



NEWS

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omer Service Chatbots Small Business Cust

Say you have a software company and potential

By Anita Campbell

Chatbots are computer programs that are able to converse with people online using human-like speech. They're common within messaging apps and live chat features to help businesses answer customer queries, increase sales, and save time. And they're getting more popular by the day. In fact, eighty percent of businesses plan on using chatbots by 2020, according to a study from Oracle.

Not sure how a chatbot could benefit your organization? Here are some of the most popular ways this type of technology is being deployed currently.

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.

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. Small Business Exchange • Voice of Small, Emerging, Diversity-Owned Businesses Since 1984



Retailers could use the app to ask customers questions about current fashion trends and then make product recommendations based on that information. Or food producers could use it to offer

This idea doesn't just apply to media companies.

Click to read more

Lendlease Turner Joint Venture is seeking MWBE & SDVOB firms for



SBE OUTREACH SERVICES With over 1.6 million businesses in our active database—the country's largest non-public diversity database—SBE sets the professional

served small businesses, prime contractors, and agencies—with proven results. Advertisements Placed in various Small Business Exchange Northeast digital publications each month,

Targeted mailings sent to businesses chosen according to your criteria **Live Call Center Follow-Up**

Telephone follow-up calls using a script of

five questions that you define **Computer Generated Reports**

into your proposal, along with a list of interested firms to contact

Special Services Custom design and development of services that you need for particular situations such

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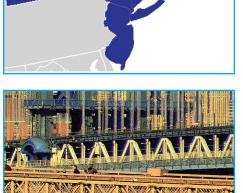
at www.sbenortheast.com **Special Follow-Up Services**

as small business marketing, diversity goal completion, and agency capacity building Call for more information: 800-800-8534









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How To Get Involved:

subcontracting opportunities on the

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center Expansion Project

LLTJV@moderntimesinc.com issues Notice of Interest (NOI) emails to all Lendlease Turner

by clicking through the NOI to the opportunities that match scopes of work they perform.

Owner: New York Convention Center Operating Corporation (New York, NY) The Lendlease Turner Joint Venture (LLTJV) will construct 1.2 million additional square feet of space expanding the nation's busiest convention center. The LLTJV team is reaching out to New York State certified MWBE-SDVOB firms to cultivate significant participation on the project.

registered vendors notifying them of upcoming 1st tier opportunities on the project. Firms respond

Register as a Vendor with Lendlease Turner JV Note : All NYS Empire State Development certified MWBE/SDVOB vendors are already registered

with LLTJV. Please contact us if your firm is not currently receiving LLTJV Notices of Interest by sending a note to: LLTJV@moderntimesinc.com **Get or Update Your Empire State Development MWBE & SDVOB Certificate:**

Seeking to be certified or re-certified? Visit https://esd.ny.gov/mwbe-new-certification to learn more about eligibility, requirements, and how to get started.

Have a question about certification?

Call the Empire State Development MWBE Hotline: (212) 803-2414 To get in touch, please contact: LLTJV@MODERNTIMESINC.COM

LLTJV seeks Empire State Development certified firms for every 1st Tier Subcontract Opportunity.

SKANSKA

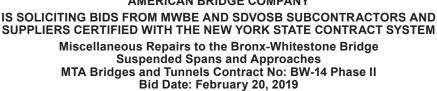
IS SOLICITING COST PROPOSALS FROM NEW YORK STATE CERTIFIED DBE SUBCONTRACTORS/VENDORS FOR THE FOLLOWING JOBS

Rehabilitation of the Major Deegan Expressway (1-87) in Bronx County NYS DOT Contract No. D263821 (NYS DBE)

Bid Date: February 15, 2019 D263821, Rehabilitation of the Major Deegan Expressway (1-87) 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



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 **SKANSKA**

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

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IS SOLICITING COST PROPOSALS FROM NEW YORK STATE CERTIFIED

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.

Julia.Omanoff@skanska.com • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled **SKANSKA**

If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska's Outreach Coordinator:

Americans Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design, enhance customer experience at the

acoustical tile ceilings, lighting, tile, masonry, glazing, stair treads, stainless steel doors, gypsum board, painting, concrete, rebar, station signage, dewatering, rodent control, abatement of bird droppings, dumpsters, office cleaning, progress photographs, engineer's office computers/equipment/furniture. If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska's Outreach Coordinator:

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 Description of Project: Accessibility Upgrades at Sixth Avenue Station on the Canarsie Line (BMT) in the Borough of Manhattan—make the station accessible by complying with the 2010

station, make the station easier to navigate, and facilitate increased ridership on the $\bar{N}YCT$ System. Bidding Opportunities: electrical work, communications work (CCTV, cameras, monitors, network, fire alarm), HVAC, plumbing, fire protection, elevators, structural steel, railings, asbestos abatement,

EAST EVENTS FOR YOUR BUSINESS rramsey@ucedc.com

Julia.Omanoff@skanska.com • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled

Wednesday, February 27, 2019, 5:30 pm-7:00 pm business or organization, the government needs Acton Public Library, 60 Old Boston Post Road, to purchase goods and services in order to function Old Saybrook, CT effectively. This seminar will provide small Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration, Southeastern Connecticut SCORE business owners with a general understanding

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

Want to know how to do business with the State

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

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

Government Contracting

Contact: Anne Driscoll, 860-388-9508,

anne.driscoll@scorevolunteer.org

Fee: Free; registration required

Liberty Hall Corporate Center, 1085 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ

Contact: Rogers Ramsey, 908-527-1166,

Main Sponsor(s): Women's Enterprise Development

Contact: Cynthia Marsh-Croll, 845-363-6432, cmarsh-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

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

of government contracting and the federal

Women Empowering Women Thursday, March 7, 2019, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm

procurement process. Learn how to increase your

chance of winning federal government contracts.

Homewood Suites by Hilton Newburgh-Stewart

Airport Hotel, 180 Breunig Road, New Windsor, NY

to network with like-minded women. Topics include: finding the right mentor; how to create a win-win relationship; how to market yourself; effective networking.



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nation. For more than three decades, we have

and at www.sbenortheast.com Fax. Email. and Postal Solicitations

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Placed in various Small Business Exchange Northeast digital publications each month, and

Custom design and development of services that you need for particular situations such





