

EBOOK

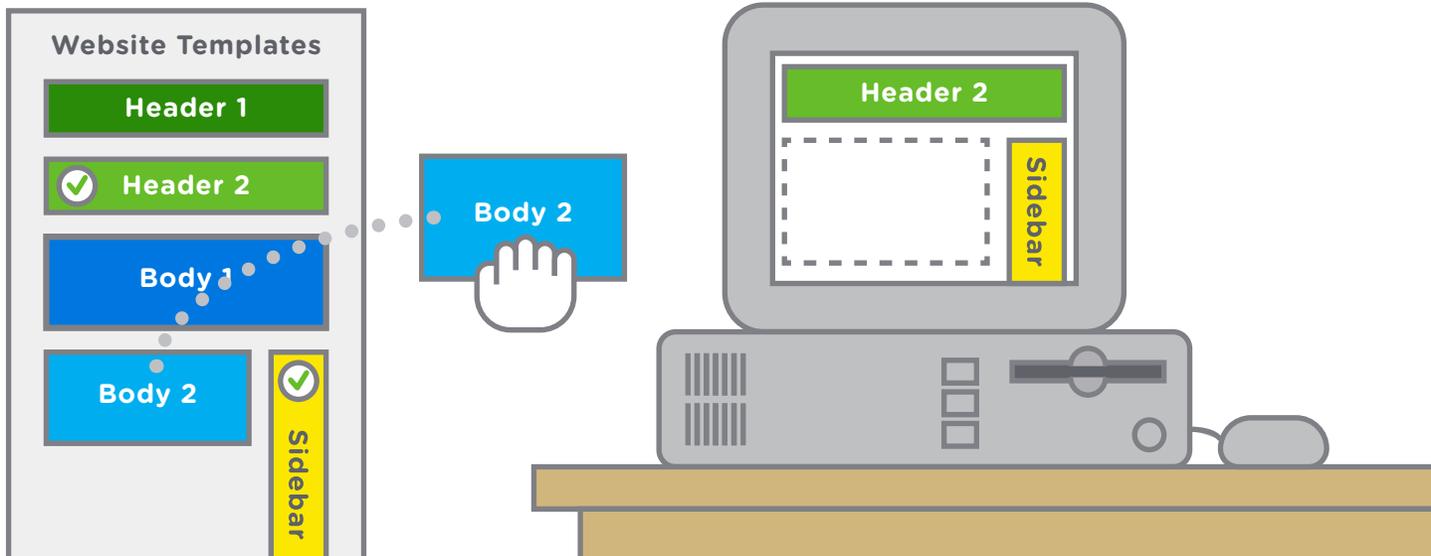
THE INTERACTIONS WAY: Partner with the Best

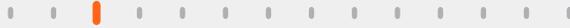




INTRODUCTION

About a decade ago, build-it-yourself websites entered the market. For the first time, people with small businesses or who didn't have the budget to build a sophisticated website could create their own corner of the internet with easy, drag-and-drop templates. Almost anyone could build a functional, good-enough-quality page to increase their exposure and sales.

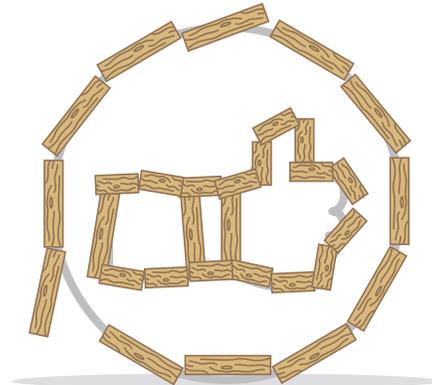


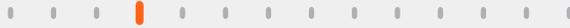


When these platforms hit the market, although less expensive and more user-friendly than working with a design team and coder, we did not see the world's leading brands abandon their existing methods and move to a DIY platform. Why would they? **The user-friendliness of a DIY platform does not translate to a better customer experience, especially for large brands that need more expertise, customization, and scalability.**



Conversational AI platforms are no different. A few years ago, DIY Conversational AI applications began sprouting up, touting that even non-technical users could build conversation flows. While this was great news for companies who did not need a sophisticated platform or have the budget for a team of designers and developers, the promise to simplicity of these platforms does not translate into the best customer experience.

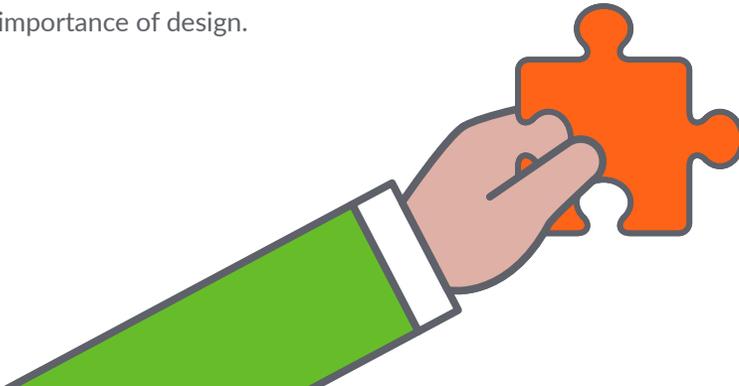


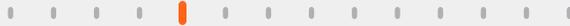


WHAT ARE DIY PLATFORMS MISSING?

You can have the most sophisticated technology, but if it isn't used properly, the results will be subpar. That's where design comes into play. Conversation and voice designers are essential for leveraging a Conversational AI platform to create transformational experiences. **DIY platforms are missing the deep design expertise needed to build proper engagement and conversation flows.** Partnering with a Managed Service vendor who offers the experience and expertise of building such experiences, on the other hand, leads to better customer experiences by understanding and delivering on the importance of design.

DIY platforms are catered towards app developers, who may be great at developing complex apps but may not have any expertise on how to build natural, human-centric conversations. Managed services vendors, on the contrary, employ experts who have years of experience in conversational design.



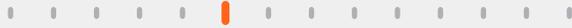


So, we know that Conversational AI needs a strong design foundation for customer experience to truly shine. At Interactions, we take Conversational AI design and delivery to the next level with The Interactions Way. Created with more than 15 years of experience of working with the world's leading enterprises, this approach takes into account the best practices of conversation and engagement so that our Intelligent Virtual Assistant delivers positive experiences, every time.

To make human-to-technology interactions as effortless and natural as possible, we always adhere to the basic principles of conversation and engagement when designing customer service applications. We've put together a few of these best practices that we use in our method to give you a taste of the importance of design.

WHAT IS THE INTERACTIONS WAY?

At the heart of delivering amazing customer experiences is The Interactions WaySM, our design and delivery managed service approach that builds on the fundamental principles of conversation and engagement and our best practices. The Interactions Way encompasses the process by which we define, design, deploy, measure, continuously improve, and certify our IVA experiences into enterprise customer service ecosystems. It ensures that we continuously deliver the results we promise and provide our clients with the most effortless and productive conversational application for their end customers. To learn more about The Interactions Way, [contact our sales team](#).



Offer the ability to communicate naturally

Much of the frustration that comes with automated systems stems from making customers conform to the technology by limiting the words one can use or making the customer use “robot speak.” For an effortless interaction, customers should be able to communicate naturally and not be constrained by technology limitations. For example, if a customer says "I want to make a payment of \$25," the application should understand both the intent of making a payment and the amount of \$25. The application should not ignore any information provided by the customer.



Uh huh.

?



Sure.

??



YEP.

???



YES!!

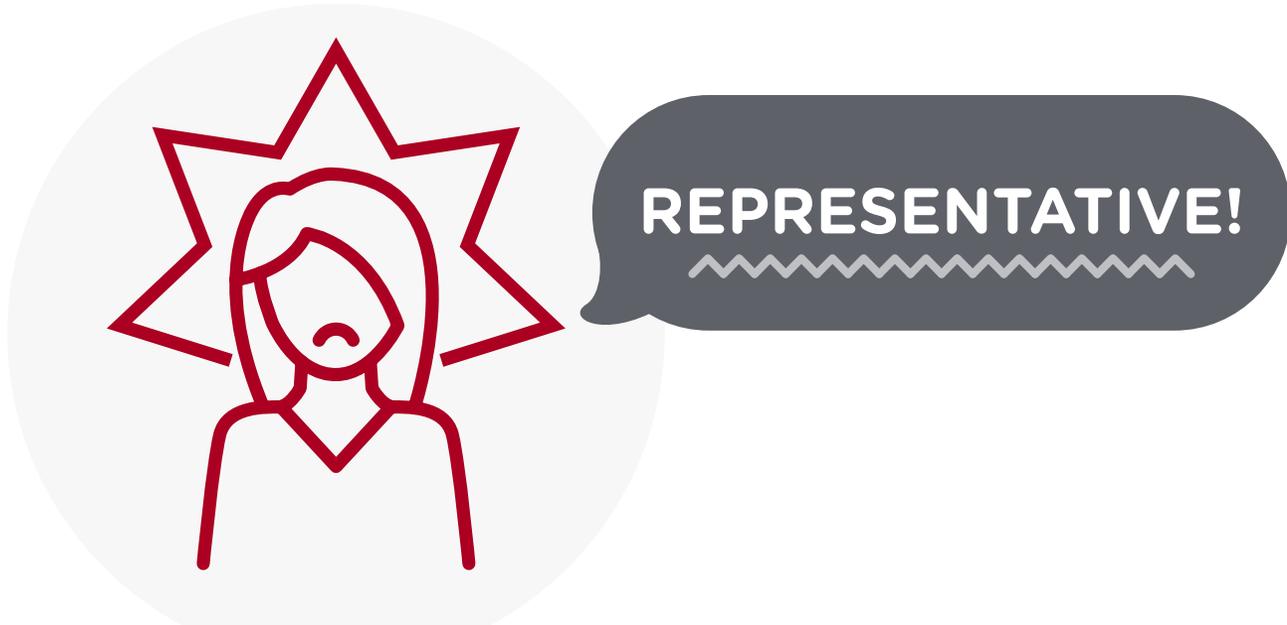
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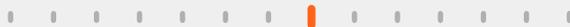




Allow the customer to be in control of the interaction

Just as the customer is always right, the customer should always be in control of the conversation. The technology should be designed to conform to what the human is saying, opposite of frustrating automated systems mentioned previously that require the human to conform to the technology.

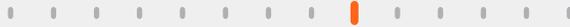




Don't make the customer do the work

The virtual assistant should use any and all data associated with the customer—e.g. the number dialed, date/time of the interaction, the caller ID (ANI)—to provide an amazing customer experience. Here are some examples:

-  Draw conclusions according to business rules.
-  Perform work with the system and only ask questions of the customer that are needed, reducing the cognitive load for the customer.
-  Don't confirm data provided that can be validated against a data system. Instead of "I heard that as 585-232-2342," have the dialog look up the data using a data source.
-  If you don't get a match on the data provided in conversation, don't ask if the virtual assistant got it right. Simply acknowledge that a match was not found and ask to try one more time.
-  If possible, access back office look-ups in the background (asynchronously) so that the user doesn't have to wait for the system to respond.



Provide simple, accurate, up-to-date information

There's nothing more detrimental to the confidence of an application than when it gives inaccurate or outdated information. When the application asks questions and communicates information, it should use simple everyday language, and not industry-specific jargon.

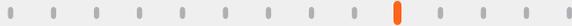
To design for a level of simple, everyday communication we place ourselves in the customer's shoes, instead of simply following client Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). We have found that client SMEs may or may not have a clear picture of what is considered jargon since they work in the industry and use the associated language every day.

RENÉE CASTILLO

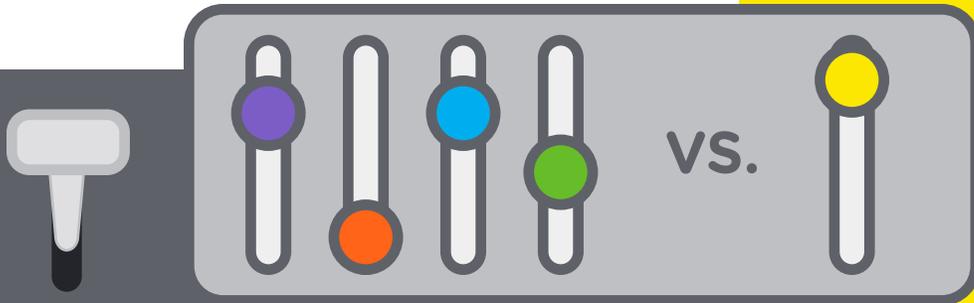
Sr. Director, Customer Strategy Integration
SRP



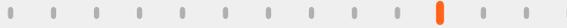
“Working with Interactions enabled us to develop a best-in-class, flexible conversational automated care solution that has had a transformative effect on the way we interact with our customers.”



While these best practices are utilized in every application that we build, there are certain aspects of a customer experience that need to be specific to each business. That's where our method really excels. With a deep study of intent, customer data, personas, and business rules that are specific to your business, we are able to create conversation flows that deliver exceptional, cohesive experiences that are aligned with your brand.



Because DIY platforms are created to be universally accessible, they can fall short when it comes to optimizing the application for your business. Customer experience is not one-size-fits-all.



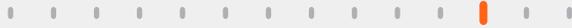
THE INTERACTIONS WAY



Interactions worked closely with us from the start to ensure a successful implementation.



- DARCY DALE, RESOURCE MANAGER, WESTAR ENERGY



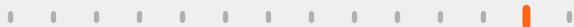
CONCLUSION

Working with an experienced partner will deliver the most impactful results for your business. While a DIY solution provides advantages to smaller businesses without the resources or needs of a large enterprise, for truly transformational experiences at scale, businesses should look for proven managed service providers.



“We’ve been through a lot of challenging times where a weak partnership with Interactions wouldn’t have lasted. Like any relationship, it’s tested through the good times and bad; today, we’re as strong as we’ve ever been with Interactions.”

- MARTY SARIM, CEO, ERC



About Interactions

Interactions provides Intelligent Virtual Assistants that seamlessly assimilate Conversational AI and human understanding to enable businesses to engage with their customers in highly productive and satisfying conversations. With flexible products and solutions designed to meet the growing demand for unified, omnichannel customer care, Interactions is delivering unprecedented improvements in the customer experience and significant cost savings for some of the largest brands in the world. Founded in 2004, Interactions is headquartered in Franklin, Massachusetts with additional offices worldwide.

For more information about Interactions, contact us:

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