IBM Newsroom

IBM Collaborated with the City of Seoul, South Korea to Develop an AI-based Virtual Assistant for its Citizens using IBM Watson

The city of Seoul's 'I Care You' project is using IBM Watson Assistant running on IBM public cloud to gather citizens' opinions on the COVID-19 pandemic

ARMONK, N.Y., Aug. 20, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- IBM (NYSE: IBM) and the city of Seoul, South Korea, have launched an AI-based virtual assistant for Seoul citizens using IBM Watson Assistant. The virtual assistant is part of the city's "I Care You" project, which is designed to survey the changes to daily life and difficulties that citizens are experiencing due to the COVID-19 pandemic to help inform policy decisions moving forward.

With cases in more than 216 countries, areas or territories according to the World Health Organization, COVID-19 is changing what normal means for customers, citizens, businesses, government agencies and healthcare organizations all over the world.

"Through this survey using an AI-based virtual assistant, we have an opportunity to understand the situation and social problems of citizens due to COVID-19," said Seon-Ae Jeong, the Director-General of Seoul Innovation. "This collaboration with IBM is a meaningful example of a public-private partnership. In the future, the results will be utilized to help develop various policies in Seoul City."

The city of Seoul's new AI-based virtual assistant will survey Seoul citizens and then perform categorization and analysis of the gathered information to help policymakers. The survey contains questions about the changes caused by COVID-19, such as changes in health, problems with social isolation or environmental factors leading to vulnerabilities. It also asks about the difficulties caused by overall changes in daily life patterns (e.g. eating habits, free time, social interaction) and those caused by institutional policies. The survey is being carried out through the website of the city of Seoul as well as its social media channels. Any citizen living in the city of Seoul is eligible to take part in the survey.

IBM South Korea worked with the city of Seoul throughout the entire process from training and development of the virtual assistant to collecting citizen opinions, analysis and service planning to make the "I Care You" project available for use in just three weeks. The virtual assistant, which is hosted on IBM public cloud, is developed with Watson Assistant for virtual agents and uses the enterprise AI search capabilities of IBM Watson Discovery to perform categorization and analysis of the gathered information.

The city of Seoul is the latest organization to use IBM Watson Assistant to manage the high volume of engagement with citizens, using the solution to communicate changes and collect opinions, and provide insights to foster safety, and work smart throughout the pandemic. IBM Watson Assistant has been used in 25 countries and counting to help manage COVID-19 response.

For more information about how Watson Assistant is being used in COVID response, visit: https://www.ibm.com/watson/covid-response.

For more information about how businesses in any industry can use Watson Assistant, visit: https://www.ibm.com/cloud/watson-assistant/.

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