Dallas Fort Worth International Airport Continues Collaboration with Soul Machines to Improve the Traveler's Experience with AI

DFW shares update on Digital Iris – digital airport concierge assists busy travelers and offers a seamless experience for arriving at future destinations

SAN FRANCISCO – October 11, 2022 – Soul Machines, the company pioneering the use of autonomously animated, AI-powered customer care solutions to help improve the traveler experience, today announced significant progress made at the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW). Digital Iris is the newest member of the DFW team and the world's first example of the Soul Machines' "Digital Person" product built to assist airport visitors at information kiosks. Inspired by in-depth research of traveler needs, Digital Iris is a hyper-realistic, animated digital persona who can hear, see, understand, and communicate with appropriate facial expressions and gestures based on the responses and expressions shown by the customer – all in real-time. Since the pilot program's initial rollout in June, Digital Iris has been operating in Terminal B and has already managed thousands of conversations.

Digital Iris provides travelers with up-to-the-minute, location-based information on Flight and Gate Information, Restaurant Information, Interactive Map Detail, Airport Support, and Service Details, all with empathy and engagement. Completely touchless, Digital Iris elevates the customer experience with voice-controlled, on-demand answers to questions in a way similar to how passengers would naturally interact with a human airport representative. Digital Iris' likeness and animation were created by Soul Machines and its speech and artificial intelligence were built using IBM's Watson Assistant technology. While Soul Machines provides Digital Iris' subconscious AI, comprised of emotional detection and response as well as autonomous animation, Watson Assistant provides conscious AI response, such as understanding questions and providing responses.

Digital Iris was designed to augment airport support staff and help service guests who tend to be less frequent travelers and less comfortable leveraging online resources. Each kiosk where Digital Iris resides has a directional microphone, speaker and camera. The camera gives Digital Iris vision to detect a customer and the mic enables Digital Iris to hear passengers' unique requests. DFW plans to expand the use of Digital Iris throughout the airport so it can continue to learn and evolve its organizational knowledge over time.

"In an era when the air travel industry is up against serious logistical challenges, maximizing both efficiency and customer experience is more important than ever," said Greg Cross, CEO of Soul Machines. "That's why the work of DFW to embrace the concept of Digital People and introduce Digital Iris to its travelers is commendable. With core functions powered by Soul Machines, artificial intelligence capabilities being driven from an industry leader, IBM, and guidance and feedback from DFW's teams, Digital Iris continues to pioneer the autonomous animation revolution. As the airport's travelers are already discovering, the potential of visual AI is huge and we are only just scratching the surface of what's possible."

 "AI and automation are providing businesses with the capabilities they need to deliver more personalized and seamless customer care experiences, while enabling their employees to focus on complex higher value tasks," said Dinesh Nirmal, General Manager for Data, AI and Automation at IBM. "The launch of the Digital Iris solution at Dallas Fort Worth International Airport is a great example of how AI can be applied to set a new standard for travelers and help support airport employees."

 Soul Machines AI technology controls Digital Iris' CGI-based appearance and animation, and interface to AI and Enterprise platforms. Soul Machines' Autonomous Animation drives real-time gestures including lip sync, gaze, facial muscles, head motion, and behavioral mannerism, all emotionally appropriate to the intensity of the conversation. IBM Watson Assistant allows Digital Iris to understand the verbal requests of passengers. It has a complete toolchain of Speech-to-Text (STT), conversational analytics, and Text-to-Speech (TTS) capabilities. In addition to enabling an interactive conversation, the AI technology connects via APIs to data sources like flight information, weather, etc.

IBM Watson Assistant uses AI designed to understand customers in context to help provide fast, consistent, and accurate answers across applications, devices, or channels. IBM Watson Assistant has been deployed by clients around the world and across a range of industries to deliver powerful customer care experiences such as responding to time-sensitive COVID-19 inquiries, helping citizens get more information on voting procedures, helping insurers provide more personalized services, and more.

About Soul Machines

Soul Machines is a leader in the creation of autonomously animated Digital People in the digital worlds of today and the metaverse. The company brings Digital Workforces to life for some of the biggest brands in the world as they imagine and innovate the future of brand interaction and personal customer experience in the way they do business. Focused on creating the future of Customer Experience, Soul Machines Digital People deliver highly personalized brand experiences for global brands including NESTLÉ® TOLL HOUSE®, P&G, Twitch, The World Health Organization, The Pan American Health Organization and more. For more information about Soul Machines, visit www.soulmachines.com

About IBM

IBM is a leading provider of global hybrid cloud and AI, and consulting expertise. We help clients in more than 175 countries capitalize on insights from their data, streamline business processes, reduce costs and gain the competitive edge in their industries. Nearly 3,800 government and corporate entities in critical infrastructure areas such as financial services, telecommunications and healthcare rely on IBM's hybrid cloud platform and Red Hat OpenShift to affect their digital transformations quickly, efficiently and securely. IBM's breakthrough innovations in AI, quantum computing, industry-specific cloud solutions and consulting deliver open and flexible

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About Dallas Fort Worth International Airport

Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) is one of the most connected airports in the world. Centered between owner cities Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas, DFW Airport also serves as a major job generator for the North Texas region by connecting people through business and leisure travel. For more information, visit the DFW website or download the DFW Mobile App for iOS and Android devices.

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