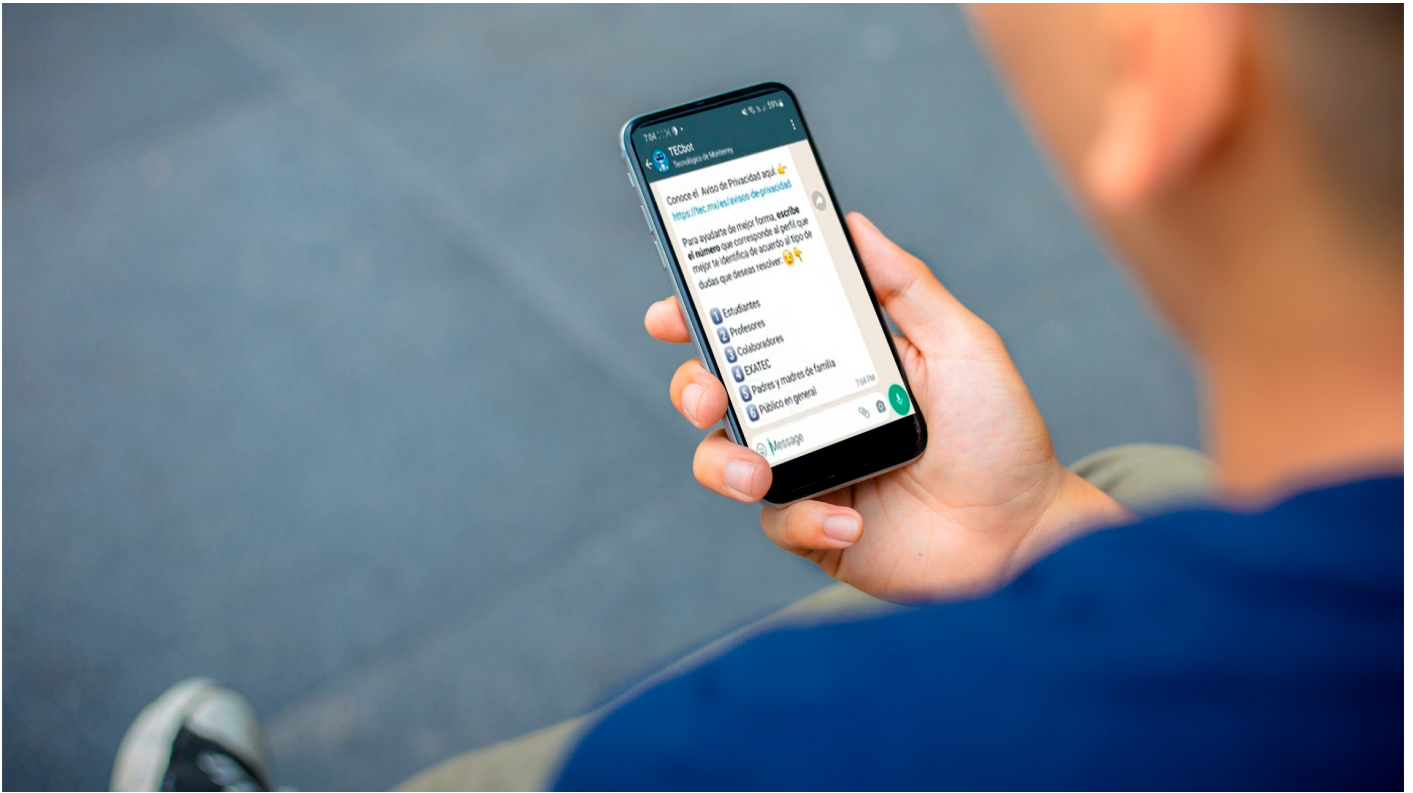# Tec's virtual assistant wins international chatbot competition

Tec de Monterrey's virtual assistant **TECbot** was a winner at the **2022 Planeta Chatbot Awards**, hosted by a leading organization in conversational technology with artificial intelligence.

TECbot received an award in the Chatbot category after competing internationally against other virtual assistants from organizations and companies in various regions of the Spanish-speaking world.

*"We were able to **compete against companies from around the world** that are also developing this type of technology. Receiving this recognition helps us confirm that we're on the right track,"* said **Lucero Sotomayor***, Information Management leader for the TECbot program.

This year, the **Tec's virtual assistant** received the award along with **Natura,** a chatbot from **Spanish company Freshly Cosmetics**, which won in the Startup category.

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Recognizing TECbot's features

The winners of the **Planeta Chatbot Awards** were chosen by a jury made up of **service and artificial intelligence** specialists and professionals who evaluated the features and functionalities of the chatbots and voicebots.

Antonieta Morales, a digital communication strategist for the **TECbot** project, said that the jury chose the winners based the following metrics:

- *User experience*
- *Cognitive ability*
- *Level of success in the tasks for which it was developed*
- *Sector innovation*

*"The jury evaluated these four parameters, and we were the winners based on their votes. We believe that **we're well positioned as innovators** in our sector and we're happy with the level of satisfaction users experience with TECbot,"* said Morales.

As a result of winning the chatbot competition, the **TECbot design team** will receive an invitation to share their progress at one of the 2023 events organized by the website that specializes in conversational technology.

TECbot: Tec's virtual assistant

The technology used by the TECbot virtual assistant allows it to connect to Tec de Monterrey's **information and financial systems** to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff, as well as parents.

Antonieta Morales said that **Microsoft Azure artificial intelligence** has been used for its development, an ecosystem that allowed them to integrate services infrastructure, data, and artificial intelligence strategies.

*"Thanks to this set of connections, TECbot is able to **identify and interact with users** and based on that information, offer personalized services such as student balance checks and enrollment periods,"* explained Morales.

Tecbot offers assistance and advice to students, faculty, and staff, as well as parents through the Tec's **mitec** website and app, Canvas, and also to external parties through **WhatsApp** or by calling *811 625 5123*.

TECbot is currently capable of solving **133 service issues** and carrying out **35 automated processes** for different audiences, which in the opinion of its developers makes it a **multipurpose chatbot**.

*"One of the TECbot developers' goals is to expand its capacity to be able to **answer any questions** or queries that users may have,"* added Morales.

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TECbot challenges and evolution

In 2021, Tec launched the **TECbot** virtual assistant, which was initially intended to support student enrollment at the Monterrey campus, but its range of operations was then expanded to other audiences and services.

Sotomayor said that one of the main challenges was the limitation of technology and understanding what type of **architecture** would allow the **project to be scalable** so that it could expand and serve different audiences.

"From the beginning, the architecture was defined with certain characteristics that allowed it to **expand organically** *so that* **TECbot** *could continue providing a good service without changing the architecture of the solution,"* said Sotomayor.

At the same time, developers faced the challenge of understanding the different areas of operation in which it now provides a service.

"We visited those functional areas, **to learn about their customer service processes**, *and transferred knowledge and restructured it so that TECbot could understand and upload all the data,"* added Lucero Sotomayor.

What's more, the Tec's virtual assistant is kept up to date thanks to an information structure that allows the different service processes to be modified.

*"This award has given us the encouragement and drive to continue **expanding and improving TECbot** to develop it into a third-generation assistant that is capable of giving us recommendations based on our behavior,"* said the Information Management leader of the TECbot program.

https://conecta.tec.mx/sites/default/files/inline-images/TECbot-tec-de-monterrey-las-mas-innovadoras.jpg

About the Planeta Chatbot Awards

These awards are sponsored by **[Planeta Chatbot](#)**, a leading website for **information on conversational technology and artificial intelligence** that recognizes initiatives in the Spanish-speaking world.

Carmen Reyes, manager of Enabling Solutions for Analytics, Business Intelligence, and Information Management at the Tec said that this award is an **international recognition** of the institution's efforts.

*"The fact that other organizations recognize and appreciate the **value of our work** is proof that we know how to do things very well in this institution and of the **talent of those people** who make things happen,"* said Reyes.

This year, the jury was made up of specialists from companies such as **Amazon Web Services, Google Cloud Platform, and Telefónica**, among other institutions.

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