COLAB, enable the Virginia Lottery's new Alexa app!

COLAB gives the Virginia Lottery a new voice with an Amazon Alexa Skill.

The Virginia Lottery generates hundreds of millions of dollars each year to help fund Virginia's K-12 public schools. In order to accomplish that remarkable feat, the Lottery must ensure it can reach its customers where they live and work on a daily basis.

The Problem

Digital technologies are changing the behaviors of consumers in dramatic ways. When, where, and how we consume information today is vastly different now than it was a decade ago, as television, radio, and newsprint give way to smartphones, tablets, and devices with virtual assistant software.

As traditional customer communication channels have fallen into sharp decline, the Virginia Lottery must evolve its consumer interaction strategy to embrace the digital transformations that continue to reshape our world.

The Solution

As of August 2018, almost a third of Americans own a voice-activated smart speaker, which is likely to jump to one half by 2019. Alexa on the Amazon Echo, Siri on the iPhone, iPad, and HomePod, and Google Assistant on Android devices and Google Home, among others, widely are becoming the preferred sources of news and information for consumers.

COLAB approached the Virginia Lottery with a roadmap for building a presence on these smart devices, beginning with an Alexa app, followed by apps for Google Assistant and Siri.

The first step was creating a cloud-based Virginia Lottery Alexa app, which could handle the basics: allowing Alexa users to ask for the latest winning numbers, the dates and times of the next big drawings, current jackpot amounts, and for available games.

Future enhancements to the app will allow Virginia Lottery customers to access more of the Lottery's content through the device, and may even offer games built for the specific purpose of being played through Alexa, Siri, and Google Assistant.

COLAB's cloud-based architectural design of the Alexa app was made with these future enhancements in mind, as well as how this platform can service apps for Google Home, Siri, and others. This was a critical part of the roadmap COLAB presented to the Virginia Lottery. Building an Alexa app may be smart, but building a platform that can support integrations with other virtual assistant systems is a much better return on the Lottery's investment in the future.

The Outcome

The Virginia Lottery is proudly one of the first lotteries to make information available via Alexa.

"Alexa helps us empower our players by providing quick, easy access to drawing results and other consumer information," said Virginia Lottery Executive Director Kevin Hall.

COLAB is helping the Virginia Lottery stay ahead of the curve in the ever-changing landscape of digital communication and interaction, giving the Lottery a voice where its customers are asking questions and listening to the answers.

Check out the Alexa Skill here: https://www.amazon.com/COLAB-Multimedia-Virginia-Lottery/dp/B07KXWVWQZ/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1544807394&sr=8-1&keywords=virginia+lottery

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Paragraph Summary

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