CASE STUDY

Avanade's digital assistant helps transform the employee experience and drive engagement

Bot Center program adopts crowdsourced AI to create a modern workplace culture

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Ever started a new job and became overwhelmed trying to sort through the vast amounts of information thrown at you all at once? You may have lost huge chunks of your day trying to find answers to common workplace issues, such as how to schedule vacation time or request new office supplies. You know the information is there, but it's not always easy or convenient to find.

Multiple bots vary in availability and accessibility

Many companies, including Avanade, turn to bots as a way to help acquire information, automate tasks and boost productivity in the workplace. But our bots often featured different UX stylings and development approaches and varied widely in quality. They were not always available or accessible. In short, our solutions ended up siloed and with much lower participation rates than we anticipated (fewer than 50 users globally per bot).

AiDA - Avanade's Intelligent Digital Assistant to the rescue

To help solve some of these frustrations, Avanade created a corporate chatbot – one bot available for everyone. Meet AiDA, Avanade's Intelligent Digital Assistant:

Hi, I'm AiDA … How may I help you today?

AiDA, what do you do?

I'm an internal, secure and standardized bot used across Avanade to deliver critical data and improve employee productivity. Avanade's Information Technology Services (ITS) designed me with multiple skills to unify the company's bots. Employees can ask me questions about their work and the company using any of these channels: Microsoft Teams, the Bot Center, Avanade's intranet, a custom Windows app, known as the "desktop channel", and your mobile device.

How do you work?

I'm built on the latest AI technology using Microsoft's AI platform. Microsoft Azure's Language Understanding Intelligent Services (LUIS) ensures secure connections to backend systems and data sources, such as HR business processes, business apps, Azure Active Directory and Microsoft Office 365. I use Avanade Graph – an internal Azure API management system – to access Avanade's set of centralized and curated APIs.

Are there any other features?

*My skills are created by developers using a **crowdsourcing framework**. This means that any Avanade employee interested in contributing to the company's AI story can access a suite of design tools to develop and publish new bot skills themselves. Less technical colleagues can submit new ideas for bot skills and ITS developers take care of the rest.*

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*Employees can find my universal (default) bot skills and shop for optional skills on the **skills hub**. This allows them to personalize their experiences with me.*

*Employees can access and share resources on AI and bots via the **AI assets repository**. These can be leveraged with clients to inform and accelerate their intelligent enterprise journeys.*

How do you make it easier for me to do my job?

With a quick inquiry, you can submit various data requests through a single interface, get immediate access to information and complete tasks more efficiently. The speed and ease with which you can perform your job responsibilities can help improve productivity.

Can you give me an example?

My human resource capabilities can help you find vacation balances, install printers and consult Avanade's Code of Business Ethics. You can also ask me questions about some of Avanade's research data to quickly find the exact information you need.

How do you help us become more intelligent, innovative and competitive?

AI will play a big role in the future of business. Avanade can use this built-in technology to improve the employee experience, reimagine the workplace culture and enhance productivity and the level of service provided to clients.

Can your technology help our clients?

AiDA's impact doesn't stop with Avanade employees. Clients can benefit from the lessons learned and cutting-edge expertise Avanade acquired as they embark on their own AI journeys. You can advise them on what works best and what to avoid. By leveraging our assets and expertise, clients can save weeks or even months to launch their own corporate bot center and realize cost savings in the process.

As one of the first companies to develop a corporate bot center, Avanade is continuing to build on its experience and expertise as a leading digital innovator on the Microsoft platform. Recently, the Avanade AiDA Team worked with the Accenture CIO team to implement the Omni bot, leveraging our experience and lessons learned to drive the Omni bot strategy for Accenture. The teams collaborated over the course of several months to deploy what will become the bot to be used by more than 400,000 Accenture users.

We understand that transforming the workplace into a driver of sustainable value means our employees need to feel inspired and confident. The Bot Center empowers them to do their best work.

"What I like most about AiDA is that it's a single place to get information relevant to my job," said Jaywant Rao, business development executive at Avanade. "It knows me – authenticates my profile so it's easier do my job. And I like that the Bot Center is constantly extending where AiDA goes, adding more services so that when I log back in, it shows me what more I can do with data that's relevant to me."

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