# Caution urged in the deployment of AI chatbots in the events industry



The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into various sectors, particularly the events industry, is gathering momentum as companies seek to enhance efficiency and reduce costs. However, experts are urging caution, emphasising the need for oversight in the deployment of AI-powered chatbots, which are increasingly being utilised as digital assistants.

Simon Clayton, chief ideas officer at RefTech, addressed the growing trend at a recent industry conference, pointing out the inherent risks associated with AI chatbots. He referenced a notable incident involving Air Canada that underscores the potential pitfalls of entrusting customer interactions to automated systems without adequate supervision.

In the Air Canada case, a passenger was misinformed by the airline’s chatbot regarding the eligibility for its bereavement fare policy. The chatbot wrongly indicated that the passenger could apply for a retrospective discount. When the customer subsequently sought a refund based on this guidance, Air Canada denied the request. This decision was later overruled by an adjudicating tribunal, which determined that the airline was accountable for the misinformation provided by its AI system. The ruling underscored that companies must take responsibility for information shared via their platforms, regardless of whether it originates from human or AI sources.

This incident raises significant concerns for event organisers and venues that may consider employing chatbots for quick replies to attendee queries or managing exhibitor interactions. The risks involved are apparent; if a chatbot disseminates incorrect information related to pricing, venue availability, refund policies, or safety regulations, the event organisation might face legal repercussions.

Unlike human representatives, who can assess situations and verify details, chatbots operate strictly within predetermined logic and available data. Outdated or incomplete data can lead a chatbot to deliver incorrect responses confidently, subsequently causing frustration for customers and exposing businesses to potential liability.

To address these challenges, Clayton provided several recommendations for event businesses considering the use of AI in customer service roles. Firstly, he emphasised the importance of regular updates and reviews of chatbot content to ensure accuracy concerning current policies and terms. Secondly, he suggested that organisations maintain a human point of contact for customer service queries, especially those involving financial transactions or bookings, to provide an essential escalation path when required.

Additionally, he advised that businesses should implement regular audits of chatbot interactions to identify patterns of inaccuracies and determine when to retrain the system or reconsider its usage. Finally, transparency about the limitations of AI is crucial. Customers should be informed when they interact with a chatbot rather than a human, as this awareness can manage expectations and lessen the chances of disputes.

The incident involving Air Canada serves as a significant cautionary example for any industry utilising AI in service capacities. While chatbots may offer improvements in operational efficiencies, they are not infallible. Excessive reliance on AI without proper monitoring may lead to misinformation, compromised customer satisfaction, and increased legal risks.

In conclusion, while AI can be a beneficial addition to business operations, it necessitates careful implementation, regular oversight, and a robust framework that includes human expertise to safeguard against potential errors and liabilities. The events industry, in particular, stands to benefit from these practices to foster trust and ensure positive outcomes.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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