

# Few Marketers Are Using AI Chatbots

Most aren't ready or don't have the budget to develop bots

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**A**rtificial intelligence (AI) may be **catching on with marketers**, but their adoption of AI chatbots has been slow going.

In a December 2017 **Freedman International** and **ClickZ** survey of 500 marketers from the US and UK, just 7% of respondents said they currently use AI-powered chatbots. While another 27% reported that they're looking into using chatbots, most respondents said their company was either not ready or didn't have the budget to develop them.

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### Usage of Artificial Intelligence Chatbots According to Marketing Decision-Makers Worldwide, Dec 2017

% of respondents

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Source: **Freedman International**, "Global Marketing 2018: Marketing Trends with a Global Reach" in partnership with **ClickZ**, Feb 14, 2018  
235970 [www.eMarketer.com](http://www.eMarketer.com)

These results mimic those of a December 2017 report from **Conductor**, in which 34% of the worldwide marketing executives polled said AI was the marketing trend **they felt most unprepared for** in 2018. This

was the most popular response in the survey, slightly edging out virtual and augmented reality (29%).

In 2016, venture capital was flowing into chatbots, and CB Insights identified 51 companies that were making them. But less than a year later, the firm indicated that the chatbot bubble was bursting as brands like Everlane and Spring discontinued their bots. Facebook also shut down some of its chatbots after they produced high failure rates and started creating their own languages.

Although chatbot adoption is low among marketers, there still are anecdotal examples of big brands using bots, like the Starbucks barista bot that can order customers drinks and the Staples bot that confirms orders.

The tepid adoption of chatbots doesn't necessarily indicate that marketers aren't paying more attention to AI. Huge marketing cloud companies like IBM, Salesforce, Oracle and Nielsen all have AI products. Marketers use these AI tools to automate audience targeting, ad buying and the creation of custom audience segments.

AI is also being deployed by marketers to expand their content marketing efforts. According to an April 2017 Salesforce survey of marketing leaders worldwide, AI's biggest impact on marketing will come from its ability to help marketers deliver the right message at the right time and hyperpersonalize content.