

GUIDE

Getting Started with Facebook Chatbots

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Introduction

Using chatbots can be daunting to some as it is a new technology that not many have used so far.

In this guide, I take a closer look at what they are, and how you can launch your own to help ease the workload at your organisation and how they can help you to move your citizen engagement to the next level.

1 | What is a Facebook Chatbot?

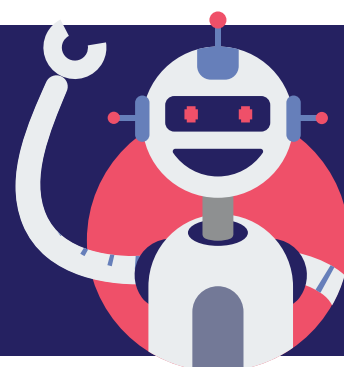
Facebook launched the chatbot service back in 2016, and it has since taken the advertising and customer care sector by storm. They are an artificial intelligence program that will respond to users with specific answers, directions and information that the business owner dictates.

We see many early forms of chatbots on websites that have a pop-up window where you can ask questions that give automated responses depending on the key terms that are input to the chat screen.

The great thing about Facebook chatbots is that you have access to everyone on Facebook, and it has been found that many people like to speak to organisations through Messenger rather than a phone call. It also allows you to offer a 24/7 service without hiring around-the-clock staff to cover the phones, email and Messenger at the organisation.

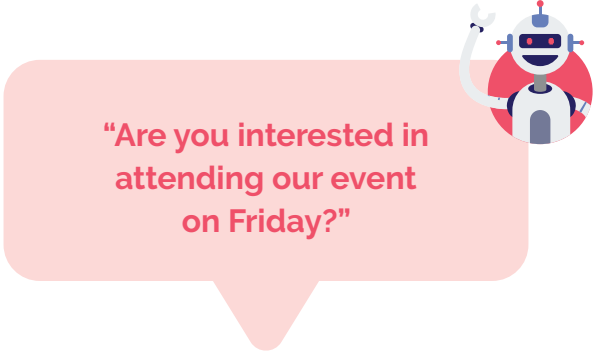


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2 | Chatbot Example

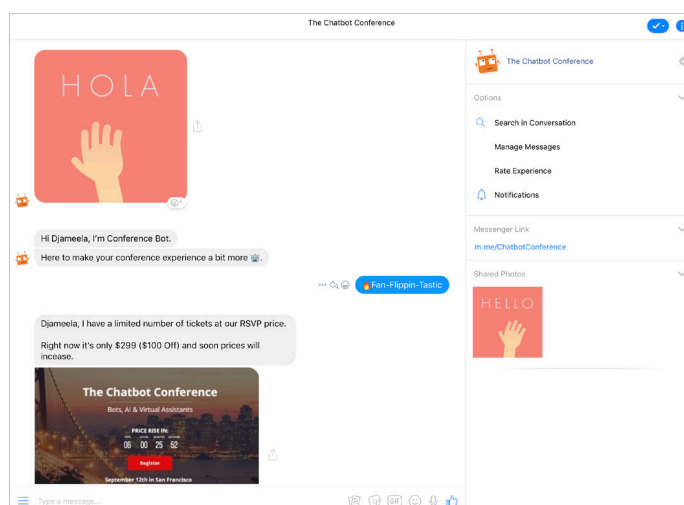
Here is a quick example of how you can use a chatbot. Let's say you have an event on in the local town hall on Friday evening; people may click to message you then be prompted with a message.



“Are you interested in attending our event on Friday?”

If you type 'Yes', they will automatically show you how to get tickets, send directions and send the details of the event schedule. This is a simple use of chatbots that will save you money as the bots are answering simple questions for you. As they are running on Facebook, the bot will know who the person is, what their likes or dislikes are and you can encourage them to click through to a webpage, video, picture or any content that the user will deem useful.

The chatbots are able to help your organisation to **increase engagement**, **answer questions** and **speed up the time needed to interact with you** so as to leave the user happy and more likely to share your page with friends and come back for more information from you.



3 | How to Set Up a Chatbot?

The easiest way to start a chatbot for your organisation will be to use an existing product that another developer has created unless you are great at coding and have the time to build your own. There are many drag and drop services available that a beginner will find intuitive and easy to use such as.



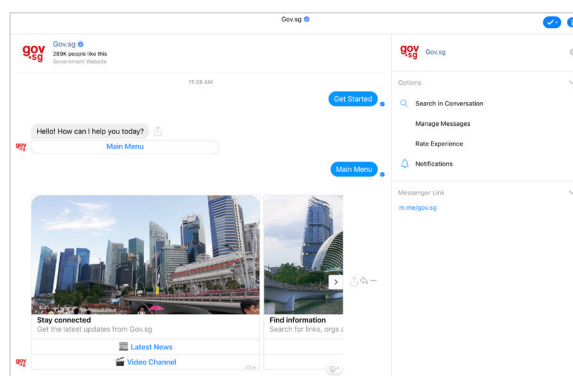
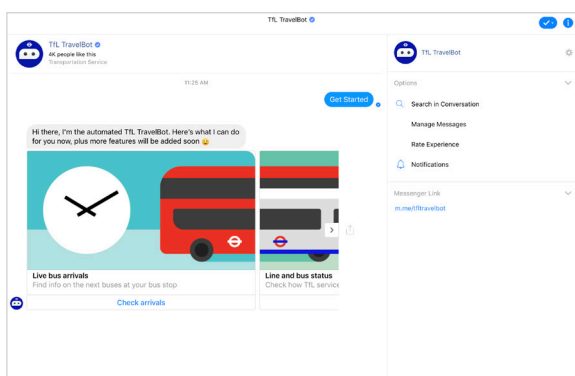
mobilemonkey.com



manychat.com

1 When you start to create a chatbot, don't add too many features try to **keep it simple** as this way you can gauge how useful certain features are and you can expand as you get more comfortable. It can be daunting leaving a chatbot to speak with your customers or interested people as you don't know how the conversation is going and whether the chatbot is working as it should.

2 Make sure your chatbot sends a **welcome message** to users when they arrive on your Facebook Page; this will help them to feel more comfortable using your chatbot and gives them a nudge to do so.



3 Create **natural conversations** that flow seamlessly, try to word phrases as you would when using messenger to talk with users. Don't ask too much out of your first chatbot; it is better that it can do one or two things correctly, rather than fumble through a dozen tasks, this will only lose you users in the long run.

4 Learn from your audience and **keep the chatbot away from using confusing terms or language**. You will yield no useful data if your chatbots are hard to understand and confuse the users. Once you have a chatbot that performs a few tasks well, you can start to roll out additional features to lessen the workload of your organisation's staff.

5 **Continuously optimise** your chatbot as you gain confidence and ask it to handle more complex functions. **Understand your goals** of having a chatbot and try to work out the best way to implement features to help reach these goals.

6 Chatbots are a fantastic tool for gathering data, and you can get them to **ask for specific information** that will be valuable to your organisation, such as locations, ages, interests or general habits. So long as your chatbot is speaking plain English, you will be able to gather plenty of useful data to help achieve your goals.

7 **Keep an eye on what other chatbots are doing** as the technology is still new, and people are finding new ways to get them to perform better. Understand any issues you have had with a chatbot and try to eradicate these from your own. In the same token, when you have a great interaction with a chatbot, try to **understand why it worked and replicate it within yours**. It is a fast-evolving technology, and no-one has all the answers.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ✔ Start simple
- ✔ Use concise language
- ✔ Study the data
- ✔ Implement changes when needed
- ✔ The bot represents your brand so make sure you know what it is doing

4 | Start a Chatbot

Unless you have a good level of coding, you should stick with the simple drag-and-drop software to create your first chatbot. As mentioned above, this is a relatively new technology, and you should take your time to understand the areas they will help your organization.

On the plus side, it is a new technology so you will reap great rewards if you can create a worthwhile chatbot and help your brand stand out from the crowd, as getting noticed on social media is becoming increasingly competitive so you need to utilize every area you can to get the users interested in your brand.

Chatbots will be heavily leveraged in the future, so make sure you are not left in the cold and release your organisation's chatbot today.

5 | Case Study: 'How a bot saved Christmas'

STRATEGY

For the period close to Christmas (22 -25 Dec) **safefood** decided to launch a chatbot, which they affectionately named Chefbot, to take over a lot of their customer service workload.

Knowing that most of their audience was on Facebook they wanted to feature it there with the objectives of:

1. Driving increased traffic towards the Christmas hub on Safefood.eu where people could find more relevant and useful information; and
2. Increased usage of their Turkey Cooking Time Calculator, also hosted on the website.

This meant the safefood team could work more efficiently and let the information readily available do the hard yards for them, instead of putting pressure on their own resources.



SOCIAL MEDIA TACTICS

Safefood set about developing their multi-media campaign by leveraging the following channels:

- **Website** - they wanted to repurpose existing resources, so that they could create a cohesive and consistent look and feel to the campaign.
- **Radio ad** – this would increase awareness of the bot and drive traffic towards the website.
- **Social media** - where the content around the bot appeared along with Facebook advertising and re-targeting to drive people through to the site landing page.
- **Chatbot** – their customer service solution supported by social advertising.

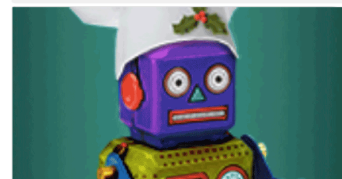
They also wanted to adopt a data driven approach by developing a character or mind map for Chefbot, so that he could handle the top queries people had historically asked about when cooking Christmas dinner.

They could also schedule Facebook posts from him which matched up with all the key milestones around the Christmas dinner occasion, like defrosting reminders on 23 December getting the turkey to the fridge two hours after cooking on Christmas Day, or recipe suggestions for the 26 December.

They then used Facebook Ads to create awareness of the bot and had a call to action to launch him in Facebook Messenger.

Of course as well as having handy tips and advice ready to go, it was also important to give Chefbot a personality so that he could respond to friendly and humorous conversation. One example being Facebook users telling him, 'I love you.'

Season's greetings, Joanne ! I'm the safefood Chefbot and I'm here to help you make sure your Christmas menu goes to plan! What can I help you with?



Chefbot

How long should I cook my turkey for?

Don't stress, cooking the turkey for everyone can be super safe as long as it's done properly. What would you like to know?

[Cooking calculator](#)

[Storing/defrosting](#)

[Preparing/cooking](#)



Only one day to go! Sorry if you're super busy, just wanted to remind you that you don't need to wash your turkey before cooking it. In fact, try to handle it as little as possible and wash your hands and surfaces with soapy water when you do. Want to know a little more about preparing your turkey safely? You can do so here: <http://bit.ly/2ARL8M0>

12/25/2017 12:00PM

Happy Christmas! How did dinner go? I bet it turned out great! Get any good cracker jokes? In case your curious about what to do with those leftovers, make sure you store them in the fridge within two hours of cooking. Once they're in the fridge, make sure everything is all gobbled up within three days.

Are you thinking of freezing leftovers?

[Yes](#)

[No](#)

RESULTS

Chefbot cooked up a treat for safefood, by serving the Irish public lots of helpful and important cooking and food safety suggestions in the days leading up to and following Christmas.

The statistics from campaign speak for themselves:

- Social, organic search and referral drove a high volume of website traffic.
- 362,000+ reach on Facebook
- Over 1 million impressions on Facebook
- 790,000+ on Twitter
- 40,331 engagements (including video views) on Facebook
- 45,000+ on Twitter
- 11% engagement rate on Facebook
- 4.6% on Twitter

As of January 1 2018, Chefbot had reached 356 users, and while that might not seem particularly high, it was still 356 people who needed to be reassured of key food safety messages. Without Chefbot those people would have required customer service from the safefood team.

Other interesting findings

- New users peaked on December 23
- The most clicked button was 'defrosting'
- Recipe link was clicked 37 times
- The Turkey Cooking Time Calculator was used 109 times
- Most users came from Facebook Ads

Most importantly they had the highest peak ever on their website between 23 and 26 December, demonstrating that Chefbot was the perfect recipe for the Christmas rush!

LEARNINGS

The success of Chefbot and their overall campaign was based around their data driven approach. By looking over the trend data over the previous few years they gave themselves a smart way to deliver all the important information without needing to have staff at hand to advise in real-time over the Christmas period.

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