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Chatbot or person: handing a conversation over, and telling visitors it is an AI

AI for Your Website

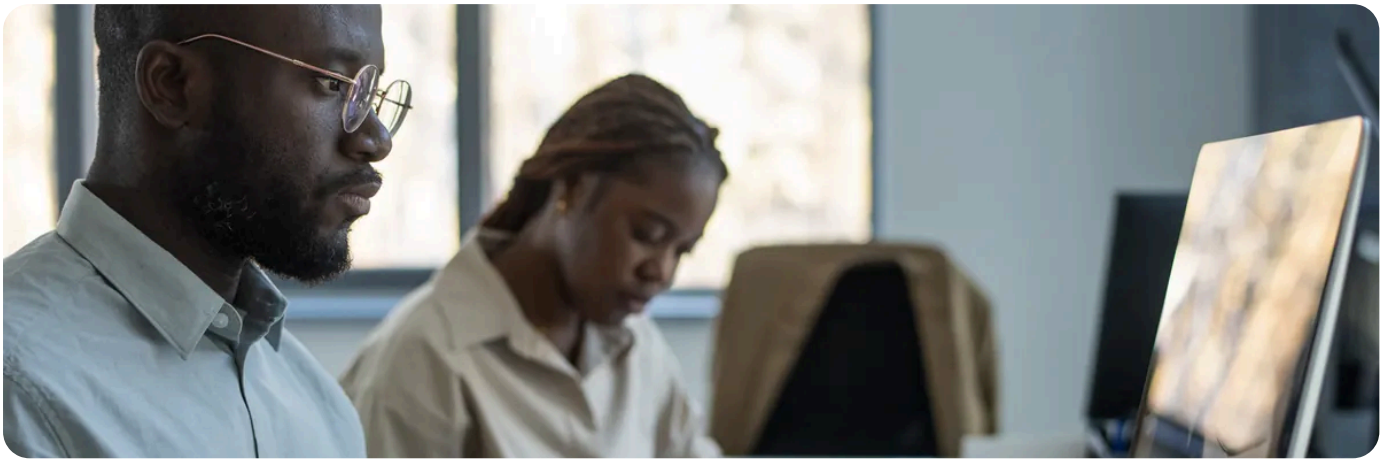
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Chatbot or person: handing a conversation over, and telling visitors it is an AI

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A website chatbot has to do two things without fail: **say at once that it is a machine**, and **hand the conversation to a person** when the subject requires it or the visitor asks. A chatbot that pretends to be human, or traps the customer in a loop of useless answers, is worse than no chatbot at all.

Saying it is an AI

Put it in the first message and in the name of the window ("Virtual assistant", not a person's name and photograph). Before typing, the visitor should know they are talking to a machine, that it can be wrong, and that what it says does not replace a confirmation from the company. It is also worth saying, briefly, that what they type is sent to an AI provider, and linking to the privacy policy. See **data protection on your site**.

When to hand over to a person

Situation	What the chatbot does
The visitor asks for a person	Hands over at once, without trying to talk them into staying.
A complaint, refund, cancellation or any money matter	Decides and promises nothing. Offers to open a ticket.
The visitor repeats the question or says the answer did not help	Admits the limit and hands over, instead of trying a third version.
A sensitive subject: health, safety, legal questions	Does not advise. Refers on.
A question about the customer's account	Only if the system has identified the visitor. If not, refers on. Never accepts a name or a number "said" in the chat as proof.

How to make the handover work

1. **A button that is always visible** (“Talk to a person”), not just a sentence the chatbot sometimes says.

2. **Take the conversation along.** The support ticket should arrive with everything the visitor has already written, so they do not have to repeat it. That is how Interweb AI works: see **what it does and what it does not**.

3. **Ask for contact details before handing over**, if nobody is there right then: an e-mail or a phone number, and say where the reply will come.

4. **Be honest about when an answer comes.** Do not promise a deadline the team does not control; say where the visitor can see the ticket’s status.

5. **Read the handovers.** Every conversation that ended with a person shows a question the chatbot cannot yet answer. That is your improvement list.

What the chatbot says binds the company in the customer’s eyes.
State in the opening notice that automatic answers are not a promise or a quote, and that the site’s terms prevail. That does not excuse you from reviewing the conversations.

A chatbot that
only routes
(it answers what is in the frequently asked questions and hands the rest to a person) brings the least risk and usually satisfies more than one that tries to answer everything.

NEED A HAND?

Want a person to look at your case? Tell us what you need and we will open the ticket.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **What to write in your website chatbot instructions so it stays on topic** →
- **Automating customer support with AI: what to automate first and what never to** →

What Interweb AI does, and what it does not

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