

**7 THINGS**

**TO CONSIDER**

**WHEN CHOOSING AN**

**AI BOT  
PLATFORM**

Including a checklist  
to simplify your selection

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## Introduction

*The benefits of AI chatbots and voice bots are clear. Arguments in favor of this innovative technology are: 24/7 availability, more personal direct interaction as well as time savings for organizations and end users.*

*However, building a state-of-the art chatbot or voice bot is not something you do overnight. It requires an investment from your organization. Resources need to work on the configuration of the bot and often a deep integration with your organization's systems is desired at some point in time.*

*If it is your first time doing a bot project in your organization, you will need to acquire new skills like: conversational design (see below), understanding how AI or Natural Language Processing (NLP) works. Also, if it is your first voice project, you'll have to think what the tone-of-voice of your organization will be.*

*All the above makes that you better select the right technology to make sure your organization succeeds in its project. This checklist can help you in asking the right questions and getting the answers to make your bot project a success by selecting the right AI bot platform.*

## Executive summary

1. Easy to work with for business users  
How to get your business on board and why this is necessary
2. Performance of the AI in the languages you need  
How to measure performance of AI and why languages matter
3. The way it helps you build a good conversational design  
Why you need conversational design
4. Ease of integrations  
Link your favorite app with the bot some examples
5. Supports a wide range of messaging apps and voice ready  
Which messaging apps and voice apps are a must for your AI bot platform
6. Analytics & optimization advice  
How to measure your impact and how to optimize along the way
7. Check compliance & security  
What to ask to make sure you are safe with your provider

## Select the right use case before you start your bot project.

It sounds so obvious, but it often isn't. Many organizations do their first bot project just *to discover the technology's potential*. This is not the best road to success, and you should avoid this approach whenever you can. Finding a use case takes some time but shouldn't be too hard either. Typically, a good use case is something very simple to implement that brings your organization instant value.

### Some examples we have seen:



**Support:** If 80% of the phone calls you receive are about whether or not your system is running properly and only in 1% there is an actual problem, it means that less than 1% of phone calls actually bring value. Overall this results in a huge cost with only limited benefits for your organization. A bot that automatically answers and polls the health of your system when a client calls would be a great use case.



**HR:** It's a people business. HR is there to make sure that your company's most important assets, being its current or future employees, have what they need to succeed. Unfortunately, there is still much time spent in answering rather simple questions. Your project would be the solution to this time inefficiency. Your bot can answer the FAQ about holiday arrangements, salary arrangements etc. while making sure the HR department can focus on the people itself.



**Sales:** Let us assume you have 3 products that each come into 3 different flavors. That makes your clients have to compare 9 different product offerings. Sounds familiar in your organization? Your bot could be a great way to ask some key questions and direct the client to the right product. You will have guaranteed sales increase.

### Industry example:



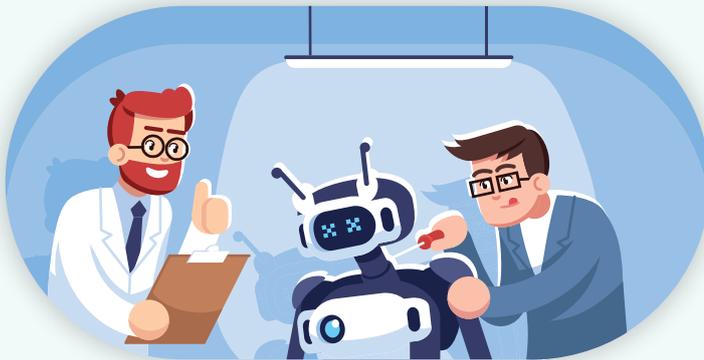
**Insurance:** An insurance company distributes their products through insurance brokers. Which is great, as they stand closer to the insured clients and can advise them better on their personal insurance needs. In case of non-life insurance products like car insurance or home insurance there is a claim event (car accident, window broken) every now and then. A bot to process the claim directly is a great use case that saves time for the broker, insurance company and ultimately the client who gets his pay-out faster.

*Now you have found the right use case for your organization, let's go through the 7 things to consider when choosing the AI bot platform for your organization*

## 1 – Ease of use for business users

Don't get us wrong. We love IT and everything that comes with it. However, research of IDC shows that 35% of IT projects fail. So treating your bot project as an IT project, might substantially increase the risk of failure. You don't want this of course. Thus, you need to make sure everyone in the organization is on board with your project. This means also the business, so they need to be able to work with the technology.

*Gartner states that "a lack of business-IT collaboration leads to misunderstanding the difference between value and quality. Without knowing the 'why', developers provide software that doesn't align to business strategy even when it exactly meets specified requirements."*



Overall, there are 3 ways of creating a bot:

### Starting from scratch

This means that you have to code a conversation from scratch. It is definitely possible if you like to have a simple conversational experience without any AI involved. However, if bots are part of your long-term strategy there are better options that provide more value in the long run and... your bots will get much smarter too!

### Use an AI framework

Frameworks like Google Dialogflow, Microsoft LUIS, IBM Watson, Rasa have a big advantage compared to starting from scratch as they have already the AI included on top of which you can code your bot. The downside is that it still requires a lot of coding and you are basically back off the square one.

### Use an AI bot platform

Platforms like [Chatlayer.ai](#) go one step further than the frameworks. Not only do they offer the AI like the frameworks, they also have features that are low-coding or no-coding which makes creating the bot a configuration exercise instead of coding exercise. This makes it possible for business users to directly configure the flows themselves in the platform.



If you want to deploy industry specific or product specific bots, it is of great value if business users can configure the bot themselves. It is typically where the industry or product specific knowledge resides. Your business colleagues have the best view on what the target audience of the bot will be and can help you to tailor the conversations to end-client needs.

## 2 – Performance of the AI - in the languages you need

Many platforms offer their AI or NLP as a black box. But not all AIs are created equal. It is true that AI algorithms have improved significantly over the last decade, but that does not mean that they are all performing well. Certainly not when you take into account the aspect of languages. There are 2 things to consider (i) performance of the AI and (ii) the languages the AI supports.

### Quality of the AI

It might become overly complicated to compare the AI of one bot platform to another if you don't use a standardized methodology. A good method is to use the same dataset with variations of expressions and check if each AI bot platform recognizes the same intent per expression ([click here to learn what's an intent](#)) This results into a metric that is easy to understand by everyone in the organization: Out of each message sent to the AI bot platform, what is the percentage of messages that are not understood? This is called the error rate.

A good AI bot platform typically recognizes up to 95% of the messages out of the box, or an error rate around 5%. Platforms like Chatlayer.ai and Qbox.ai tell you where the mistakes happen. Chatlayer.ai can even tell you why the mistakes happen and how to reach an even higher performance. This enables you to reach accuracies over 99% so that less than 1% of messages is misunderstood.



**A recent development is that AIs are becoming increasingly language independent. This means that if you make adaptations in your bot flow in one language, the flows in other languages are automatically adapted as well.**

If you're interested in how we test our AI at Chatlayer.ai, please read also [our blogpost](#) (Warning: for AI enthusiast only!).

### Languages of the AI

Another important aspect is to understand what languages are supported and to what extent.

If your target audience is from 5 different countries and speaks 5 or more different languages, you need a platform that can handle these languages at a consistent quality. It is not easy for an AI bot platform to add a language if it wasn't originally foreseen to do so. Ideally your platform allows you to create one flow and deploy this flow in as many languages as your target audience speaks.

Find out [here](#) the 100+ supported languages of Chalayer.ai

### 3 – The way it helps you build a good conversational design

Conversational design is new to many organizations. In short, it is the translation between what machines need (intents, entities, context, variables) to understand human language (full of emotional needs). If you want to make a successful bot, the art of conversational design is of great importance. An AI bot platform that gives you advice along the way how to make a bot that is empathic increases your chances for success.

Even with a no-code bot platform, with which virtually anyone could build a bot, there is still a learning curve. Designing a bot requires deep insights in its potential users and their needs, expectations, emotional states... as well as knowledge of the principles underlying conversation. This combination enables you to design a solid bot that can anticipate human unpredictability and react to it in a natural way. You might be building a robot, but it shouldn't sound like one.



Given the growing importance of bots, and how crucial it is to only expose customers to high-quality bots, it pays off to invest in the nascent field of conversation design. You can start from scratch using online tutorials, but working with an experienced partner can help building expertise rapidly and avoiding beginners' mistakes.

## 4 – Ease of integrations

Stand-alone bots can be pretty nice, however, integrated bots are 10x more exciting. You read that right, if you want your bot to add significant value, you will in most cases, sooner rather than later, integrate it with some core applications that are already present in your organization. Here is a list of applications that are on many organizations' integration wish list:

Application	Why?	Examples
Live chat applications	An ideal way to start building your bot is based on live chat conversation history. Based on these conversations you can determine the subjects that are most likely to be addressed to your bot as well. Another nice thing is that once your bot is up and running, a handover can be configured between the AI bot platform and the live chat platform for subjects that are not yet covered in the bot. You can then systematically add new bot subjects based on the live chat conversations.	Livechat Intercom #Interact
CRM systems	Bots are an excellent way to drive customer engagement. Whether it is the first time that you encounter that customer or if it is a long-time loyal customer, you want to have that 360° view. If you want to keep up to date with your customers, an integration with your favorite CRM is what you are looking for.	Salesforce Dynamics365 Hubspot
ITSM systems	IT service management systems. If you want to create a bot to smoothen your ticketing system and limit the phone calls to your service desk, this is the integration that you want.	ServiceNow Zendesk Atlassian Topdesk
Contact Center Software	Your organization's contact center is the ideal environment to deploy a bot. Many of your customer interactions are taking place there and the experience of the operators can be of great help to shape the bot. A voicebot can be used as a smart IVR system	Genesys Vocalcom Avaya
Industry specific Systems	The type of software you integrate with depends upon the industry that you are active in. Examples are: core banking systems (banking), claims management systems (insurance), reservation systems (travelling & hospitality), e-commerce platforms (online shopping) and so many more!	Different in each industry

If you want these types of integrations, a simple-to-consume API is of great importance. The best platforms also allow you to write simple code within the platform to directly consume external systems. Some AI bot platforms also have standard connectors or connect through Zapier.



**Ask your provider to give a trial account for 30 days. Try the APIs or connectors yourself and check if the connections you have made were simple to set up and fulfill the business needs that your organization has.**

## 5 – Supports a wide range of messaging apps and voice ready

Conversations can come in many forms. It is important that you choose an AI bot platform that can handle different messaging and voice solutions.

If voice is important for your bot, check how easy it is to integrate with your existing telco infrastructure. Common integrations are through APIs or through SIP trunking.



A new trend is also that conversations will not only be omnichannel, but also [multimodal](#). This means that you can have within the same conversation e.g. a voicebot that sends you an E-mail to click and then shows you what you were asking for.

Popular messaging channels include:

-  Website
-  FB Messenger
-  WhatsApp
-  SMS
-  RCS
-  Apple business chat
-  Telegram

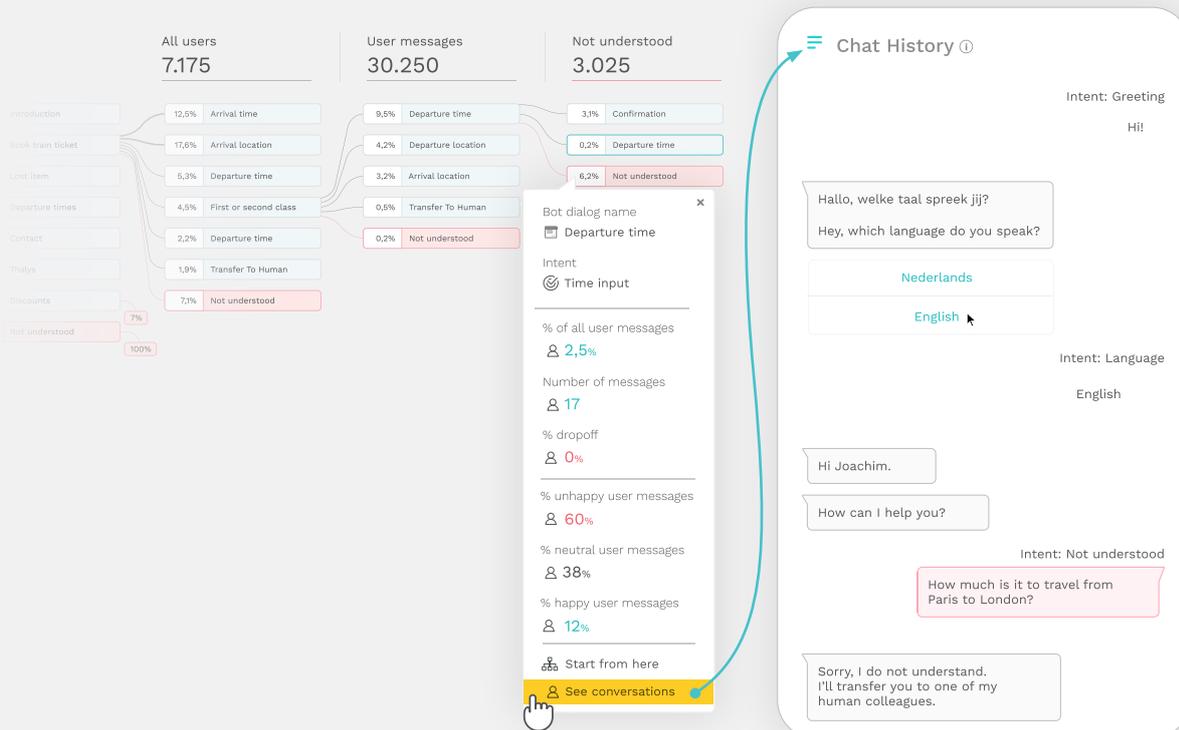
Popular voice channels include:

-  Amazon Alexa
-  Google Assistant
-  Telephone line



## 6 – Analytics & Optimization advice

You have made it. Your bot project is live, and you have your first positive results, but a bot is a living thing (don't worry. It will still remain a machine, it will not actually come alive). What we mean by this is that most bots typically evolve over their lifetime. Analytics are of great value to understand what your users like in your bot and what could be improved. Also, analytics can help you to use the AI in a better way to avoid messages like: 'Sorry I didn't understand that'. Example features are intent overlap recognition, conversational design improvement suggestions, etc.



Typically, you will only run into the needs of analytics & optimization advice when the bot is already live. Check if you can already test the analytics & optimization during the bot building. This will make sure that you don't run into limitations later on. It would be a pity if you have worked really hard on you bot project and you can't report first results and suggestions for future optimization to your team!

## 7 – Check compliance & security

A great AI bot platform doesn't only provide great features, it also has compliancy and security features built in so you have guarantees of the data privacy of your end users. Also, you want to have assurance on the security of the platform and of its integrations with other systems. Another important aspect is that you can configure which users have access to which content in the AI bot platform.

Most AI bot platforms are offered as Software-as-a-Service (SaaS). In this case it is important to check where the data is hosted and if the datacenters are certified by industry standards (e.g. ISO 27001). If the AI bot platform is offered as on-premise, make sure you understand the upgrade/update policy of the provider and ask to which maintenance plan you are on?



**You can always appoint a 3rd party outside of your organization to test the security of the platform or request the applicable certification or results of previous tests.**

## Checklist:



1	Easy to work with for business users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Can business users create a first bot in the platform right away without coding?</li><li>o Is it easy to update bot flows?</li><li>o Can the NLP be trained without having knowledge of AI?</li></ul>
2	Performance of the AI in the languages you need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o What is the error rate of AI (% of expressions not understood)</li><li>o What languages are supported?</li><li>o Can you create one bot flow and deploy it for multiple languages?</li><li>o Is the AI based on a framework AI or independent?</li></ul>
3	Conversational design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Does the platform give you active advice on how to make your conversations more attractive for end-users?</li><li>o What training/tools does the platform provide for your users to master the conversational design?</li></ul>
4	Ease of integrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Are there APIs to connect to?</li><li>o Is it possible to code directly into the platform?</li><li>o Are there standard integrations with applications like: livechat, CRM, ITSM and contact center software</li></ul>
5	Supports a wide range of messaging apps and voice ready	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Which messaging apps are available in the platform?</li><li>o Which voice applications are available in the platform?</li><li>o Are there webhooks available where you can link your own apps?</li></ul>
6	Analytics & Optimization advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Does the platform provide analytics?</li><li>o Are the analytics simple consumption statistics or more?</li><li>o Does the platform give optimization advice on how to improve certain flows and how to avoid intent overlap?</li></ul>
7	Check compliance & security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o How is the data treated on the platform? Is the data also used for other purposes than your project?</li><li>o Can the platform provide assurance in security?</li><li>o How does the platform assure that not all the conversations are available to anyone in the organization?</li></ul>

## About Chatlayer:

Chatlayer.ai is the leading AI bot platform to build chatbots and voicebots on. With our platform your business can easily build bots once and make them available in 100+ languages. There is no limit to the size of your bot project with the Chatlayer.ai platform. Thanks to our Natural Language Processing (NLP) you can do deep-dive analysis on the performance of your bot.

Headquartered in Belgium, Chatlayer services organizations globally in many different industries like Telco, Banking, Insurance, Real Estate, Government, Healthcare and many more. Our platform daily bridges the gap between technology and having great conversations in automated way

Visit us online at [www.chatlayer.ai](http://www.chatlayer.ai) and follow us:



Contact details [sales@chatlayer.ai](mailto:sales@chatlayer.ai)