecting with customers on their preferred technology, via their favorite platforms. Today, this means mobile and messenger. Chat is quickly becoming the communication method of choice among mobile users who expect to instantly interact not only each with other, but their favorite businesses too.

Driven by the popularity of WhatsApp and Facebook, messenger platforms are considered to be a game-changing development, and the technology is giving way to “the next big thing;” that is, conversational interface, which is expected to have a bigger impact than smartphones.

Transavia, part of Air France-KLM and known as the most accessible budget airline in Europe, had witnessed an enormous shift in its customers’ usage patterns to chat apps. The leader in holiday travel knew it needed to find new ways to serve this base, using more than just human interface. At the same time, Mirabeau, a Cognizant Digital Business, had been creating conversational interfaces and exploring bot

technology, when it realized an opportunity for Transavia to meet the new demand for chat among its customers.

Mirabeau was developing new experiences, through a new generation of artificial intelligence and cognitive services based on Microsoft Azure’s Cortana, which has capabilities like natural language understanding, facial recognition and emotional detection. From there, bots can be developed to help people do anything from buy products and find information, to use services—all in a more intuitive way.

For Transavia, Mirabeau came up with the idea to enable a bot to allow passengers to book their flights through Facebook Messenger. After seeing the prototype, the airline was enthusiastic about the idea and wanted to get started developing the real solution immediately.

Mirabeau helped Transavia see how to apply, next-big-thing bot technology to create real value for its customers now.

Leveraging Transavia's business knowledge and customer insights along with Mirabeau's technological and design expertise, and using Agile and Lean development practices, teams worked in one-week iteration sprints.

This allowed for quick system adjustments according to specific questions and challenges encountered in the development process. Testing was performed and improvements deployed concurrent to development. The key was finding the points in the interaction where chat could provide real value. Simple click-based functions were added to eliminate any gaps and accelerate the transaction.

Just weeks after the initial concept was completed "Transavia Flight Search" was ready. The bot is now live and Mirabeau's team takes advantage of cloud technology to make improvements based on real-time feedback and analytics.

Mirabeau enabled fast development resulting in a quick go-to-market product.

With the right balance of text chat and click-based automation, the solution creates a flowing conversation on Facebook Messenger that smoothly guides customers through the ticket selection and purchasing process.

Transavia knows its success depends on being where its customers are, but keeping up with their ever-changing digital habits was challenging.

Instead of succumbing to the pace, however, Transavia leveraged the latest technology to stay a step ahead. And, by creating a dialogue with its customers, the airline can ensure its new offering continues to evolve with their needs.

AT A GLANCE

Releasing a product in an early stage of development might seem risky, but for Mirabeau and Transavia, launching Transavia Flight Search in Facebook Messenger was worthwhile.

They wanted to take full advantage of the opportunity afforded by digital technology for accelerated time-to-market, machine learning and real-world feedback that results in real-time improvement.

"Bots are here to stay and will change everything," says Ines Verburgh, Innovation Lead at Transavia. "Companies that have not begun exploring the opportunities available should start doing so right away. The sooner you start learning and getting comfortable with the potential of this technology, the more prepared you'll be when it becomes the industry standard—which may happen in a matter of months."

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