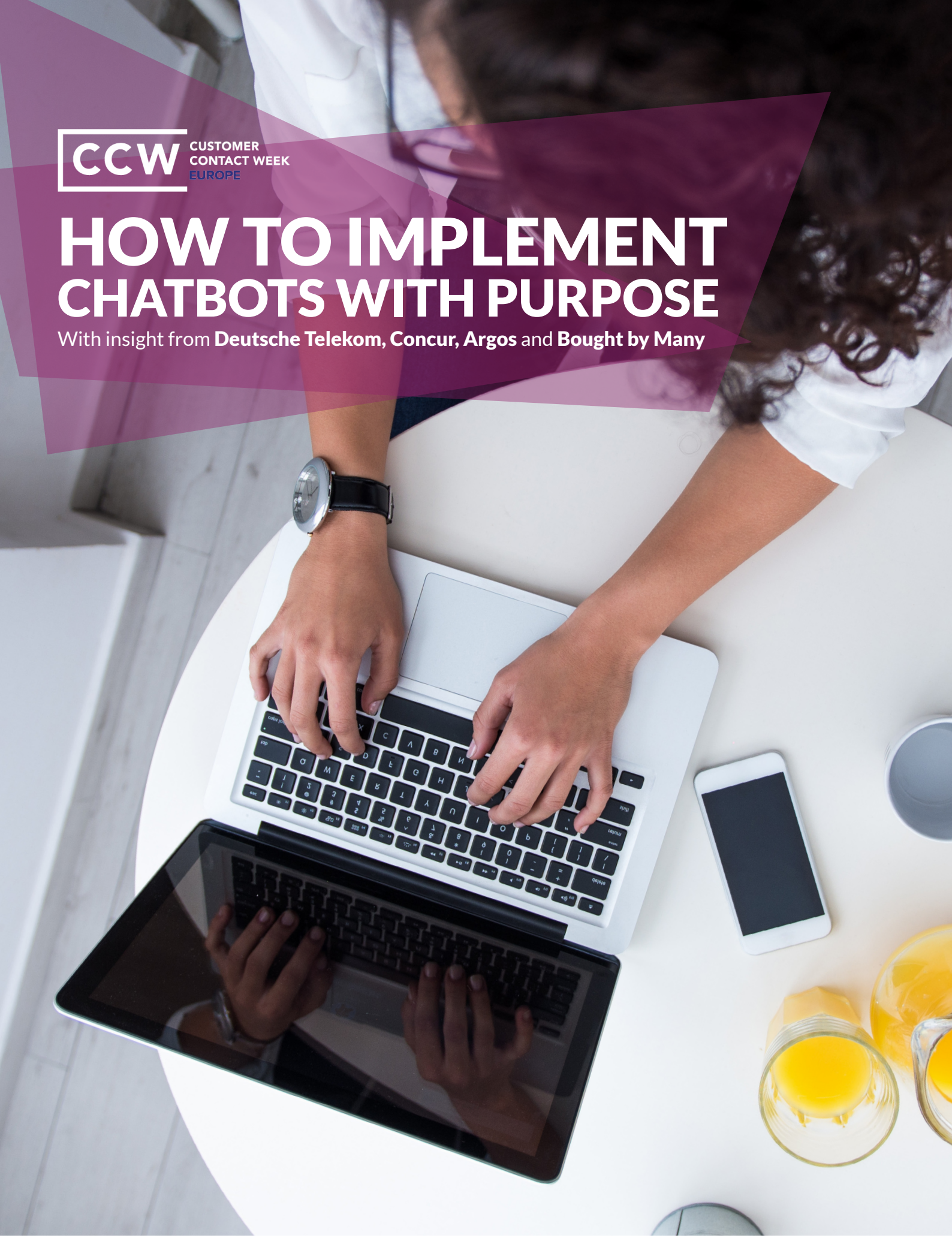


CCW CUSTOMER CONTACT WEEK EUROPE

HOW TO IMPLEMENT CHATBOTS WITH PURPOSE

With insight from **Deutsche Telekom, Concur, Argos** and **Bought by Many**

COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of connectivity, mobility and business continuity - meaning chatbots have become ever so prevalent.

In today's fast-paced, swipe-right, instant messaging world, customers expect the efficiency that they'reused to accessing in everyday life to be just as prevalent when communicating with brands, products and services.

Over the past few years, advancements in artificial intelligence coupled with the culture of 'now' have made this possible, as numerous companies make the move to integrate chat bot technology into their customer service offering.

With the ability to comprehend individual customer needs and go beyond the provision of basic information, today's chat bot technology is evolving into something increasingly complex. For many businesses this technology has come to have a considerable impact on cost, time and money saving initiatives and now more than ever the ability to maintain immediate customer interaction in a time where a high level of reassurance is has proven extremely useful and one of the most rewarding aspects of introducing chat bots on the customer servicefront, is its ability to lead to more human experiences.

CCW Europe asked four industry experts for their advice on introducing chat bot technology into your service offering. Together, they explore the importance on doing so with purpose as well as how to use this as an opportunity for human agents to provide a more value-adding customer service experience.

THE **EXPERTS**



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Vice President Business Transformation,
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ONNO HOFFMAN
VP New Products& Services,
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Head of Digital Contact, Techology & Innovation,
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OKE ELEAZU
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WHY USE A CHAT BOT?

In 2018, 42% of organisations identified chat bots as being a leading priority for them over the next two years, with 12% deeming it tobe an urgent investment. Largely, this comesas a response to the customer expectation that businesses provide a quality of service that meets what is becoming the new status quo. Omni channel engagement, frictionless customer experiences, first contact resolution and proactive engagement are increasingly becoming the norm. If companies fail to meet these expectations, they face the potential of frustrating and even losing valued clientele.

Today, two thirds of adults feel that the appropriate response time to social communication is under an hour, 43% expect it to occur in less than 10 minutes, and the rest believe it should be instant. The instantaneous nature of automated chat bots mean that businesses can cater to this expectation, but this is of little value if these bots are unable to adequately resolve the issue at hand. "People are getting more used to chat being a point to point channel, requiring resolution at its conclusion," says Claudia Belardo. "The techniques required to conduct a successful chat troubleshooting session from beginning to end are different from voice or email and I have seen many examples where the technology is great but the person or botbacking it has been less than spectacular."

Digital technologies can be an organisation's single point of success or a unique point of failure when not configured and maintained properly. To maximise the impact of a bot, they need to have a purpose for doing so. A technology solution should not be implemented solely to respond to an elicit market demand, but it must fulfil a clear need and deliver clear value. "If a company is using digital channels to enhance the experience for customers, that's good, but if they're using it to lower cost base, then that may not be the best thing," expresses Oke Eleazu. "If they are thinking that instead of having 1000 employees, to have 500 chat bots, without considering if they work effectively, then they might have a challenge."Businesses must focus on the purpose behind their bot solution and ask why their customers will value the technology.



Deutsche Telekom

CHAT BOTS IN **ACTION**: FUELING FEEDBACK



Onno Hoffman
VP Special Operations & Innovation

Onno Hoffman works within Deutsche Telekom's customer service operations and is responsible for special operations and innovation. This includes the social media services provided via Facebook, Twitter and Deutsche Telekom's own service community called 'telekom hilft' which garners over two million users per month. Here, Onno explains how Deutsche Telekom is using chat bot technology to generate customer feedback.

What does Deutsche Telekom use chat bots for?

Within our social media channels, we use our chat bot 'Horst' to collect customer feedback. Horst comes in at the end of a conversation, introduces himself and asks customers for satisfaction ratings and reacts suitably to the rating. For example if the customer says that he or she is not satisfied, Horst might say, '...man, I thought my colleagues were experts. Obviously, they didn't perform well in your case. Help me to help them improve.' 40% of all customers contacted by Horst will participate in the survey. The response rate is significantly higher than any regular online survey we have conducted.

Our second use case is routing. Today we allocate a certain amount of our resources to read customer queries and complaints on social media platforms to route them to the agent with the right skill. We have people doing that because we need precise routing for efficient operations but we have started to use bots to do this for us and our first results are promising.

How do Deutsche Telekom monitor chat bot success?

You need enough return on surveys to use them operationally. Horst created an overwhelming response rate which allows us to integrate customer satisfaction metrics in daily operational steering. We also monitor Horst's own perception and performance with a survey, whenever a customer has had a dialogue with the bot.

In the case of routing we look at the routing success of the customer request. If the bot forwards a request to the right agent, it's a good case. If a second redirect is necessary we count that as a failed routing.

So what have you learned from the surveys about 'Horst'?

In the beginning of our journey we were uncertain whether the use of a

bot could harm our reputation, which we have built up over the years among the online community. But the first results of Horst's surveys reassured us. More than 70% of the respondents said they liked the format of Horst so we started to experiment more and tuned the dialogues and scripts, Horst's reactions were more specific and unique. We've learnt that ourtime and resources were invested well. Today Horst fits well into the social media team and has built up his own personality which is constantly enhanced and improved by colleagues.

What are Deutsche Telekom's next steps with this technology?

Our next step is to automate common queries. For example, If a customer has a question about a basic tariff plan we would like Horst to be able to answer that question to keep human colleagues available for more complex queries.

Again we will introduce this innovation carefully and put a lot of emphasis on the feedback of our teams and customers. Social media is all about the right spirit. We would never put our culture and team spirit at risk as the loss of it would immediatly eat up any earned efficiency.



KEEPING THE **HUMAN** TOUCH

While automation may save time and money when resolving customer queries, there will always be complex queries that robotics are not yet skilled or emotionally intelligent enough to answer in a personal manner that satisfies the customer. To cater to this, businesses must continue to provide the option for customers to contact a human agent if they so require. Here, our experts offer an insight into their thoughts and experience of stiking this balance.



ONNO, DEUTSCHE TELEKOM

"Call is still our preferred channel and the one we invest in the most. I don't see Deutsche Telekom becoming a company without call service in the near future.

There is a fine line between success and failure when using automation within modern service operations. As emotions and empathy are still key for superior customer service we aim to use robotics as a synergetic add-on. We don't want customers to feel that bots keep them from getting to the right person to help them."



CLAUDIA, IFS

"Customers will self-serve whenever given the opportunity and if the experience makes it worthwhile to do so. This should never be a cue for organisations to remove channels or use chat bots to replace people. Use your self-service portal to fill gaps for intuitive resolutions but always provide customers with a means to contact someone.

People want to do business with people, so the resources freed through the use of technol-ogy should be used on a proactive basis to service exceptional issues. This helps the business gain insight into other areas or processes that could be changed to improve the customer experience. Self-service data provides half the picture when it comes to how easy you are making it for custom-ers to do business with you but it's real-time interactions that provide information on an ongoing basis that help you to continually improve your service."



JAMES, ARGOS

"Human interaction still has an incredibly important role for us, because our businesses are offering more complex products and services upfront and **certain challenges demand emotional intelligence and human interaction to resolve them**. Therefore, whilst we may be getting rid of some contact through the bot, at the same time we're growing our complex contact, and home delivery propositions."



OKE, BOUGHT BY MANY

"You've always got to give customers the ability to bounce out of the channel they are on. I would love customers to never need to call us because that means we have designed a product clear enough to understand or a website that is clear enough to find the answers. However, that's not always the case. If the answers aren't on the website customers can come to us on chat, and if that doesn't work for them then they can call us. **The key is for a customer to easily find what they need**, but if they're struggling, to be able to bounce out to a channel that helps them."



TAKE ACTION

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER AHEAD OF YOUR CHATBOT IMPLEMENTATION

The key to finding balance between the implementation of chat bot technology while still providing the option for human interaction is to focus on the purpose behind your bot solutions. Below are three types of questions to ask continously on your chat bot implementation journey.

1

DETERMINE YOUR BUSINESS OBJECTIVE

Why are you automating? To maximise bot initiatives set clear, measurable objectives from the off to give your investments purpose. Will your bot reduce interaction volume? Customer effort? Optimise channel utilisation? Drive revenue?

2

FOCUS ON EXECUTION

How are you going to implement your bot to achieve key objectives? Decipher which of your goals are most important - what about the customer or agent experience would most immediately benefit?

3

IDENITIFY THE TOOL YOU WILL USE YOUR CHAT BOT FOR

What type of bot is best suited for the method? What qualities should it have? Do you want your bot to engage in meaningful two-way conversations, or will it be used transactionally to fulfil a set task?