

Customer engagement, Authentication & fraud prevention, Financial services AI

Compelling conversations, part 4: Nuance and Australia's IAG virtual assistant 'Arlo the Koala' wins APAC Stevie® Award

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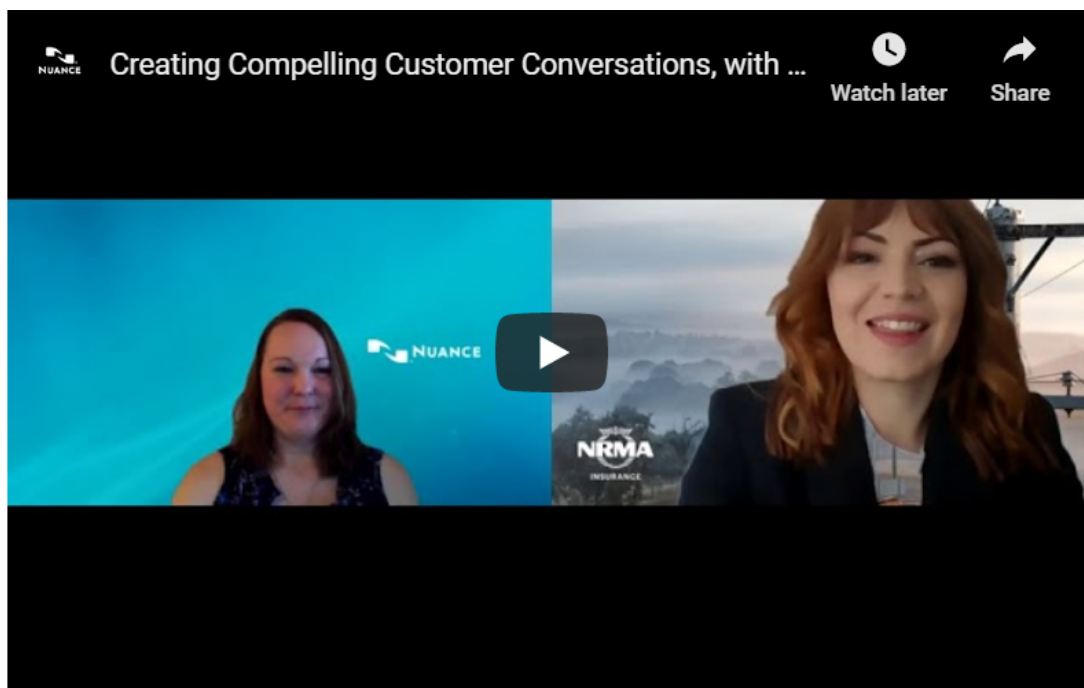
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In the latest Creating Compelling Customer Conversations webinar, we caught up with Insurance Australia Group (IAG) to discuss 'Arlo the Koala'—the award-winning, interactive virtual customer service assistant for Facebook Messenger, which drove strong customer engagement and fostered positive brand sentiment.

This week, Nuance took home another Stevie® Award, this time in the APAC region for our Innovative Use of Technology in Customer Service within the financial services industries for 'Arlo', Australian insurer NRMA's virtual assistant.

More than 100 executives around the world judged over 1,000 nominations from APAC organizations in the seventh annual [Asia-Pacific Stevie® Awards](#), which are widely considered the world's premier business awards recognising innovation in the workplace. The judges commended Nuance and IAG for leveraging technology to drive business sentiment for NRMA, while promoting the conservation of koalas.



Introducing Arlo – the latest in digital customer service

As part of our *Creating Compelling Customer Conversations* series, we caught up with Sinead Hoffman, Content & Social Media Lead at IAG, to learn more about the award-winning strategy with Arlo that achieved a significant increase in brand awareness and explosive customer engagement.

NRMA sought to increase its brand recognition in the home insurance category through a campaign that aligned the brand with a good cause—the conservation of koalas. With an impassioned above-the-line creative campaign running, our Nuance team used technology to create a customer-first approach to engage Australians.

This led to the creation of Arlo—the latest and greatest interactive virtual customer service assistant for Facebook Messenger, geared toward answering questions while providing insights into koala conservation. Using Nuance Virtual Assistant technology, Arlo was designed to engage NRMA's customers in intelligent, automated conversations—like no Australian insurer had before.

To optimize Arlo's user experience, we created multiple upfront responses that allowed for a more dynamic conversation with the customer, while artificial intelligence technology made the virtual assistant smarter and smarter over time to enable more interactions. Dynamic conversations provided an organic feel to dialog and significantly reduced repetitiveness, keeping customers engaged for longer.

We equipped Arlo with a range of engaging elements that expanded its persona and conversational ability, including jokes, quizzes and even the ability to 'boop' the koala's nose or give him a hug. Interactions with Arlo helped to humanise the NRMA brand and create a deeper customer connection, while raising awareness of koalas as an endangered species.

During the 2019 Australian bushfire crisis, 80% of users wanted to know if Arlo was 'okay'. Our team worked with IAG to swiftly pivot Arlo's conversations from a conservation message to one of help to meet evolving customer expectations. This allowed Arlo to answer inbound enquiries like "How can I help koalas who are in the fire?" with information on how to aid bushfire-injured koalas found in the wild and show people how to volunteer or donate through charity partners.

In line with NRMA's bushfire support, its customers supported IAG to plant almost 800 trees in November alone to help preserve the natural environment of the koala population.

During Arlo's initial deployment in August 2019 to January 2020, the chat bot created an engaging and versatile experience for NRMA that exceeded all forecasts for interaction and revenue generated.

Chat with Arlo yourself: [try it out here!](#)

Tags: Retail, Customer service strategy, Customer success story, Customer engagement solutions, Awards, Stevie awards



About Sebastian Reeve

Seb Reeve is a customer experience industry leader who is always seeking to provide thought-leadership, lateral-thinking and decision-support for Fortune 1000 Enterprises who are both his customers and partners. Reeves has more than fifteen years of experience in deploying technologies to improve the user experience. In his current role at Nuance as EMEA Director of Product Management and Marketing, he is responsible for defining and evangelizing the Nuance customer care proposition across Europe, the Middle-East and Africa – sharing how companies can create extraordinary automated experiences which their customers actively choose to use rather than simply tolerate and complain about, promoting best practices in AI and Machine Learning to the world of Customer Experience.



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