



Transforming HR with conversational agent

The Banque Internationale à Luxembourg (BIL) HR department processes 14,000 employee requests each year just for time management. It wanted to automate the response and asked long-term IT partner Fujitsu to create a Robotic Process Automation (RPA) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) enabled conversational agent, which can process 80% of identified common inquiries. This frees up the HR team to focus on more strategic tasks, while providing an instant response to users.

About the customer

Founded in 1856, BIL is the oldest multi-business bank in Luxembourg. Since its foundation, the bank has always played an active role in financing Luxembourg's economy. With over 2,000 employees, and thanks to its local and international network, BIL offers bespoke and innovative financial services which help private wealth and businesses to flourish and support financial professionals in developing their activities.



Industry: **Financial Services**



Location: **Luxembourg**



People: **2,000+**



Web: **bil.com**



“The idea is not to replace humans, but to support them, speed up processes, and allow everyone to do their job better.”

Franck Niatel, Automation Team Manager, Banque Internationale à Luxembourg (BIL)

Challenge

BIL's HR department handles 14,000 requests each year just for time management and many of those are asking the same or similar questions. It wanted to automate the vast majority of requests and reduce the burden on the HR team.

Solution

- RPA platform and NLP-enabled virtual agent

Outcomes

- Virtual agent can process 80% of common HR requests, freeing up valuable resources
- It can respond to 34 individual topics
- Employees get instant responses to inquiries
- Communication level is the same for each employee of the company

80%

of HR common requests are now handled by Laura

Automating common HR requests

BIL's HR department receives over 14,000 email requests relating to time or absence management, for instance, sick leave, holidays, training, and so on every year. These emails are all asking similar things and take significant time to process. The bank thought there could be a way to automate the response to incoming requests.

It had already established a Center of Excellence for automation with long-time technology partner, Fujitsu. Together, they explored RPA as a potential solution, however it had limits in how well it could interpret the nuances of human communication.

“RPA automates many operations, but not necessarily an entire business process. Disruptions in the processes persisted, particularly on operations involving human interaction, such as additional information to be provided by an employee,” explains Franck Niatel, Automation Team Manager at Banque Internationale à Luxembourg (BIL). “To take full advantage of the power of automation, it is therefore necessary to combine RPA with other technologies, such as NLP.”

Combining RPA with NLP to create 'Laura'

Following a series of functional, technical, and user experience (UX) workshops, Fujitsu developed a virtual agent, dubbed 'Laura', which combines RPA with NLP to answer requests on 34 topics. It is integrated with the bank's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system so it can automatically gather user information, send emails to relevant people, and personalize its responses.

“At least 80% of common requests can be handled directly by the virtual agent, making it possible to obtain a quicker answer by benefiting from a qualitative experience,” continues Niatel.

Now employees can click a button on their desktop and ask for holidays, declare sickness and upload their sickness certificate, as well as retrieve information on paternity leave, breastfeeding, leasing, and much more. If Laura does not recognize a request and cannot answer, it has been trained to route it to the right department and flag it for attention. Laura can even adapt her tone – serious, happy, sorry – according to specific situations.

Instant answers free up resources

Laura will free up HR employees from having to process thousands of similar requests, allowing them to be re-deployed where they can add more value. At the same time, employees enjoy a swift and relevant response to pressing inquiries. This becomes particularly helpful during pandemics like COVID-19 when, with users working from home and illness a major concern, Laura helped deal with a spike in requests, giving everyone peace of mind.

In fact, such has been the success of Laura, BIL is looking at creating more agents for other departments, as well as a customer-facing one. And Laura itself is constantly learning and adding new features to enrich the user experience.

“For our colleagues in the HR department, this is precious time saved, which can be used to support more complex requests and to be more attentive to employees,” concludes Niatel. “The idea is not to replace humans, but to support them, speed up processes, and allow everyone to do their job better.”

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07-21