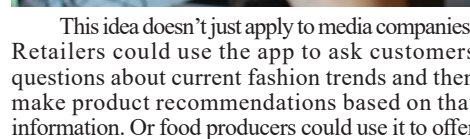


By Anita Campbell

Say you have a software company and potential buyers often want to learn more about how to actually deploy the program before purchasing. You can offer a chat option on your website and have a chatbot recognize when someone is asking about deployment. It can then provide step-by-step instructions in a way people understand. If customers then have further questions that aren't as common, it can direct those customers to an actual customer service agent who will provide more personalized answers. But if ninety percent of the questions you receive are about the same few things, having an automated system for responding can save you a ton of time on customer service.

Creating a Unique Social Experience

Chatbots don't have to only live on your website. In fact, brands like Quartz are reaching out to customers using chatbots in Facebook Messenger to increase engagement. The economic news site shares snippets from stories or unique facts with customers in a message. Then it engages in a back-and-forth conversation with those who respond, diving even deeper into the topic.



Answering Frequently Asked Questions

At some point throughout the buying process, customers are likely to have questions. Small businesses don't always have the resources to respond 24/7. And doing so manually isn't very efficient. But chatbots can help you respond quickly and save time on answering the same queries over and over again.

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A green and white train is shown on tracks, moving towards the right. The background is a light-colored map of the Greater Boston area, showing various locations like Somerville, Union, and Lynn. The train has a green stripe along its side and a white body. The tracks are black and lead into the distance.

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**IS SOLICITING COST PROPOSALS FROM NEW YORK STATE CERTIFIED
DBE SUBCONTRACTORS/VENDORS FOR THE FOLLOWING JOBS**

**Rehabilitation of the Major Deegan Expressway (I-87) in Bronx County
NYS DOT Contract No. D263821 (NYS DBE)**

Bid Date: February 15, 2019

D263821, Rehabilitation of the Major Deegan Expressway (I-87) in Bronx County (NYS DBE):
Description of Project: Bridge replacement with roadway on fill, operational improvements on I-87 Northbound by adding new access ramp and auxiliary lane. New retaining walls, lighting, utilities, pavement and sign structures. Bridge rehabilitation, deck and approach slabs replacement, sidewalks, all new utilities and its facilities, proved vertical clearance over I-87. Replacement of two bearings and modifications to pier near MNRR tracks.

If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska's Outreach Coordinator: Julia.Omanoff@skanska.com • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled



**American
Bridge**

AMERICAN BRIDGE COMPANY

**IS SOLICITING BIDS FROM MWBE AND SDVOSB SUBCONTRACTORS AND
SUPPLIERS CERTIFIED WITH THE NEW YORK STATE CONTRACT SYSTEM**

**Miscellaneous Repairs to the Bronx-Whitestone Bridge
Suspended Spans and Approaches
MTA Bridges and Tunnels Contract No: BW-14 Phase II
Bid Date: February 20, 2019**

The work to be performed may briefly be described as furnishing all labor, material, and equipment necessary for the following: median barrier extension installation on the suspended spans; upgrade the fire standpipe hose connections on the suspended spans; rehabilitation of the wind pins at the towers; repair to lower lateral gusset plate at the Bronx Tower; repairs to bearing plates at the approaches; repair tower electrical conduits at lamp posts on suspended spans; refurbishment of tower deteriorated electrical panels; repair of traveler track beam; replacement of stringer bearings; repairs to fairing gratings; replace drainage pipe at towers lower struts; and electrical conduit restoration at spans 12 and 13 (two locations); incidental lead abatement; and maintenance and protection of traffic.

Please contact Brandon Rosado at brosado@americanbridge.net or 201-592-1217 for plans and specifications.

American Bridge Company is an Equal Opportunity Employer

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IS SOLICITING COST PROPOSALS FROM NEW YORK STATE CERTIFIED
MWBE AND SDVOB SUBCONTRACTORS/VENDORS FOR THE FOLLOWING JOBS
Line Structural Component Repair Program—Canarsie Line
MTA NYCT Contract No. C-48719 (NYS MWBE, SDVOB)
Bid Date: February 28, 2019
C-48719, Line Structural Component Repair Program—Canarsie Line (NYS MWBE, SDVOB):
Description of Project: This project is to repair the structural steel and concrete defects in
the subway tunnel between First Avenue Station and Eighth Avenue Station in Manhattan.
Additional station component repairs for Sixth Avenue Station, Canarsie Line, in the Borough
of Manhattan are also included.
Many bidding opportunities available.
If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska's Outreach Coordinator:
Julia Omanoff@skanska.com • FOF/M/E/Vet/Disabled

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**IS SOLICITING COST PROPOSALS FROM NEW YORK STATE CERTIFIED
MWBE AND SDVOB SUBCONTRACTORS AND VENDORS**

**ADA Sixth Avenue Canarsie Line
MTA NYCT Contract No. A-37150A
Bid Date: January 31, 2019**

NORTHEAST EVENTS FOR YOUR BUSINESS



2019

Government Contracting

Wednesday, February 27, 2019, 5:30 pm–7:00 pm
Acton Public Library, 60 Old Boston Post Road,
Old Saybrook, CT

**Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration,
Southeastern Connecticut SCORE**

**Contact: Anne Driscoll, 860-388-9508,
anne.driscoll@scorevolunteer.org**

Fee: Free; registration required

Want to know how to do business with the State of Connecticut, municipalities, private sector, as well as the federal government? This seminar with economic development specialists from the US Small Business Administration will cover where you need to be registered, where to find the bids, as well as state and federal set-aside programs. Southeastern Connecticut SCORE is a non-profit resource partner of the SBA, offering free business counseling to the public. SECT SCORE offers sixty workshops a year covering topics from business basics, managing your finances, digital marketing, and social media, to franchising, preparing business plans, and more.

How to Get Federal Contracts for Your Small Business

Thursday, February 28, 2019, 8:30 am–1:30 pm
Liberty Hall Corporate Center, 1085 Morris
Avenue, Union, NJ

**Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration,
Union County Economic Development
Corporation (UCEDC)**

rramsey@ucedc.com

Fee: Free; registration required

This free program is being offered by UCEDC, a nonprofit economic development corporation that is dedicated to helping New Jersey's small business community. The federal government is a huge organization and just like any other business or organization, the government needs to purchase goods and services in order to function effectively. This seminar will provide small business owners with a general understanding of government contracting and the federal procurement process. Learn how to increase your chance of winning federal government contracts.

Women Empowering Women

Thursday, March 7, 2019, 6:00 pm–8:00 pm
Homewood Suites by Hilton Newburgh-Stewart
Airport Hotel, 180 Breunig Road, New Windsor, NY

**Main Sponsor(s): Women's Enterprise Development
Center**

**Contact: Cynthia Marsh-Croll, 845-363-6432,
cmash-croll@wedcbiz.org**

Fee: Free; registration required

Come and meet mentors from all different backgrounds and see how you can make 2019 your best year! Mentors include: Melanie Richards, Increase Your Visibility; Mindy Kole, State University of New York Ulster; Sandra Salguero, Superior Mortgage and Latinos in Business; Lauree Ostrofsky, Simply Leap and Hudson Valley Women in Business; Jan Wallen, Professional Consultant. This event will be an interactive roundtable as well as an opportunity to network with like-minded women. Topics include: finding the right mentor; how to create a win-win relationship; how to market yourself;

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