



Conversational AI Buyer's Guide

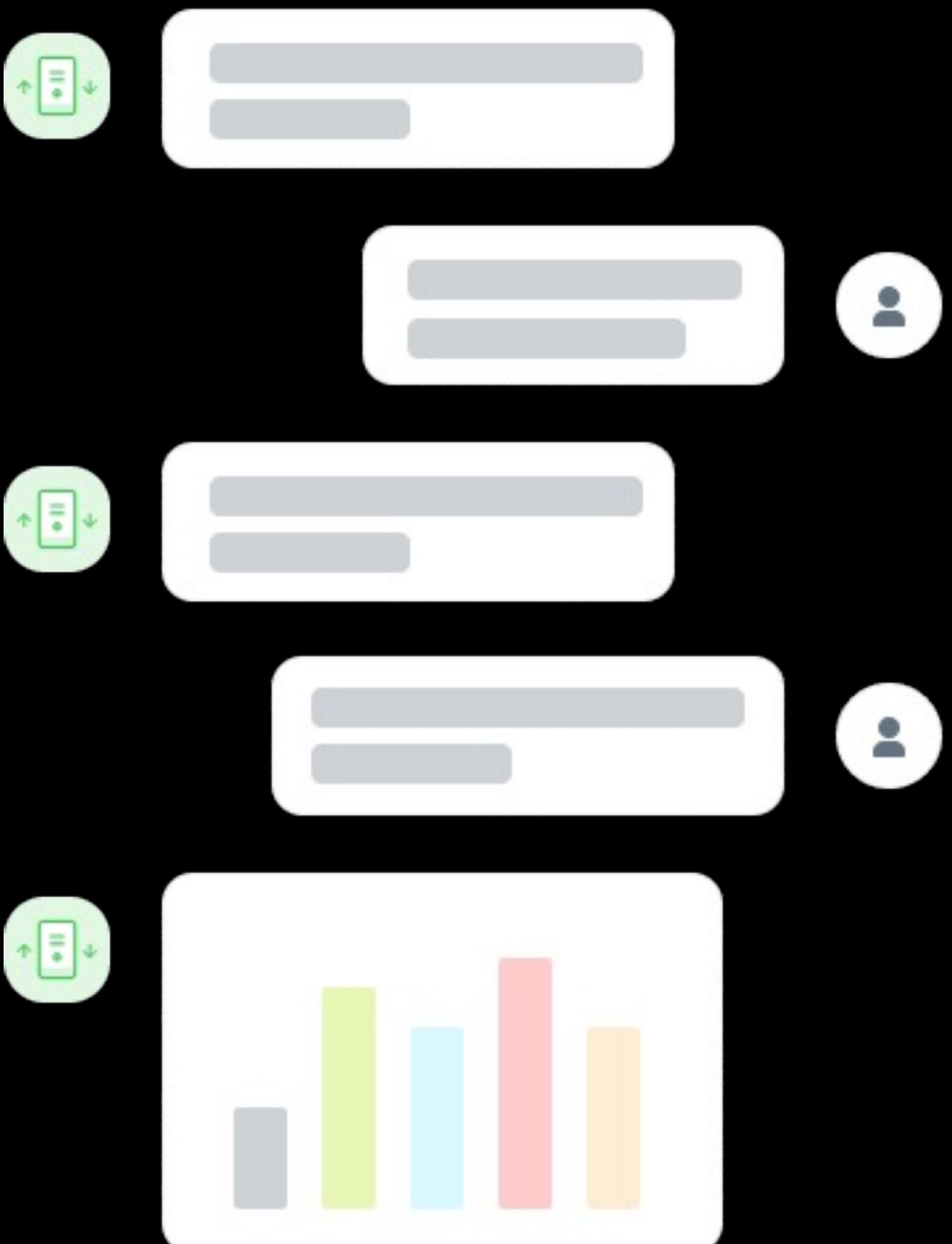


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“[Krista] is putting forward an innovative approach to machine learning that allows clients to use their data models and helps integrate them into production. Intuitive NLU and low-code applications reduce the need for coding and specialist knowledge. The ambition is to make automation a conversation between people and systems, for instance, personifying the backend system.”

Tom Reuner, Senior Vice President at HFS research



Introduction

Conversational AI (CAI) is a form of artificial intelligence that allows humans to communicate with computers in a natural way, using everyday language. This type of AI takes advantage of natural language processing (NLP) to understand human conversational patterns, as well as machine learning, which teaches computers to learn from data without being explicitly programmed.

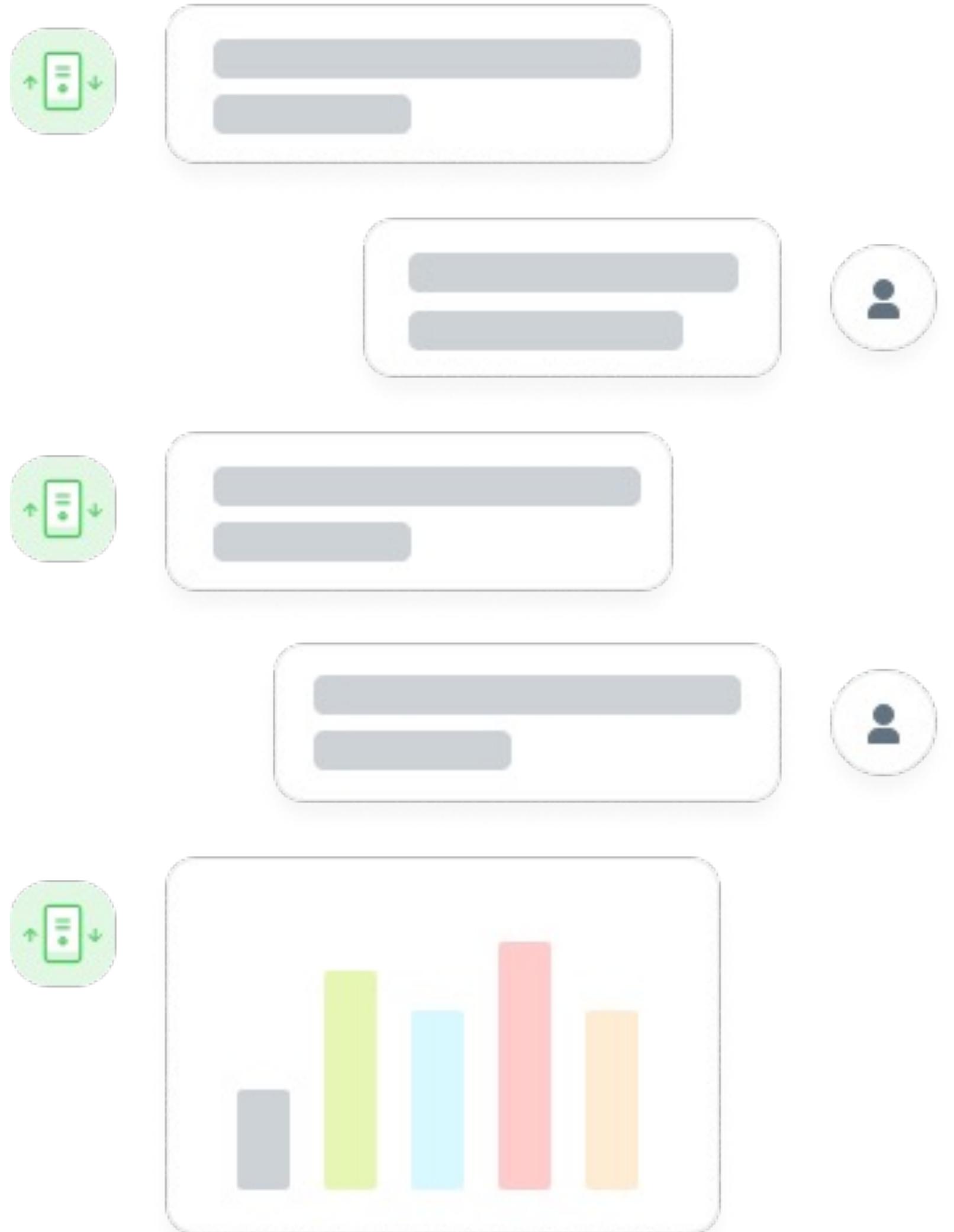
This combination of technologies allows businesses to solve many different problems for employees, including customer service interactions, employee service, and business operations like marketing, sales, IT, human resources, and more. For example, NLP can be used to automatically interpret and respond to customer questions in a chat interface, or it can be used to help employees track their work hours and productivity.

The potential for conversational AI is huge, and it is changing the way people interact with technology at work. However, only one CAI product in this study is capable of widely transforming the way employees consume and interact with technology. Most platforms in this study are too tactical and narrowly scoped and are better used for smaller point and departmental projects.

Conversational AI can be used in many different ways to improve employee and customer experiences. The possibilities are endless and are only limited by your imagination. Here are a few use cases to initiate your thinking:

- **CAI improves customer experiences by providing conversational interfaces across disparate systems to find information, order products, or enhance customer service.**
- **CAI can provide virtual assistants to help simplify how employees simultaneously find information from different systems as part of their jobs.**
- **CAI can help employees with onboarding and human resource needs by orchestrating workflows as part of the hiring process or removing access when employees leave.**

If you're thinking about adding Conversational AI to your business, this guide will help you understand the different vendors and solutions available, as well as the key considerations for choosing a solution that's right for you.



The Conversational AI Market

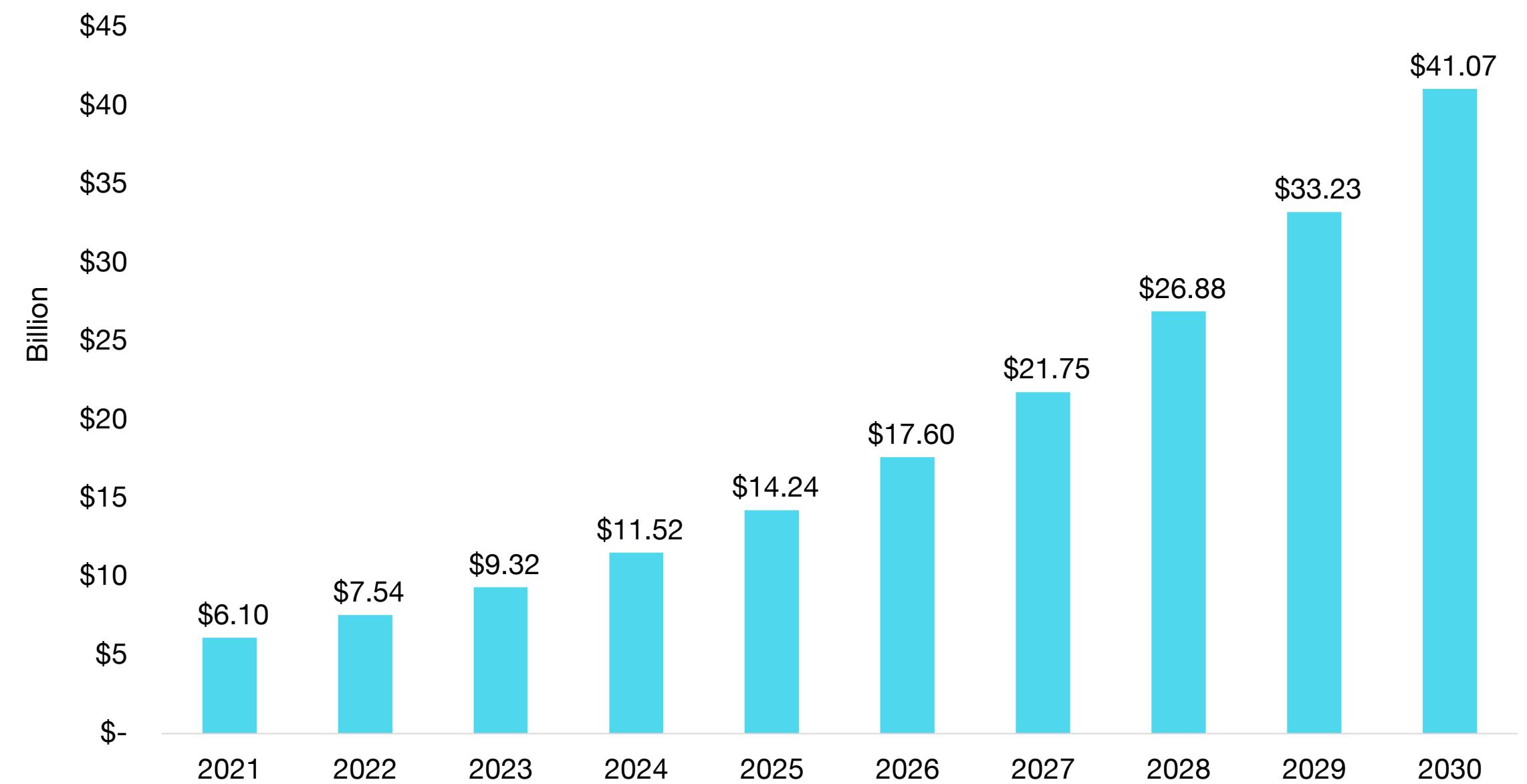
The Conversational AI Market

The conversational AI market is now in high gear, and a growing landscape of platform vendors is competing to serve companies with natural language processing. According to a recent study by Grand View Research, Inc., the worldwide conversational AI market is anticipated to reach \$41.39 billion in 2030, growing at a CAGR of 23.6 percent from 2022 until 2030.

Even though some business executives still think of conversational AI in terms of its earliest use cases in customer service, interrelated developments have fueled the market:

- Underlying technologies matured, and additional related technologies have emerged;
- Innovative solution vendors started incorporating enterprise-level capabilities; and
- Corporations' appetite for digitalization has continued to accelerate.

As a result, companies in almost all industries are looking at ways to use Conversational AI to support business objectives. Professionals from nearly every discipline across the business are now eagerly looking to Conversational AI to solve problems: customer service interactions, employee service, and business operations like marketing, sales, IT, human resources, and more.



Typical Conversational AI Use Cases

Using Conversational AI to Solve Real-World Problems

Early conversational AI tools helped companies put rudimentary voice response systems in place, while later solutions enabled first gen chatbots. Buyers shouldn't consider conversational AI "just" a limited-scope chatbot or binary voice response system. Conversational AI addresses enterprise needs by targeting numerous use cases, both conversation modalities (spoken and written), assorted channels and platforms, and the ability to operationalize enterprise-wide. In the hands of a citizen developer, conversational AI can address many ongoing challenges throughout the breadth of industries and business functions:

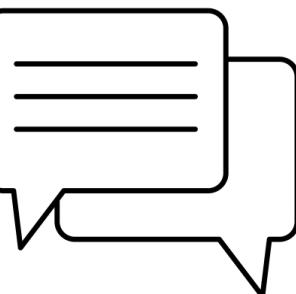
- Improve customer service and sales delivery
- Automate IT, quality, health, and safety incident management
- Automate business processes for contact centers, sales, recruiting, training, and employee management
- Examine, review, validate, and summarize documents
- Identify and resolve issues
- Orchestrate and optimize business outcomes

One Platform, Countless Use Cases

In today's digitally enabled world, new and innovative use cases for conversational AI emerge almost daily. A word of caution to the business user evaluating platforms. Take the time to consider use cases beyond the immediate problem at hand. There are likely many more ways the organization can put the system to work, even if those projects are months into the future. Limiting potential or future use cases with narrow capabilities will reduce ROI.

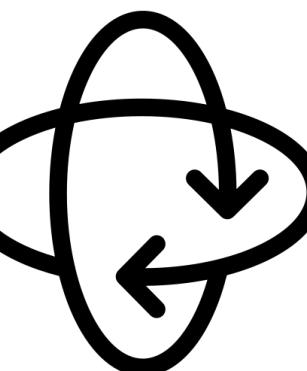
For example, if the customer service department is considering conversational AI to automate some of its processes, could the company's HR group also leverage the platform? Could it use the system to create a more engaging onboarding process with self-service elements? Certainly, making the platform widely accessible can compound the value it delivers.

Consider the possibilities for your department and processes that span beyond your purview. One conversational AI platform could offer countless use cases and it's best to look at how the technology can help automate processes other than your primary use case.



Agent "Assistants"

CAI removes complexity for agents by providing chat-like natural language understanding interfaces.



360-Degree View of the Customer

CAI chat interfaces provide personalized support and services based on customer profiles and needs during their journey.



Omnichannel Support

CAI can enable omnichannel amongst your people, apps, customers, and AI.



Salesforce Automation

CAI can improve data updates and data quality to eliminate CRM app training and provide accurate sales and promotional planning.

Selection Criteria

Solution Selection Criteria

The conversational AI competitive landscape ranges from one-off, limited-scope applications to highly robust platforms worthy of global enterprises with vast resources. At a minimum, a conversational AI platform is software to design, build, implement, manage, and support multiple use cases of conversational automation that various roles can use throughout the company.

We can loosely group conversational AI functions and capabilities into three categories: linguistic and situational context, automation, and architecture. Buyers will most certainly discover features that don't fall neatly into one of these buckets; we present them only to simplify confusing concepts.

Linguistic and situational context

These capabilities enable conversation, search, text analytics, natural language generation, translation, text summarization, information graph interpretations, and similar activities. They provide language and context support for a lifelike experience. They include:

- Natural language processing (NLP)
- Utterances
- Sentiment

Automation

Process automation is an important element of conversational AI, particularly within a conversation workflow. These capabilities enable users to mine and author business processes, make decisions, and participate in dialogues in a single environment. They include:

- Long-running stateful conversations
- Orchestrating multi-step processes containing people and systems in a single conversational workflow
- AI decision support

Architecture

System and platform architecture is important for any software application, but when it comes to conversational AI, it's a critical component for the suitability, versatility, and long-term value. These elements enable experiences across many channels, reusability of language modeling efforts, and shared information architecture across use cases. Most importantly, these capabilities eliminate technical barriers and empower citizen developers.

- Omnichannel support
- Low-code, no-code platform
- Enterprise data security
- Integration platform as a service (iPaaS)

Solution Selection Best Practices

Before making up a short list of vendors or even watching software demos, it's helpful to level-set and understand the intended purpose of each function. As you explore them, evaluate the importance or impact of each one against your company's needs. Organizations with a rigorous solution selection process sometimes create a weighted matrix to prioritize requirements.

This buyer's guide can help you understand the conversational AI solution landscape and take the first steps toward evaluating vendors and platforms. While it's not a replacement for due diligence, it might help you weed out solutions that fall short of your company's needs and expectations.

How to Use this Guide

All entries in this conversational AI buyer's guide represent the opinions and summaries of information collected across publicly available sources. We strive to be as objective as possible, but similar to other firms, our publications may contain editorial biases.

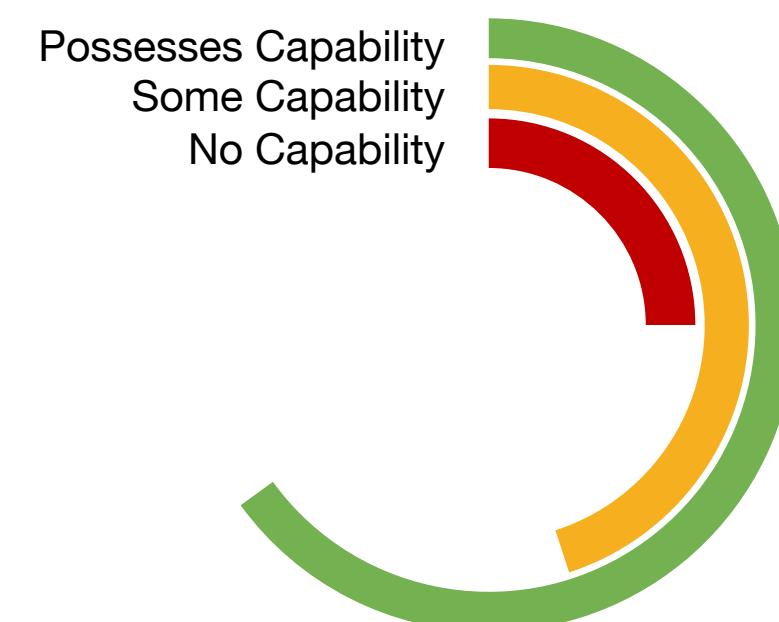
Overall, we are informing you on how each of these conversational AI platforms, products and services rate in the following areas:

- **Cultural fit with existing employees** - Each platform is rated on whether or not it can easily support your citizen developer programs.
- **AI Capabilities** - Each platform is rated on its AI support. AI support is NLP, automated utterances and adjacent terms, sentiment, and whether or not it guides employees with automated decision support via machine learning models.
- **User Experience** - Each platform is rated on how easily the product integrates with existing channels and how it integrates people, apps, and AI into business processes.

Rating and Scoring

Each vendor platform is individually rated on the cultural fit, AI, user experience, and the following ten capabilities. For each capability, the vendor is rated on three-tier rating criteria. The visualizations help provide a high-level view at a glance:

- **Green** - The vendor possesses this capability and is on par with other vendors in this guide
- **Orange** - The vendor provides some capability in this area and may need additional professional services or partner technology to fulfill the requirement
- **Red** - The vendor does not possess this capability



Vendor Platforms and Vendor Names

The vendor platforms in this guide have been obfuscated to hide their identities. Each vendor is assigned a name from the phonetic alphabet (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, etc.) Names were randomly chosen and do not represent any alphabetization or similar naming conventions based on actual vendor names. If you would like to learn which vendors are in the report, you can contact us to obtain the decryption key.

Conversational AI Capabilities

Beyond typical software purchase considerations, companies should examine requirements for conversational AI at a granular level. Given the rate of acceleration and continued innovation across the market, decision-makers need to understand the features and capabilities required for effective conversational AI. Functionality considered “essential” for conversational AI spans ten foundational criteria:

Omnichannel Support

Omnichannel support is an approach or strategy to provide seamless engagement across many distinct channels. Depending on the use cases a company intends to apply, the solution may need to support web chat, Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, SMS, email, Slack, Teams, and many others. When omnichannel support is present, it should be intentionally integrated, retain important data across various channels and touchpoints, and ensure a consistent experience across those channels. If a software vendor isn't transparent about which channels it supports natively or via out-of-the-box integrations, buyers should assume that omnichannel support is deficient or absent. The same is true if the platform only supports chatbot interfaces.

AI Decision Support

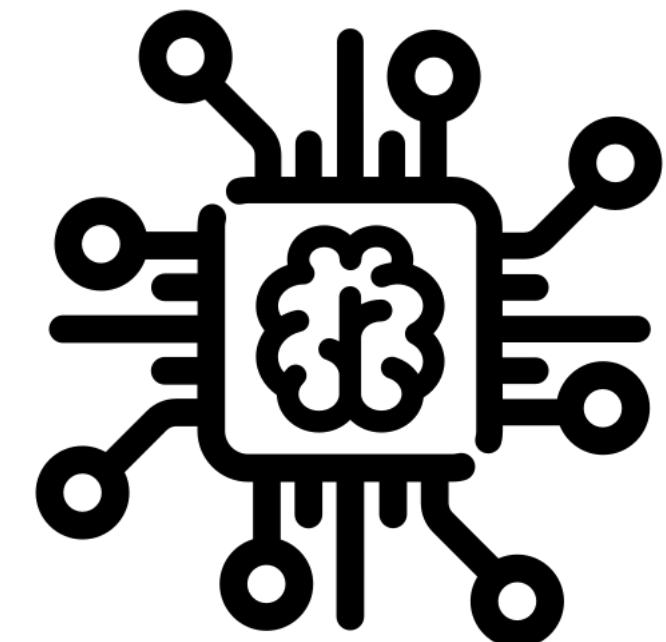
AI decision support is a category of AI and means native AI capabilities to help employees make decisions. The system uses past interactions and machine learning models to offer one or more paths for the current interaction that will result in an optimal outcome so workers can perform a process.

Natural Language Processing (NLP)

NLP is a category of AI that allows the system to understand human text and speech regardless of the communication channel – email, text message, social media, audio, and more.

Utterances Support

When present, utterances support is native to the application and understands intent in an automated fashion. For example, a bank's conversational AI might receive one customer's input as “I lost my card” and another as “my card is missing.” A system with utterances support would understand that these inputs are contextually the same: the customer's card is gone. Utterances support can range from weak (the need for developers to manually enter adjacent keywords) to robust (combining templates, developer input, and self-learning models).



Conversational AI Capabilities

Sentiment

Sentiment is a subset of NLP that allows the system to understand if the emotion is positive, negative, or neutral. If the system understands the sentiment, it can tell if the person is angry, happy, or just ok (neutral).

Add Human in the Loop, Secondary Conversations, or Automations in a Workflow

The system can orchestrate multi-step processes containing people and systems in a single conversational workflow and add secondary or tertiary humans in the loop as the need arises. A worker inside a workflow can manually add another human in the loop to append a conversation to gather additional support. Conferencing in additional people or automated workflows provides a continuous contextual customer experience for all participants. Supports Long-Running Stateful Conversations

A long-running stateful conversation is a multi-step interaction that doesn't produce an outcome instantly, goes from active to dormant (and dormant to active) as the interaction progresses, and has no time constraints. When the interaction meets a pre-defined condition, it comes back to life and continues until it reaches another dormant state, or the interaction reaches the end of the process. A solution that supports stateful conversations but has time constraints (usually minutes, hours, or a day) is not considered a long-running stateful conversation solution. One example is a company that has new employees complete a training program within two weeks of their start date. The long-running stateful conversation understands and senses as the employee completes each course in the program and provides prompts along the way.

Low-Code, No-Code Platform

A no-code platform lets anyone in the organization add value, regardless of technical skill level. This is a citizen developer who has subject expertise and can create business processes; a no-code platform lets them create, test, and implement effective conversational bots and assistants. Low-code solutions help democratize creating and editing automation by lowering technical skill requirements. Lowering technical skill requirements removes enterprise IT bottlenecks to enable businesses to innovate quickly. A low-code, no-code platform means the solution has tools to meet both types of users at their level of technical skill.

Enterprise Data Security

The system supports a modern enterprise security model with role-based permissions for the application and the data it uses. The platform should also allow developers to set permissions

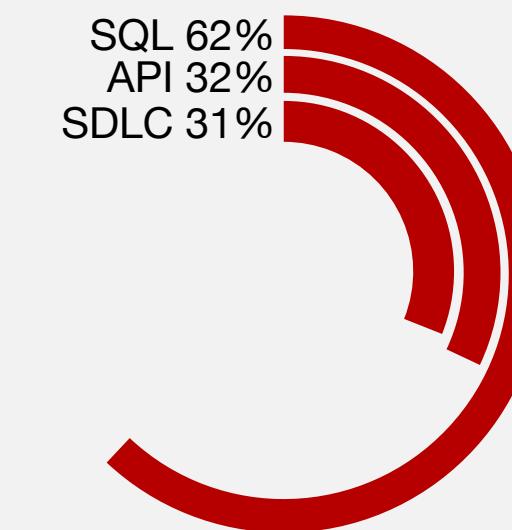
and data access for those who interact with conversational bots and assistants.

Integration Platform as a Service iPaaS

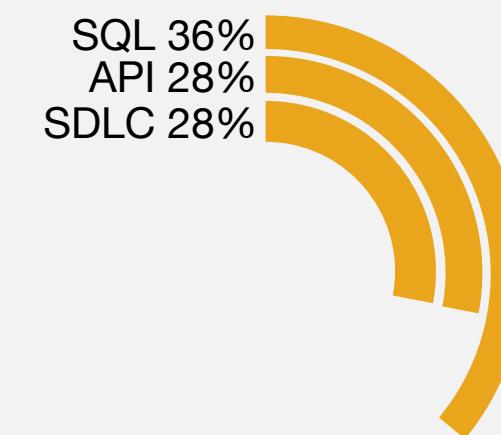
Integration-platform-as-a-service (iPaaS) natively standardizes how the platform integrates with other applications. An iPaaS removes business logic from integration technology so automations are flexible and malleable. It lets developers and non-technical users build integration flows with third-party systems in a no-code fashion without coding automation to each system every time.

Many Low Code Development Platforms Require Software Development and Process Skills

Application Developer

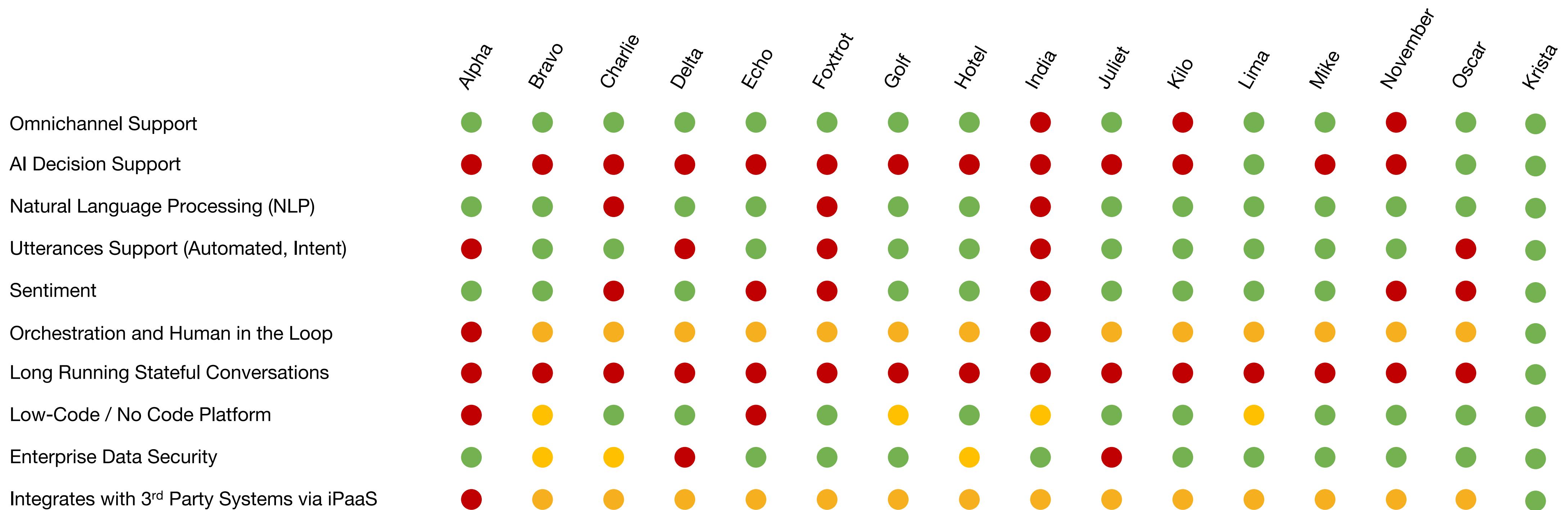


LCAP Developer



Source: Low Code Application Platforms Require Software Development Skills, Krista Software

Conversational AI Platform Comparisons



Conversational AI Platform - Alpha

This no-code platform is a series of integrated tools, products, and add-ons to build conversational UIs, virtual assistants, and process workflows. It has three separate but complimentary engines to establish a conversational AI lifecycle from concept, design, build, test, deploy, manage, and analysis. The vendor also provides guidance and processes to help users create chatbots or virtual assistants.

The vendor's products use natural language processing (NLP) and a visual drag-and-drop interface so the end-user can design conditional conversation paths. The platform provides a method to connect to external systems for data exchange but requires development skills. The system reportedly supports over 35 channels, and users can specify channel-specific responses, formatting, and authentication. The platform provides feedback as the user works with scenarios.

Despite being called a no-code platform, the interface lacks other platforms' intuitive scenario-creation and problem-solving capabilities. The data-lookup system is also less-than-adequate, further hindering the ability to build realistic bots and virtual assistants. The platform is void of the decision-support functionality required to create effective conversational bots and virtual assistants.

The vendor offers a handful of industry-specific and discipline-specific templates for virtual assistants (bank, healthcare, search, HR, IT). The templates are available as subscriptions at an additional cost; they were developed to accelerate adoption and shorten development time to create bots and virtual assistants. These are useful for end-users less comfortable with technology or development tools.

Omnichannel Support	●
AI Decision Support	●
Natural Language Processing (NLP)	●
Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)	●
Sentiment	●
Orchestration and Human in the Loop	●
Long Running Stateful Conversations	●
Low-Code / No Code Platform	●
Enterprise Data Security	●
Integrates with 3 rd Party Systems via iPaaS	

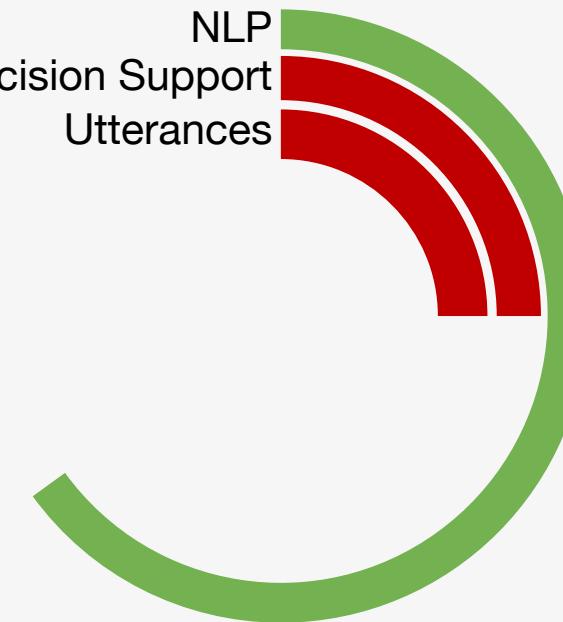
Fit for Citizen Developers

No Code Authoring
iPaaS
3rd Party Integrations



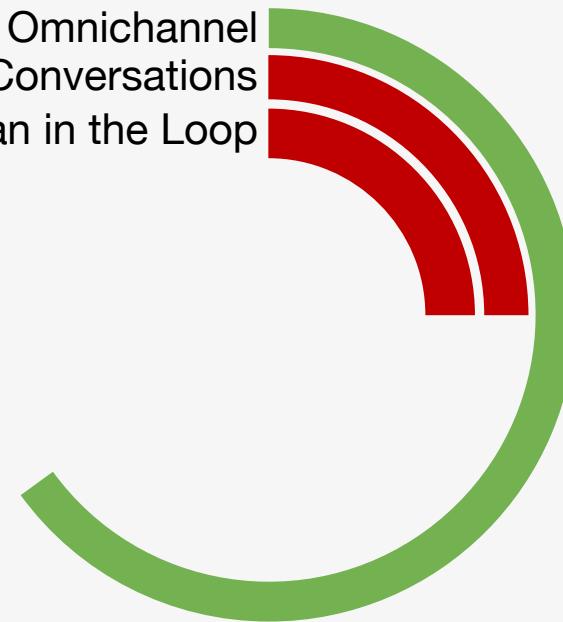
AI Capabilities

NLP
Decision Support
Utterances



User Experience

Omnichannel
Long-Running Conversations
Human in the Loop



Conversational AI Platform - Bravo

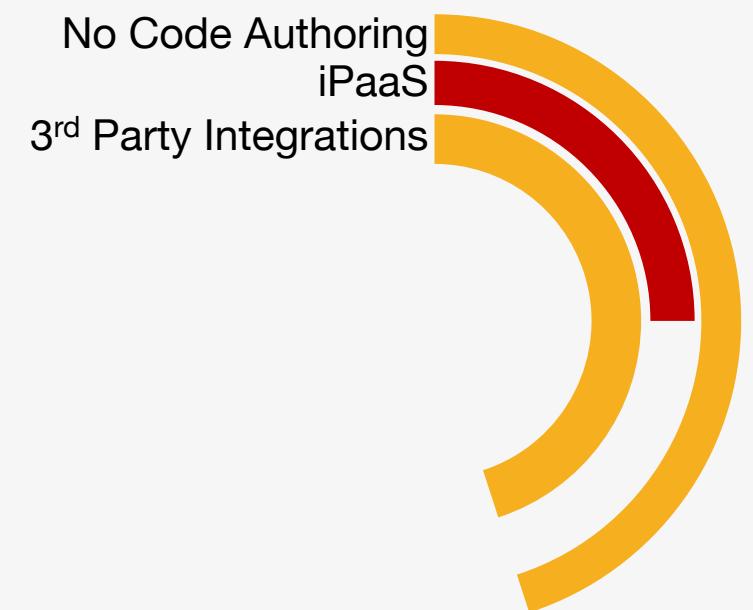
This conversational AI platform helps companies automate interactions between customers and employees. It's a lower-cost solution available in 135+ languages and integrates with 35+ channels. It focuses on customer engagement, customer support, HR, conversational commerce, and IT service management. The solution has pre-built templates for several industries and corporate functions, including workflows and integrations. The company has published many forward-looking use cases and has several industry-specific offerings with over 100 pre-built plug-in templates.

The solution has built-in natural language processing (NLP). The company does not explicitly promote its solution as "no-code," but its visual UI compares adequately against mid-market competitors. As a niche player, it performs better with text channels than telephony. This deficiency has slowed adoption in markets with heavy customer service demands.

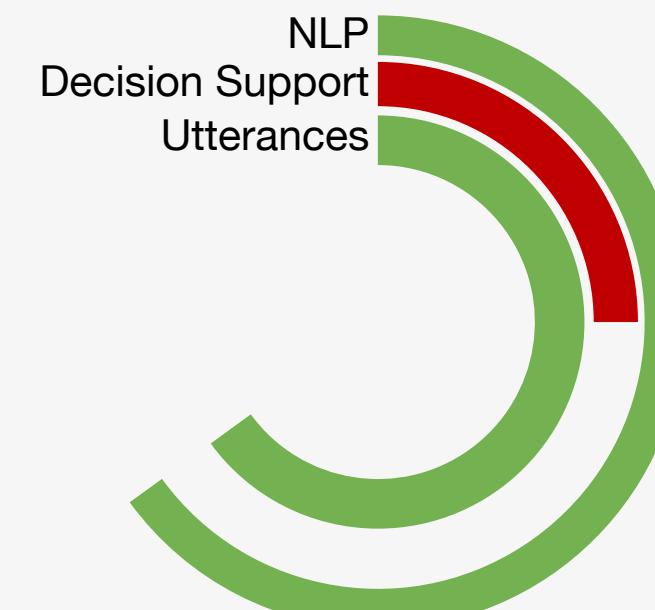
This solution is a feature-rich toolkit, but buyers might need to rely heavily on implementation firms for support. Critical shortfalls include no decision-making support for end users and no data lookup capability. At times chat notification lags which is a noticeable deficiency. The company promotes its pricing structure as "pay as you go," but it does not publish pricing on its website. If you're in a company or industry with security concerns, conduct due diligence and testing to ensure the platform meets specific requirements.

Omnichannel Support	●
AI Decision Support	●
Natural Language Processing (NLP)	●
Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)	●
Sentiment	●
Orchestration and Human in the Loop	●
Long Running Stateful Conversations	●
Low-Code / No Code Platform	●
Enterprise Data Security	●
Integrates with 3 rd Party Systems via iPaaS	●

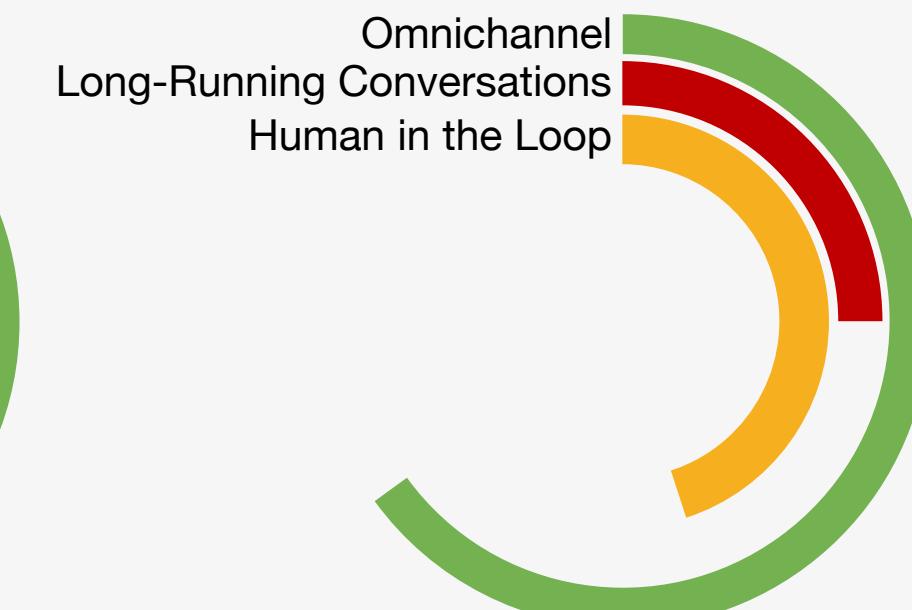
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AI Capabilities



User Experience



Conversational AI Platform - Charlie

This conversational AI and live chat platform has solid customer engagement and customer service features. It's one of the more comprehensive AI chatbot solutions on the market but also one of the most expensive. Analysts worry that the high price tag and long lag time for ROI make it impractical for all but those with bottomless pockets. The solution offers an omnichannel, multi-lingual app to enhance the vendor's many other products and tools. While not primarily a conversational AI platform vendor, the company is working to integrate the solution seamlessly with its other products.

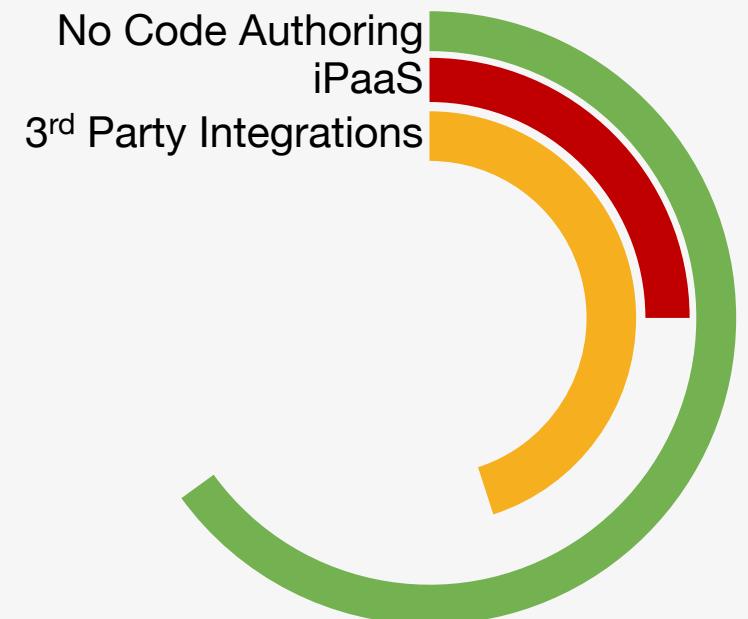
The vendor did not develop the platform in-house – it became part of this global tech company's portfolio through acquisition. Before the acquisition, the vendor had deep penetration across markets and customer service-centric industries, particularly digital brands. This should have made it easy to expand its conversational AI solution footprint across existing markets and customers. However, adoption has lagged as even existing customers have pursued lower-cost, faster time-to-value options.

The vendor says voice assistant is a strength, but references, reviewers, and analysts find it lacking. Out-of-the-box vertical industry templates are notably absent. A minor nuisance is the inability to configure the platform UI experience, which even many of the world's lightest applications offer today. Security could be somewhat of a concern, so prospective buyers should conduct due diligence.

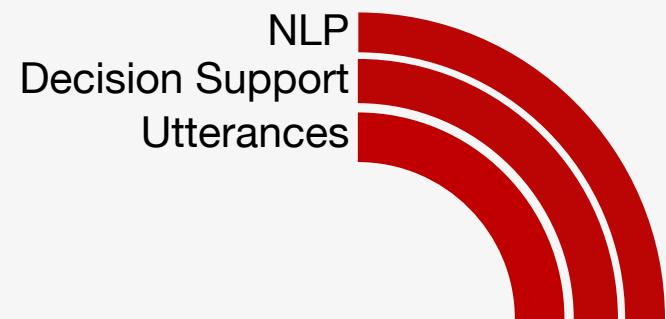
One essential feature for every contender is notably missing: natural language processing (NLP). The solution does offer the capability to adjust chatbots with zero code, but creating models is cumbersome and time-consuming. It takes a long time for the system to ingest and understand the input then it's a painstaking process to create scenarios. The vendor's customer success team is highly rated, especially for conversational AI deployments that need a lot of customization for the industry or use case. Companies that need a quick-start approach for conversational AI and virtual assistants should look elsewhere.

- Omnichannel Support
- AI Decision Support
- Natural Language Processing (NLP)
- Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)
- Sentiment
- Orchestration and Human in the Loop
- Long Running Stateful Conversations
- Low-Code / No Code Platform
- Enterprise Data Security
- Integrates with 3rd Party Systems via iPaaS

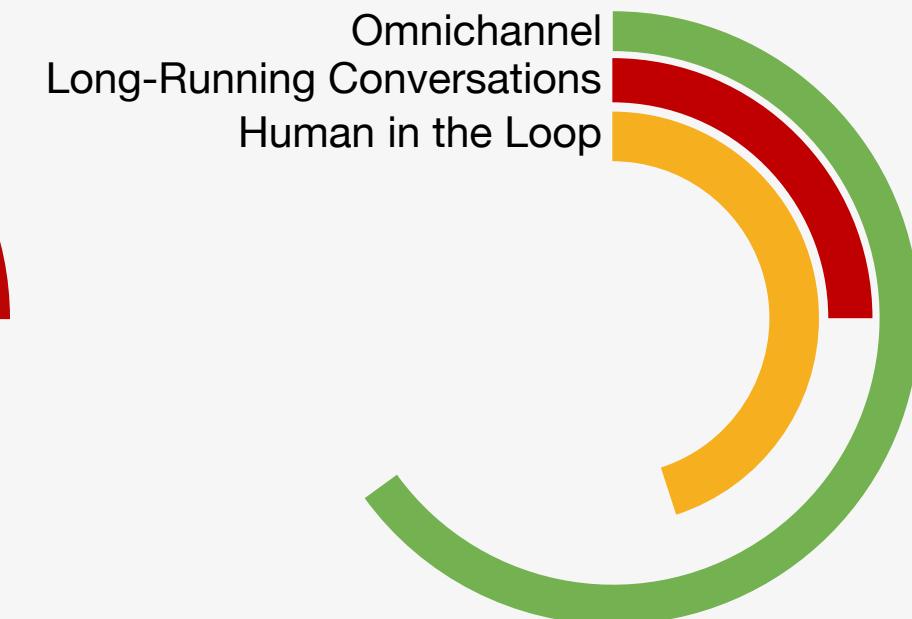
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AI Capabilities



User Experience



Conversational AI Platform - Delta

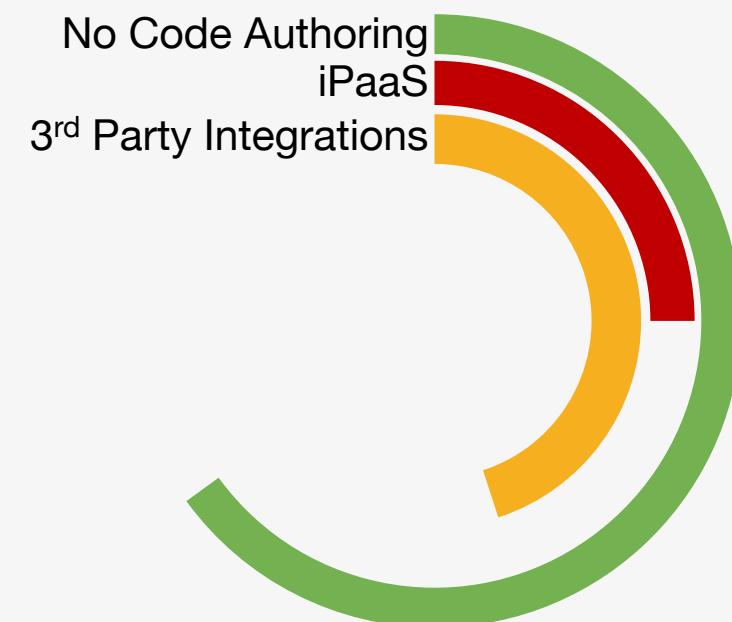
This conversational AI and virtual assistant application is an affordable omnichannel offering for voice and digital. End users report a seamless, human-like conversational experience for self-service. The market doesn't consider this a platform but rather a collection of lightweight apps for voice, chat, authentication, and analytics.

This contender has focused thus far on contact centers and digital engagement for customer service operations. Deployments have spanned mid-size and large-scale customer service operations. The company offers extensive out-of-the-box templates for tasks that customers can use with their cloud or on-premise deployment. These templates are available at no additional cost and are reusable and customizable.

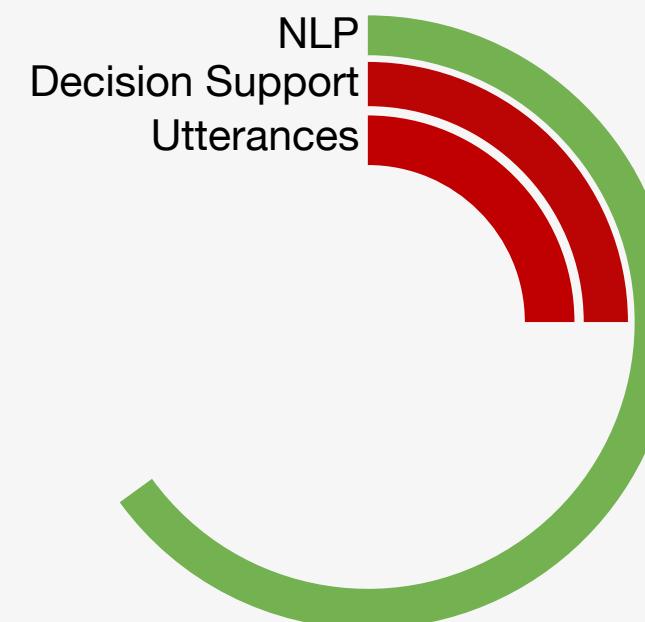
While deployments span many industries, few use cases exist beyond customer service. As a boutique contender, it lacks the market presence and brand recognition enjoyed by other companies. This is a multi-lingual solution but lacks agent-assist – considered a foundational capability for conversational AI. Natural language processing (NLP), no-code development, and AI-based decision support are notably absent. Potential buyers should conduct security due diligence to ensure it satisfies industry and enterprise needs.

Omnichannel Support	●
AI Decision Support	●
Natural Language Processing (NLP)	●
Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)	●
Sentiment	●
Orchestration and Human in the Loop	●
Long Running Stateful Conversations	●
Low-Code / No Code Platform	●
Enterprise Data Security	●
Integrates with 3 rd Party Systems via iPaaS	●

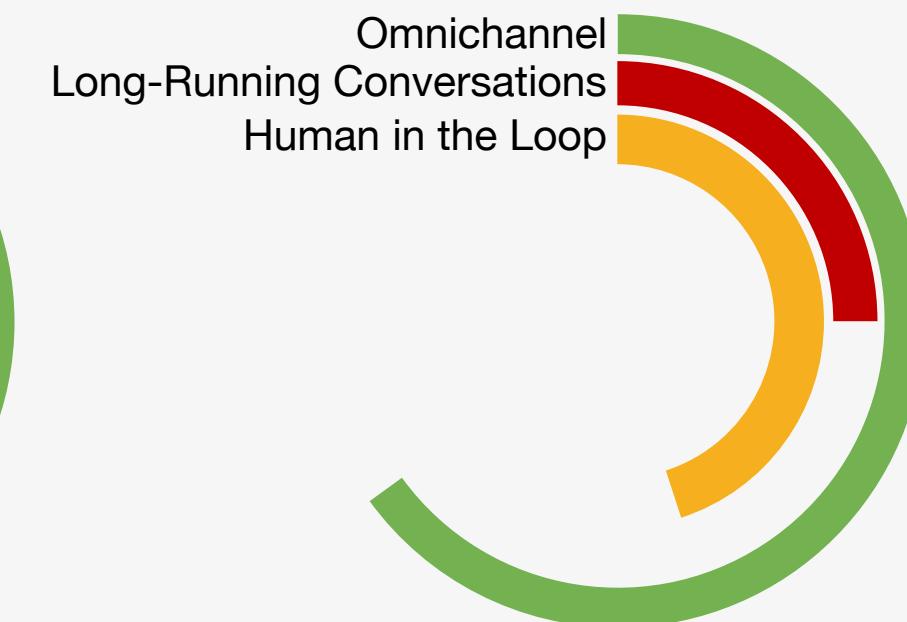
Fit for Citizen Developers



AI Capabilities



User Experience



Conversational AI Platform - Echo

This enterprise-level CCaaS is one of the most comprehensive solutions and includes a conversational AI app. The entire platform is geared toward contact centers. The platform integrates and automates chat, messaging, and voice with virtual and live agents. Customers can deploy this vendor's solutions, outsource the contact center function to the vendor, or use a blended model.

Since the vendor has extensive experience in contact center environments, its platform and professional services are specifically targeted at contact centers. The platform is an effective yet complex solution to deploy and integrate. The solution vendor is highly rated for its large professional services organization that helps clients develop and integrate solutions. That's a clear signal that the solution is hard to use and isn't fit for the citizen developer.

Companies can customize the conversational AI functionality to assist in multiple areas of customer service, from intent training to next-best-action flows. The solution includes an impressive intent discovery tool to upload recorded conversations. The application then applies learning algorithms to create insights about top intents and which processes to automate.

This vendor generates a high percentage of its revenue from professional services instead of tech solutions. That's a good reason why the company has avoided no-code conversational AI in its go-to-market strategy. Buyers eager to create and manage conversational AI and virtual assistants in-house will likely struggle with development and implementation. Most projects require data scientists and advanced designers to be successful. Companies and functions with use cases outside customer service may find other solutions more suitable to their needs. This solution has proven security measures but features around customer satisfaction, AI-based decision support, and data lookup are significant gaps.

Omnichannel Support



AI Decision Support



Natural Language Processing (NLP)



Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)



Sentiment



Orchestration and Human in the Loop



Long Running Stateful Conversations



Low-Code / No Code Platform



Enterprise Data Security

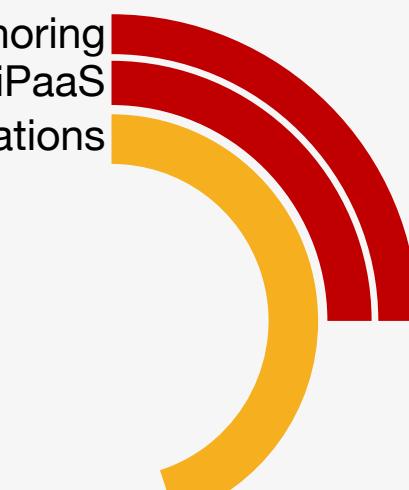


Integrates with 3rd Party Systems via iPaaS



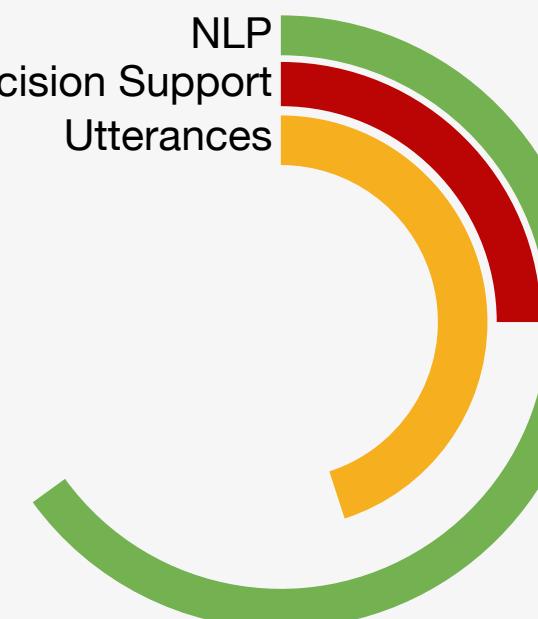
Fit for Citizen Developers

No Code Authoring
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3rd Party Integrations



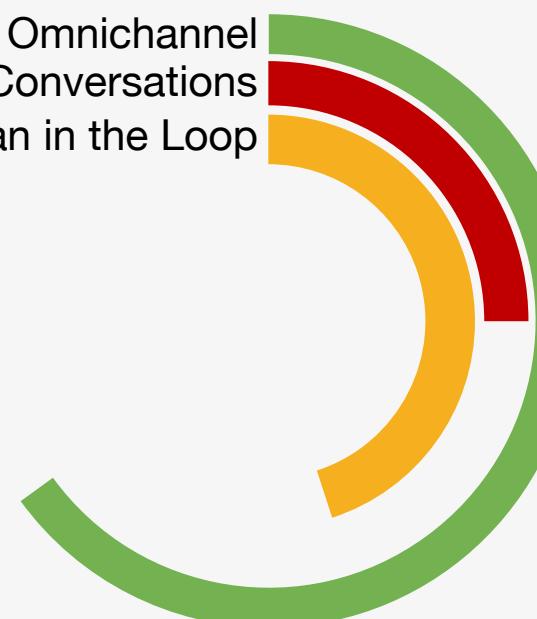
AI Capabilities

NLP
Decision Support
Utterances



User Experience

Omnichannel
Long-Running Conversations
Human in the Loop



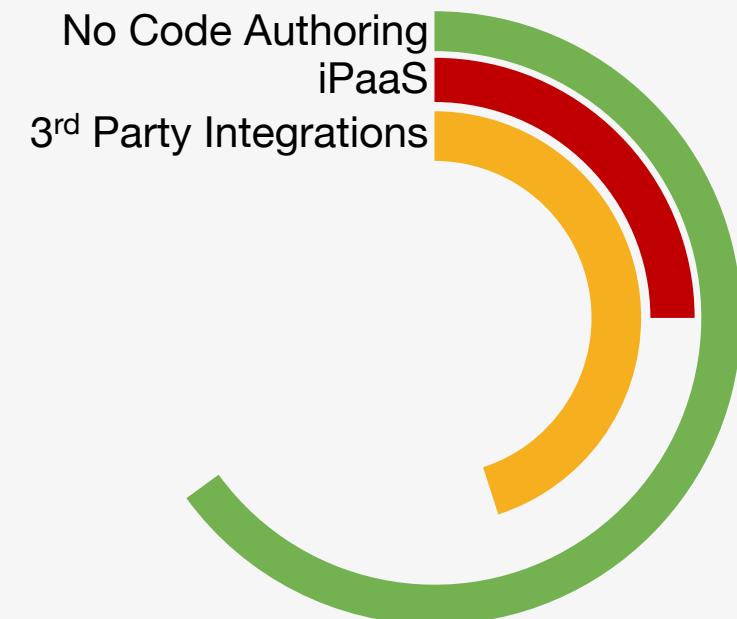
Conversational AI Platform - Foxtrot

This no-code conversational AI SaaS includes chat, virtual assistant, live agent assist, and voice. The live agent-assist feature offers suggestions based on other agents' previous interactions, but only from a limited number of days just prior to the current interaction. Voice functionality is weak compared to the competition. Despite claims about omnichannel chat, informational material only mentions WhatsApp, so it's unclear if the capability is present.

The market has found this app's security features lacking, with only basic encryption. Integration capability also falls short. The vendor has focused primarily on customer service and support and offers a quick, easy signup process. Teams with multi-lingual needs may find this app appealing. If the buyer has simple requirements and a tight budget, this solution might find its way to the shortlist.

Omnichannel Support	●
AI Decision Support	●
Natural Language Processing (NLP)	●
Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)	●
Sentiment	●
Orchestration and Human in the Loop	●
Long Running Stateful Conversations	●
Low-Code / No Code Platform	●
Enterprise Data Security	●
Integrates with 3 rd Party Systems via iPaaS	●

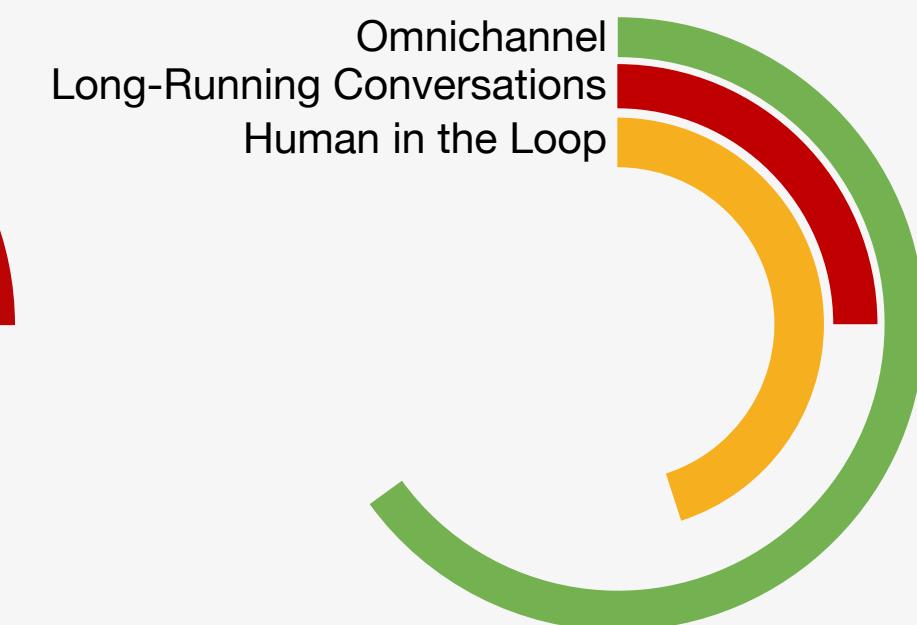
Fit for Citizen Developers



AI Capabilities



User Experience



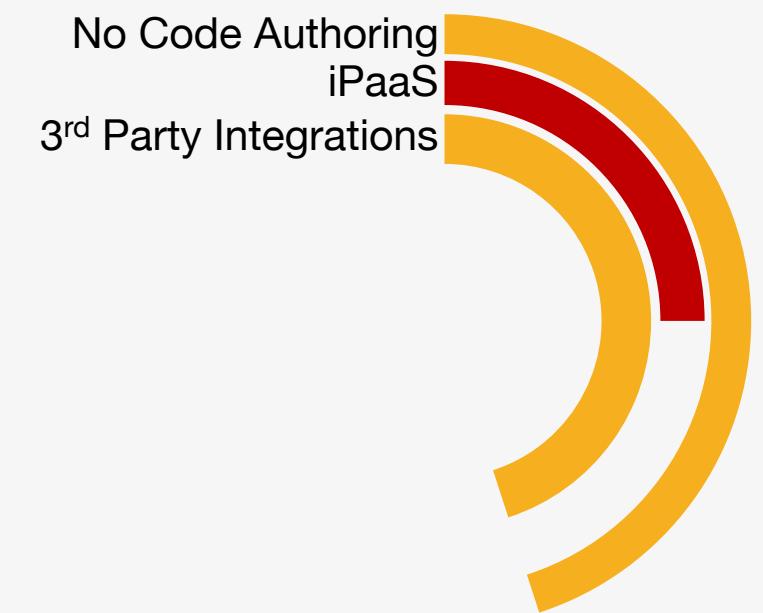
Conversational AI Platform - Golf

This cloud-based conversational AI platform helps users build and automate conversations with employees, customers, and partners. Voice capability is built-in. Use cases across banking, insurance, education, and healthcare front office.

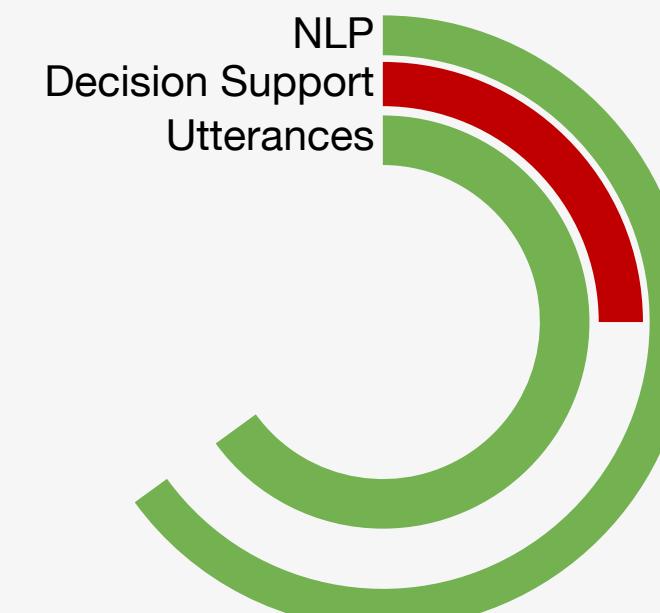
The platform is feature-rich but lacks the basic elements required for customer service agents and AI-based decision-making. Bot version control is problematic. The vendor promotes it as a no-code solution, but the interface and overall solution may require specialized knowledge to implement, use, and deliver value. Specialized knowledge and skill requirements may drive up the total cost of ownership and delay time-to-value. Users can adjust the chatbot in a zero-code environment. Available connectors and analytics enable development and deployment to other systems.

Omnichannel Support	●
AI Decision Support	●
Natural Language Processing (NLP)	●
Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)	●
Sentiment	●
Orchestration and Human in the Loop	●
Long Running Stateful Conversations	●
Low-Code / No Code Platform	●
Enterprise Data Security	●
Integrates with 3 rd Party Systems via iPaaS	●

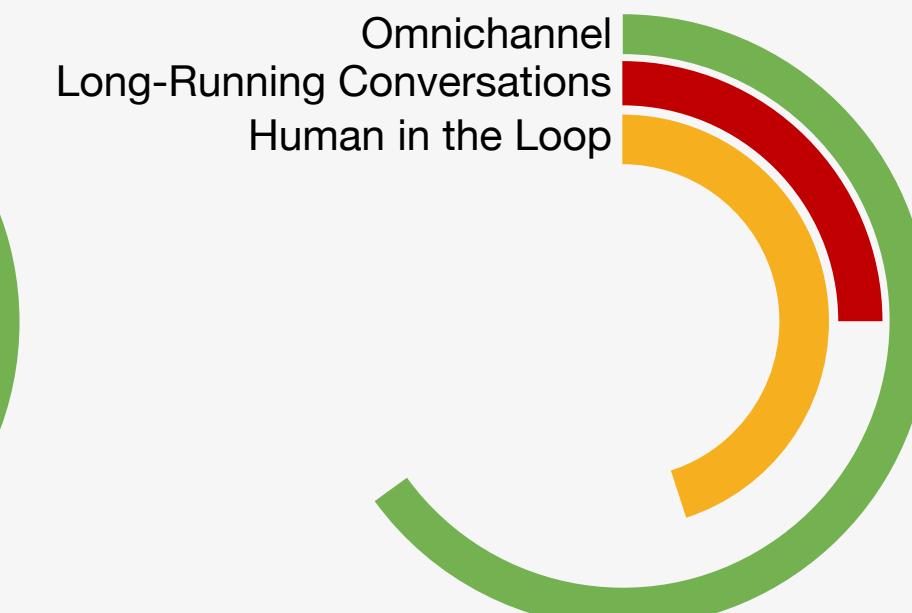
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AI Capabilities



User Experience



Conversational AI Platform - Hotel

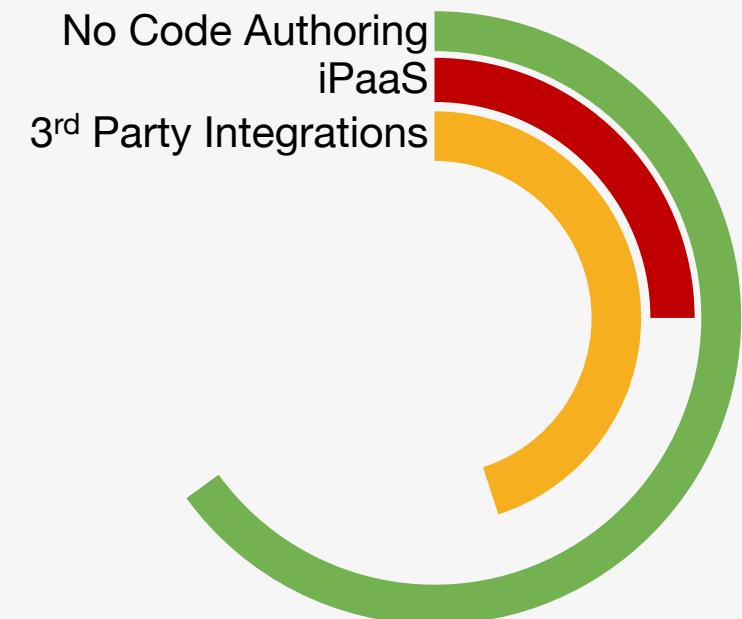
This is a conversational AI and virtual assistant solution with a unique capability to compare recorded conversations to defined flows. This solution has one of the better omnichannel capabilities. Built-in analytics fall short compared to market competitors, but end-users can close the gap with integrations to other reporting solutions. Functionality for customer service agents reportedly falls a bit short, so due diligence is required in this area.

The product's natural language understanding (NLU) capability boosts conversational AI. This low-code / no-code platform is available as SaaS, but the product is better suited for on-prem deployment to fully leverage integration and the rich feature set. Advanced users do have the ability to adjust the chatbot with zero code. Security may be a shortfall, so proceed with caution.

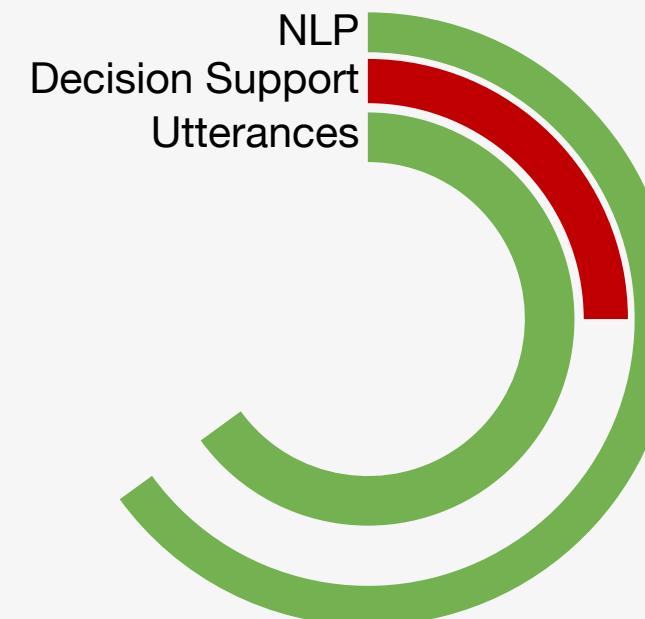
This product is intended and built for large enterprise deployments, so has a labyrinth of features and capabilities with a price tag to match. Requires a high skill level for version control and troubleshooting for individual channels.

Omnichannel Support	●
AI Decision Support	●
Natural Language Processing (NLP)	●
Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)	●
Sentiment	●
Orchestration and Human in the Loop	●
Long Running Stateful Conversations	●
Low-Code / No Code Platform	●
Enterprise Data Security	●
Integrates with 3 rd Party Systems via iPaaS	●

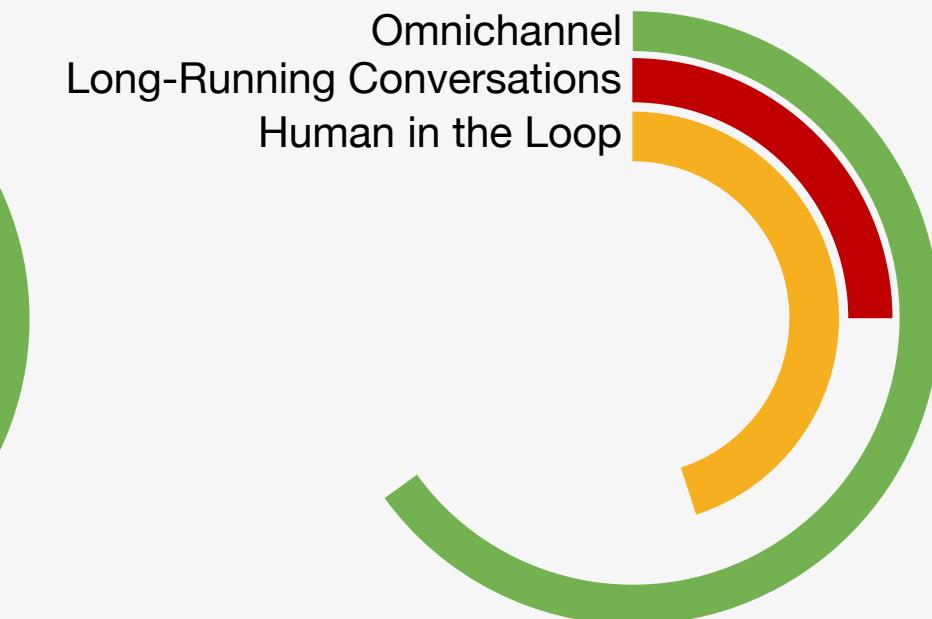
Fit for Citizen Developers



AI Capabilities



User Experience



Conversational AI Platform - India

This is an AI solution specifically designed to support in-house employee needs. Use cases span five categories to serve employees: IT, HR, finance, facilities, and employee communications. The application offers multi-channel access, so employees have more than one way to seek help: text message, email, or chatbots; voice assistant is notably absent.

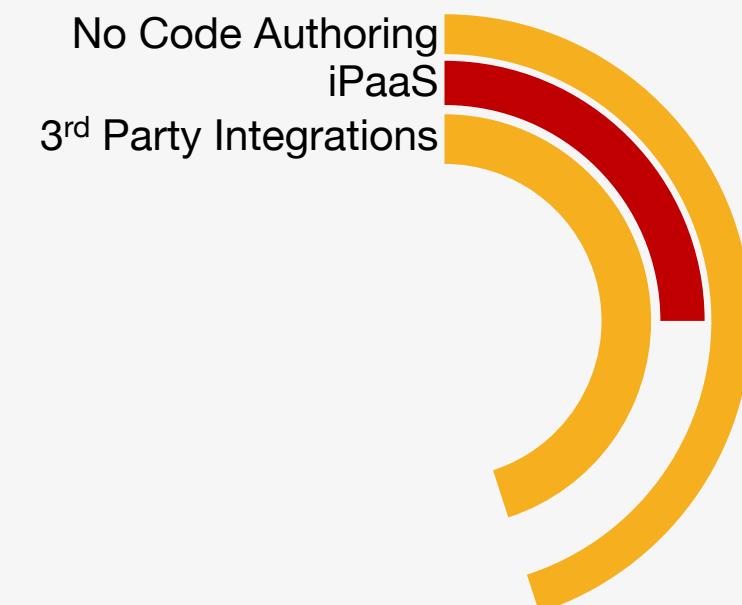
The vendor built its application on a natural language understanding (NLU) engine and has “trained” it on 250+ million internal employee support issues. The company claims its solution recognizes 99% of enterprise support requests out of the box.

While most of the features and capabilities might make this a broadly useful platform, the vendor did build the application with intermediate data lookup capability. The platform is not strictly “no-code;” it requires much more knowledge and tech-savvy skills than the typical business user likely possesses.

- Omnichannel Support
- AI Decision Support
- Natural Language Processing (NLP)
- Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)
- Sentiment
- Orchestration and Human in the Loop
- Long Running Stateful Conversations
- Low-Code / No Code Platform
- Enterprise Data Security
- Integrates with 3rd Party Systems via iPaaS



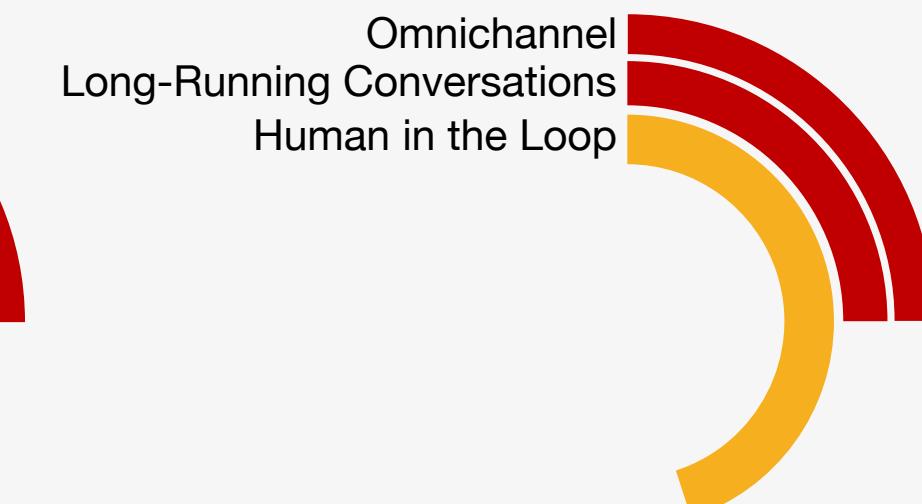
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AI Capabilities



User Experience



Conversational AI Platform - Juliet

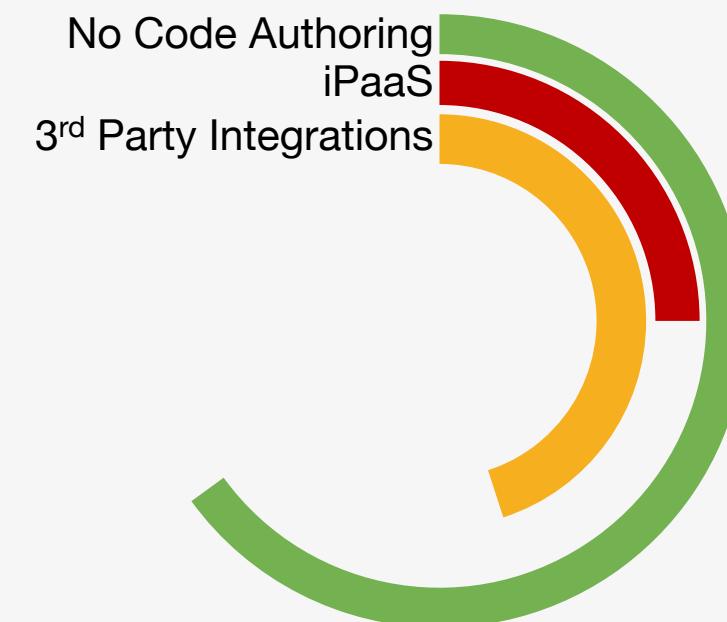
This use case-specific conversational AI solution / virtual assistant solution is produced by a company that has reinvented itself several times since it was established in 1997. The company started as a bridge service for e-commerce, URLs, queries, and Java – a precursor to modern APIs. By 2012 the organization had evolved into a multi-channel customer service and knowledge management software company for in-house deployment – a faint predecessor of AI. Today, the company strives to offer a comprehensive connected platform that offers customer service organizations personalization, knowledge management, context, and process guidance.

Depending on the specific customer service incident and the agent's level of expertise on that issue, the individual can use interactive Q&A or a browse-and-search approach to find answers. The platform administrator can permit access so agents can create and document new information in the system; chatbot adjustments happen in a zero-code environment.

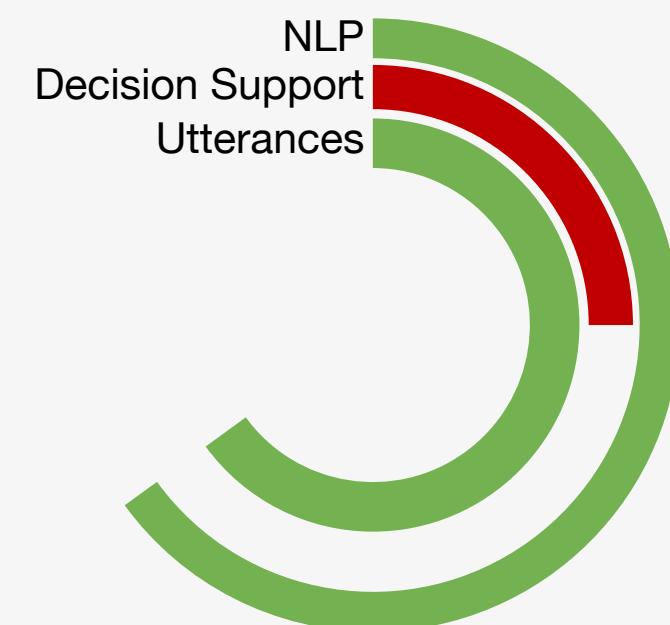
Despite the breadth of the platform, essential features common among less complicated applications are absent, most notably voice and robust reporting. The company routinely urges customers toward pilots to assess value in a real-world situation and always welcomes custom development projects, which may indicate complexity, cost, adoption, or other implementation roadblocks. Given the company's propensity to reinvent itself and reports of making then breaking promises to customers, buyers should proceed with caution.

Omnichannel Support	●
AI Decision Support	●
Natural Language Processing (NLP)	●
Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)	●
Sentiment	●
Orchestration and Human in the Loop	●
Long Running Stateful Conversations	●
Low-Code / No Code Platform	●
Enterprise Data Security	●
Integrates with 3 rd Party Systems via iPaaS	●

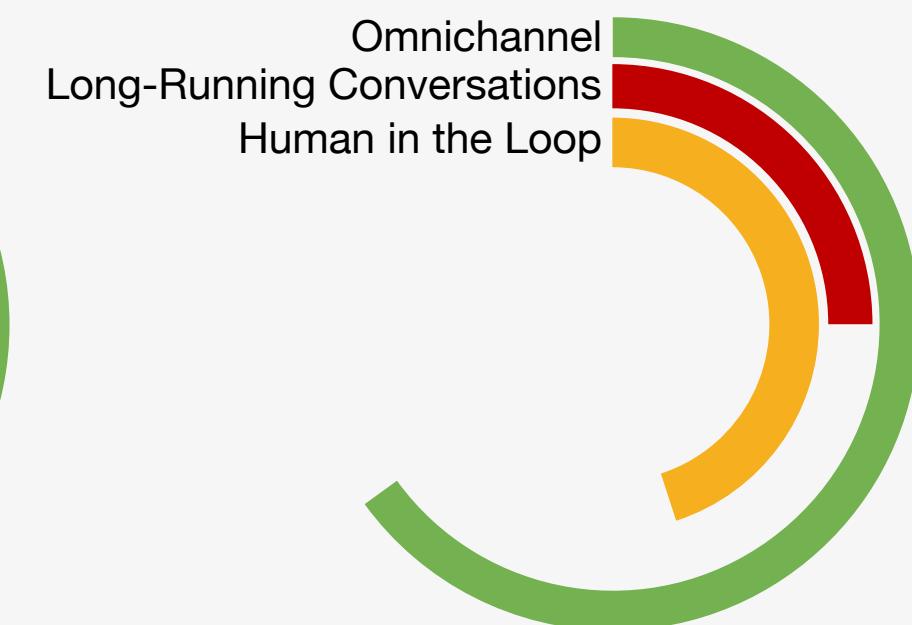
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AI Capabilities



User Experience



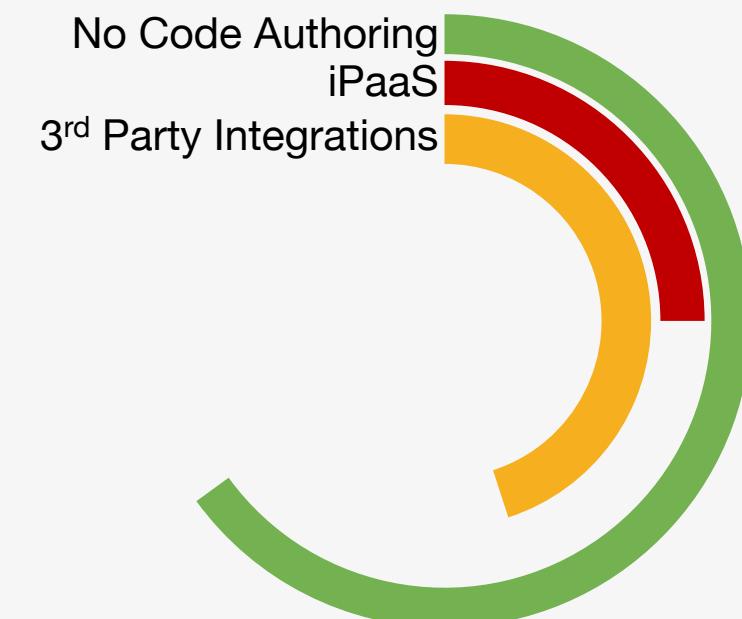
Conversational AI Platform - Kilo

This conversational AI solution provides real-time accuracy, including utterances, and is the shining star of this platform. It can inject humans into the loop boosting AI effectiveness and quality. Customer engagement and social media-based customer care are the focus of this platform, but this solution lacks omnichannel support. The solution has broad industry appeal, anywhere from banking to travel or utilities and most industries in between.

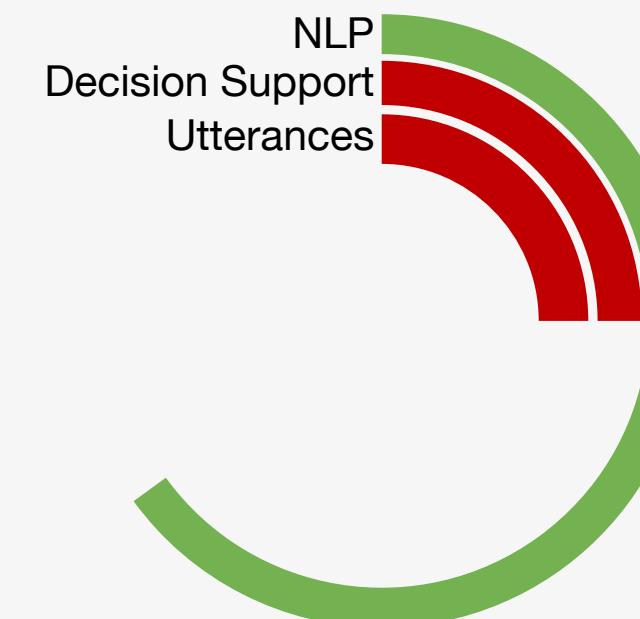
Multi-lingual support, voice assistant, and the ability to adjust chatbots in a zero-code environment provide surface appeal. Metrics and analytics dashboards are lacking, as is digital channel support. This is a deficiency despite the headway the company has made over the last few years. Company messaging boasts that it wants to help customers have millions of conversations every day through talk, tap, type, or swipe. One interesting feature is the application's ability to monitor and measure social media conversations about the company. It goes beyond social listening and leverages user-generated rules and keywords to identify engagement opportunities. Natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning boost the effectiveness of this capability.

Omnichannel Support	●
AI Decision Support	●
Natural Language Processing (NLP)	●
Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)	●
Sentiment	●
Orchestration and Human in the Loop	●
Long Running Stateful Conversations	●
Low-Code / No Code Platform	●
Enterprise Data Security	●
Integrates with 3 rd Party Systems via iPaaS	●

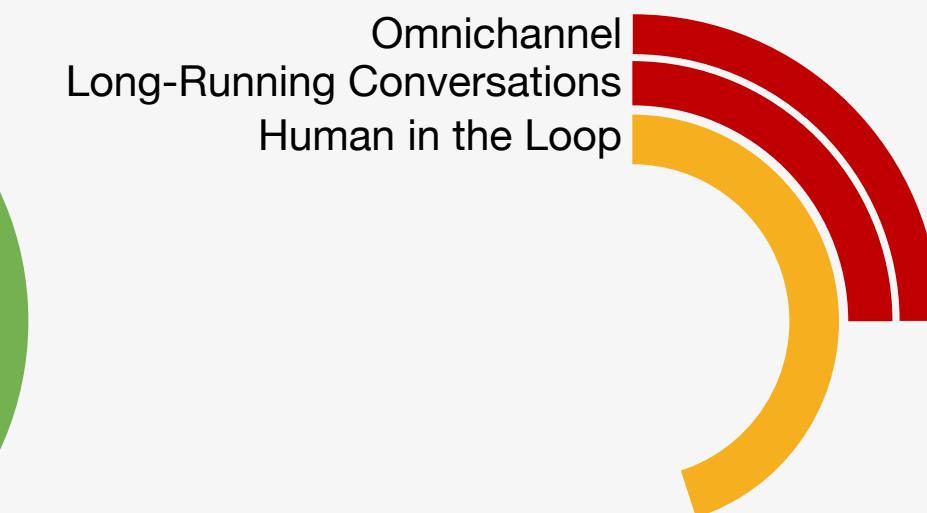
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AI Capabilities



User Experience



Conversational AI Platform - Lima

This conversational AI platform automates chat, messaging, and voice with virtual and live agents. The company offers free components to help with platform IT management. Out-of-the-box templates and graphical tools help companies design and build enterprise-worthy chatbots and assistants. Complex administration controls enable governance.

Despite being an impressive platform, this solution would be cumbersome and difficult for large or multinational companies to implement. The product has natural language understanding but is limited to its native NLU. Sales literature says the platform requires no coding experience, but users find the “no code experience” lacking and difficult without relevant tech knowledge.

The platform lacks a self-learning capability, isn't easy to get up and running, and often needs custom coding or customization if intended for use in a large enterprise. Users report administrative quirks and obvious bugs.

Omnichannel Support



AI Decision Support



Natural Language Processing (NLP)



Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)



Sentiment



Orchestration and Human in the Loop



Long Running Stateful Conversations



Low-Code / No Code Platform



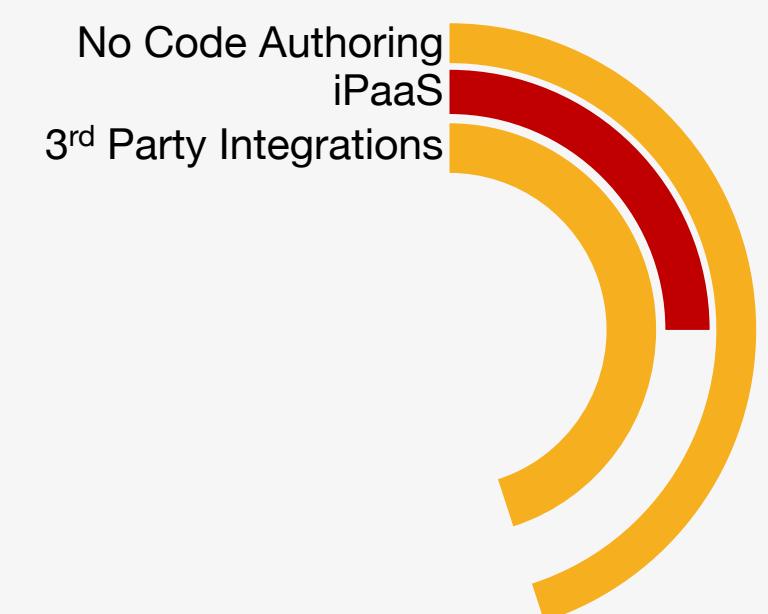
Enterprise Data Security



Integrates with 3rd Party Systems via iPaaS



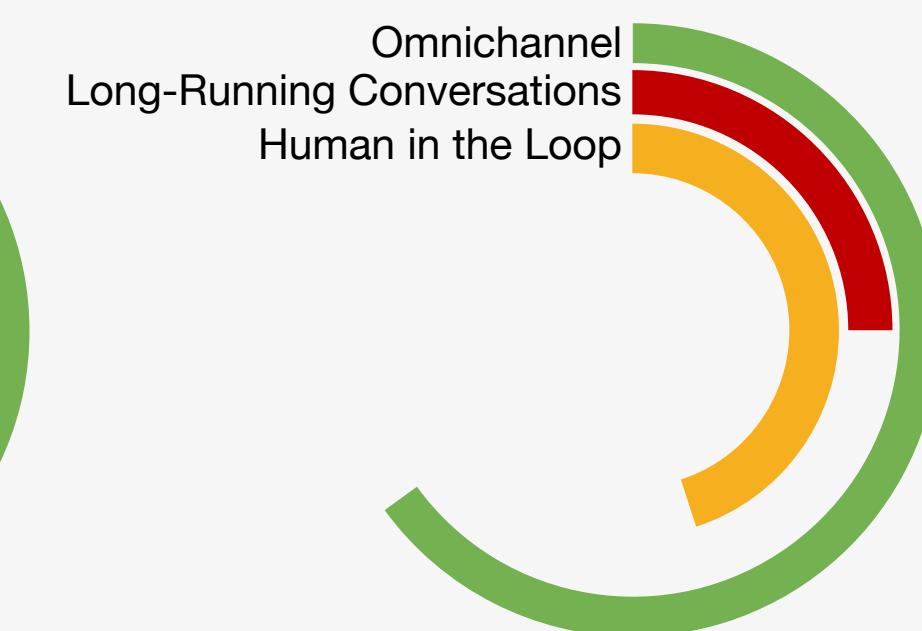
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AI Capabilities



User Experience



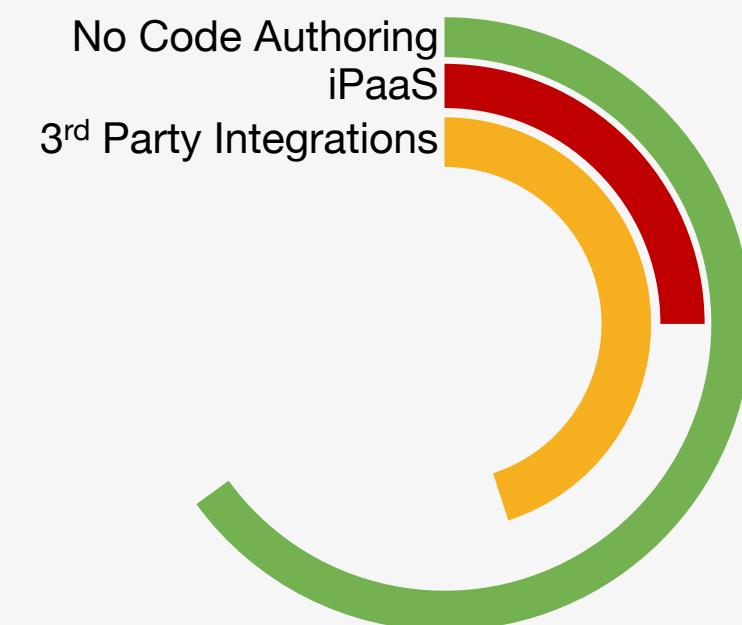
Conversational AI Platform - Mike

This conversational AI and virtual assistant platform focuses mainly on healthcare, telecom, financial services, and government; healthcare is a particular strength. It offers multi-lingual support and has built-in multi-modal biometric authentication. While speech recognition is superior to other solutions, it's an expensive platform that mainly works with WhatsApp.

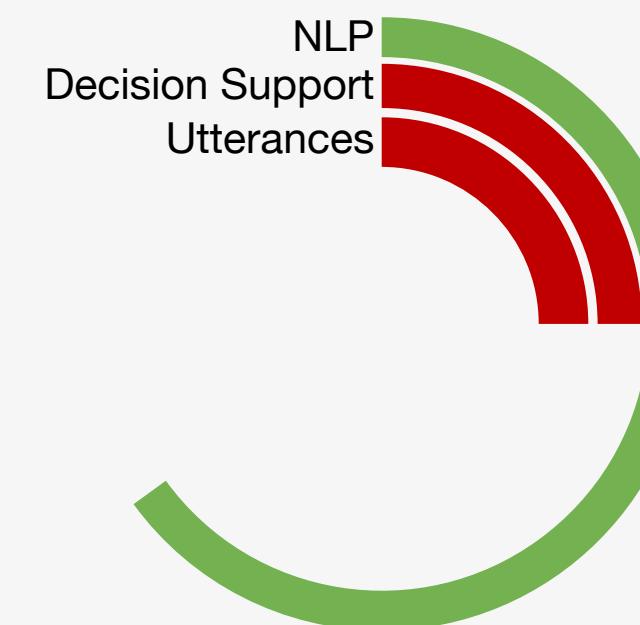
The solution offers the ability to adjust the chatbot in a no-code environment. Users report chatbot issues that aren't apparent until the feature is in live production and in use when it could be too late. Given the maturity of this platform, the lack of decision support is surprising, as is the frequency of chatbot issues.

Omnichannel Support	●
AI Decision Support	●
Natural Language Processing (NLP)	●
Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)	●
Sentiment	●
Orchestration and Human in the Loop	●
Long Running Stateful Conversations	●
Low-Code / No Code Platform	●
Enterprise Data Security	●
Integrates with 3 rd Party Systems via iPaaS	●

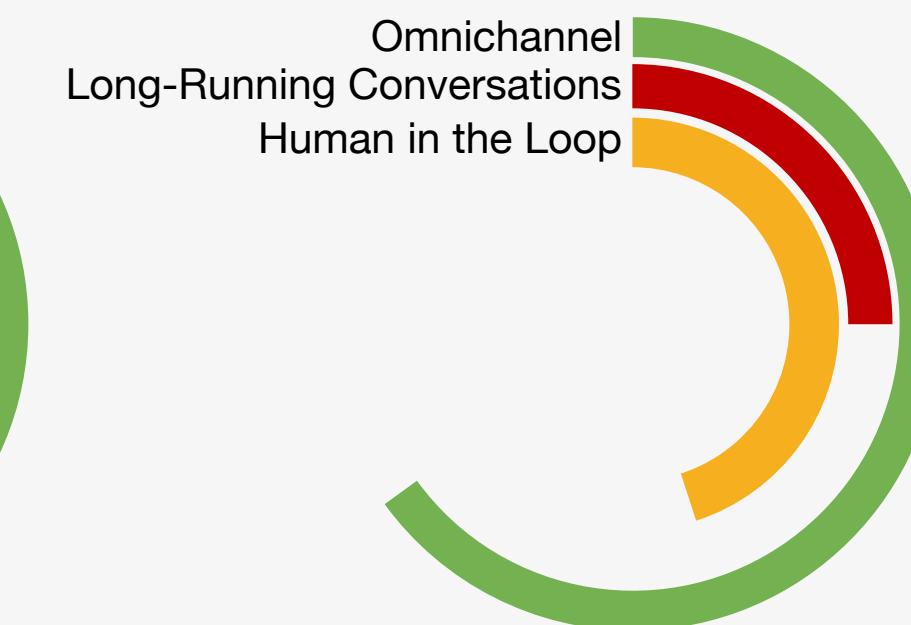
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AI Capabilities



User Experience



Conversational AI Platform – November

This solution incorporates conversational AI and virtual assistant tools, but they are not the primary focus for this enterprise software vendor. Knowledge management, customer engagement, and metrics and reporting are key strengths. Its flagship workforce platform is enhanced by the customer engagement platform, which includes conversational AI and virtual assistant tools.

The multi-channel conversational AI, virtual assistant, and chatbot tools have built-in natural language processing (NLP). Industry-leading fraud and security measures are built with banking and financial services in mind. Sentiment is lacking and missing entirely for some apps.

The company's portfolio includes many interrelated solutions like voice assistant, messaging, knowledge management, automated quality management, case management, speech analytics, and experience management. Teams can adjust chatbots in a zero-code environment.

With a high price tag and a complex set of solution offerings, buyers are often overwhelmed by options and functionality. Most solutions are internet resource hogs, a serious deficiency; most UIs are cluttered and confusing.

Omnichannel Support



AI Decision Support



Natural Language Processing (NLP)



Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)



Sentiment



Orchestration and Human in the Loop



Long Running Stateful Conversations



Low-Code / No Code Platform



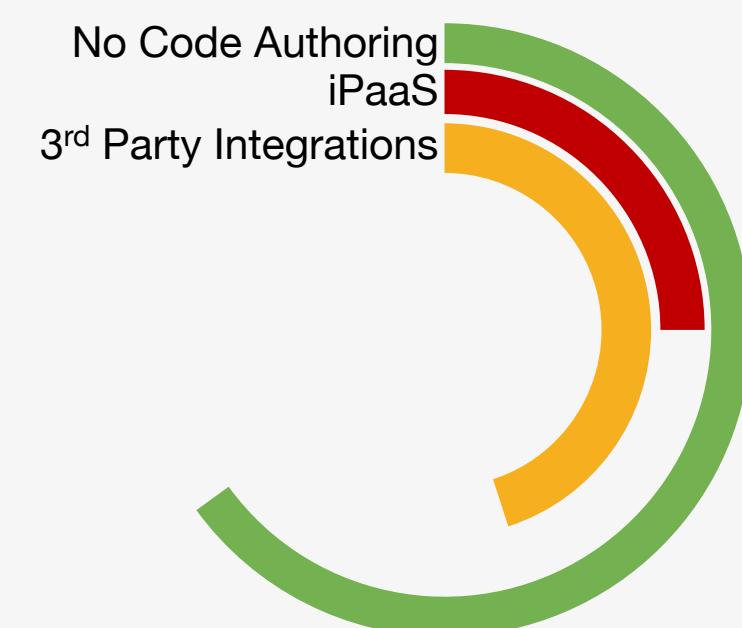
Enterprise Data Security



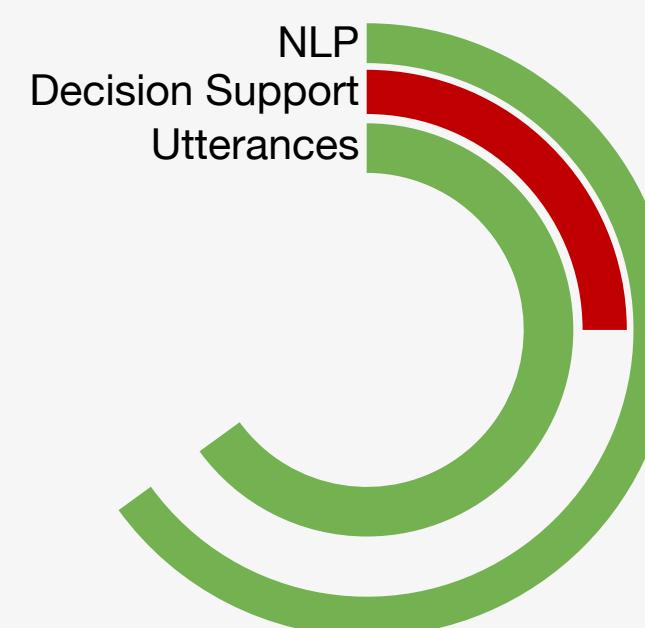
Integrates with 3rd Party Systems via iPaaS



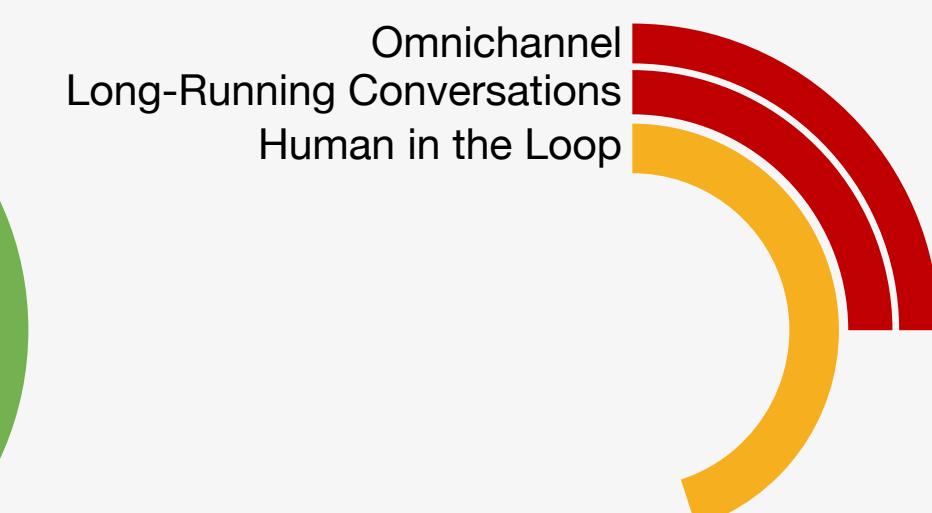
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AI Capabilities



User Experience



Conversational AI Platform – Oscar

This AI product is more of a digital employee rather than a conversational AI product. It offers automated email, automated document handling, and a chatbot. Compared to the market landscape, this solution is relatively basic, touting text-based intelligent process automation as a notable strength.

The company's focus is mainly on insurance, financial services, and public agencies with limited use cases compared to competitors. This vendor appears to prioritize partnerships over direct sales, which may indicate high cost or complexity in implementation.

The market is strangely silent on this solution, so buyers beware. Based on what we glean from documentation and sales literature, notable solution gaps include voice, human blend, easy access to a demo, utterances, intent, and sentiment.

Omnichannel Support



AI Decision Support



Natural Language Processing (NLP)



Utterances Support (Automated, Intent)



Sentiment



Orchestration and Human in the Loop



Long Running Stateful Conversations



Low-Code / No Code Platform



Enterprise Data Security

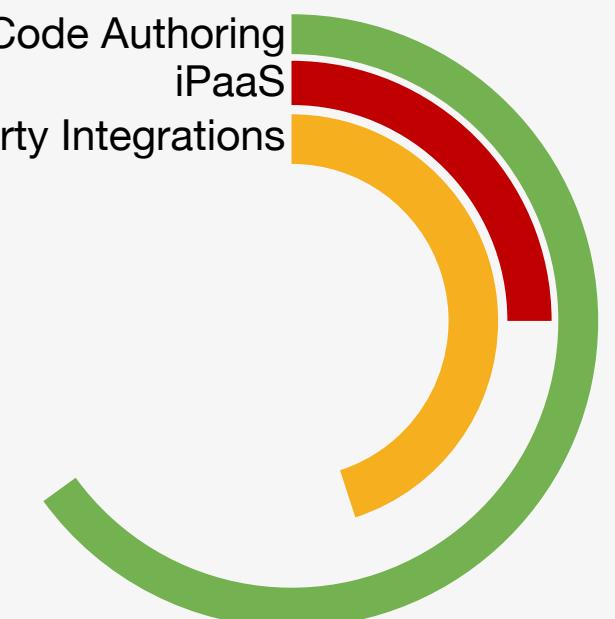


Integrates with 3rd Party Systems via iPaaS



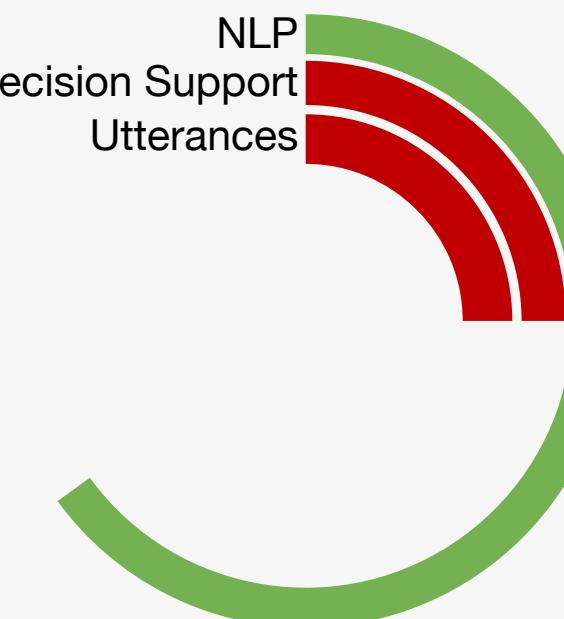
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No Code Authoring
3rd Party Integrations



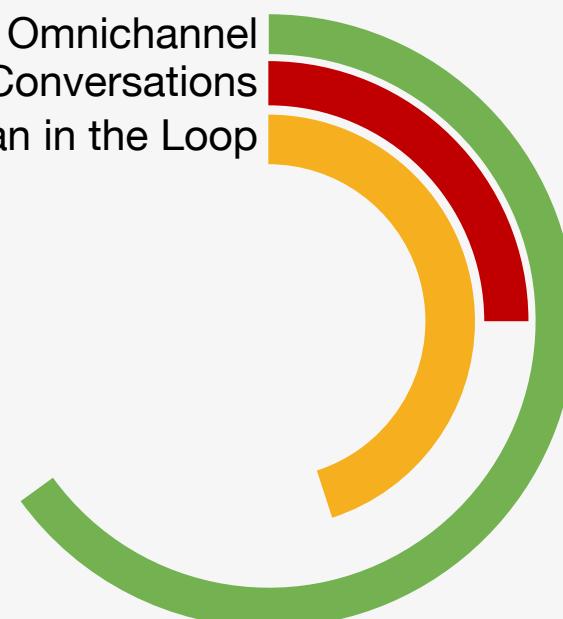
AI Capabilities

NLP
Decision Support
Utterances



User Experience

Omnichannel
Long-Running Conversations
Human in the Loop



Conversational AI Platform – Krista

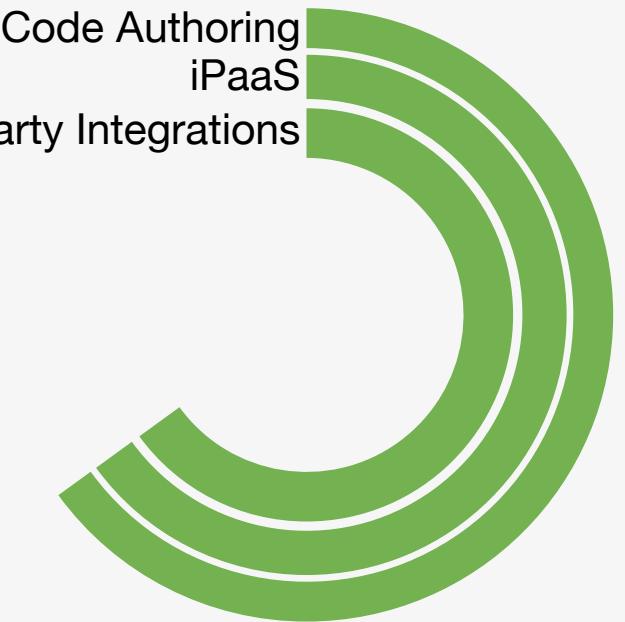
This feature-rich conversational AI solution is a true no-code platform fit for citizen developers with real-world problems to solve: No coding or IT knowledge is required. Unlike competitors, it leads the way in innovative new features like iPass, long-running conversations, conferencing or joining conversations, and robust data lookup systems. It also weaves in AI-based decision support along with the ability to fully automate business workflow outcomes.

The platform provides robust omnichannel support via best-in-class direct integration connectors. Out-of-the-box integrations and intuitive integration APIs make this solution one of the most flexible in its class and suitable for every imaginable use case tried by the market so far.

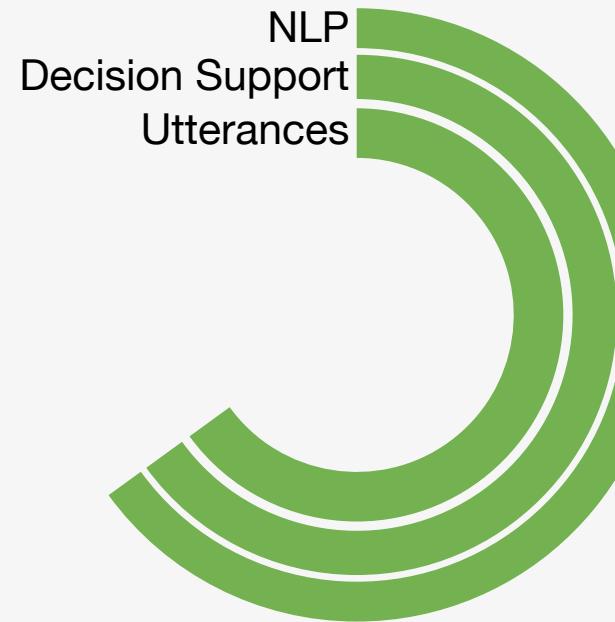
The platform is a cloud-based, multi-lingual solution that is truly industry-agnostic – it incorporates capabilities required most by financial, insurance, hospitality, and healthcare industries. It provides industry-leading enterprise security, natural language processing (NLP), and intuitive error correction. It also has easy-to-use features in high demand by small and mid-size businesses: human blend, agent assist, and customer engagement. With an attractive price tag, quick and easy implementation, plus fast-to-learn, fast time-to-value models and scenario creation, this platform should be on every buyer's shortlist.

- Omnichannel Support
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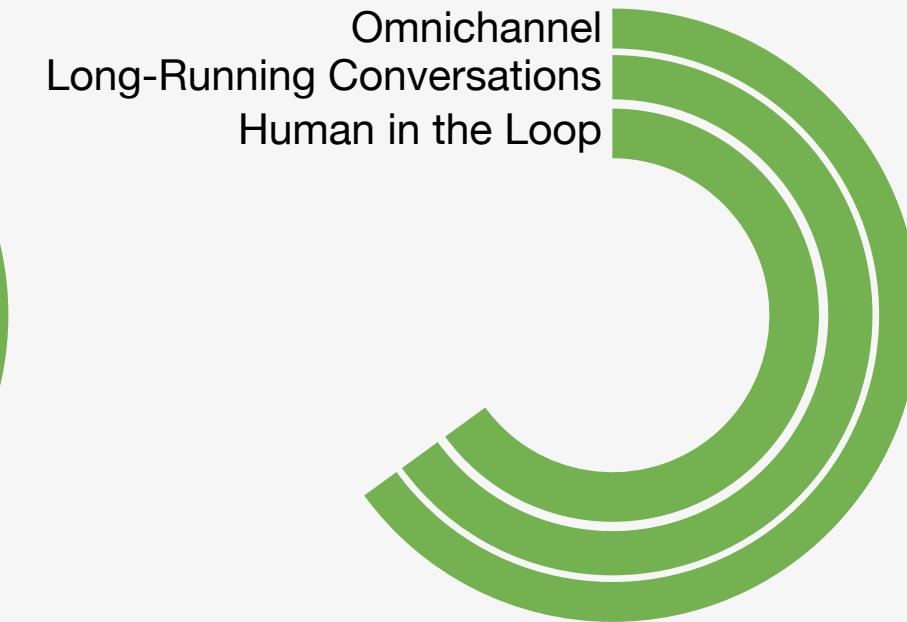
Fit for Citizen Developers



AI Capabilities



User Experience



Conversational AI Buyer's Guide Summary

This Conversational AI Buyers Guide covers all of the features you should look for when evaluating a conversational AI solution. Technical requirements include support for utterances, sentiment analysis, conferencing in other employees or conversations, long-running stateful conversations, low-code capabilities, enterprise data security, and integration with your current and future apps.

All of these features are important to consider when choosing a conversational AI solution for your business. You should also consider how well the platform you chose technically fits inside of your company and how it benefits your company culture.

Be sure the platform you choose is a cultural fit and can easily support your citizen developer programs.

Understand how each platform is rated on its AI capabilities and whether or not its AI support helps employees with decision support via machine learning models.

Consider how each platform is rated on how easily the product integrates people, apps, and AI into business existing processes and channels and future digital projects.

If you have questions on the guide or would like to obtain the vendor decryption key, please [contact us](#) and one of our representatives will respond accordingly.

Contact Us

Krista offers a unique combination of features that make her an ideal platform for achieving a high ROI on AI and automation projects. Contact us today to discuss how Krista's conversational AI can integrate your people, apps, and AI.

[Contact Us Here](#)

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