Action for Children uses emotion-interpreting AI to encourage charitable donations

With Capgemini's Applied Innovation Exchange as its partner, Action for Children opened a pop-up shop as part of its Secret Santa campaign and introduced Elf.ai to help visitors select gifts that sparked emotional connections.

Fostering charitable actions within the UK

Generosity is a core part of the human condition and is seen every single day through gestures both large and small. Through selfless acts, people all over the world take care of each other, providing much-needed help and hope for the less fortunate. Action for Children has spent the last 150 years doing everything it can to protect and support children and young people. This effort has formed a core part of the organisation's vision to ensure that every child has a safe and happy childhood.

Overview

Client Challenge: Action for Children wanted to expand upon their Christmas campaign, Secret Santa, by opening a two-week-long pop-up shop supported by AI and digital technology.

Solution: Partnering with Capgemini's Applied Innovation Exchange, Action for Children introduced Elf.ai, an emotion-detecting artificial intelligence solution, as well as other interactive digital elements to drive wider engagement with its audience.

Benefits:
- Action for Children achieved 160% of its pop-up shop donation goal
- 93% of the 550 visitors who used Elf.ai went on to make donations
- Greater interaction with social media
- Streamlined experience for charitable donations

Capgemini

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Action for Children

Two years ago, Action for Children began its Secret Santa campaign, which is a Christmas-themed donation plan through which donators can purchase presents that range from hot meals to trips to pantomimes to presents for at-risk and vulnerable children. Following the programme's success in year one as a purely digital experience, Action for Children wanted to find ways to expand and improve in year two.

To compete for the public's attention amidst a crowded field of worthy causes, the charity decided to draw from the latest trends in retail to create a pop-up shop for 2 weeks around Christmas time that would use digital principles to excite and engage with its audience. As part of this effort, Action for Children partnered with Capgemini's Applied Innovation Exchange, which brought substantial experience in retail and the latest digital technologies to pair with the charity's vision.

Supporting an emotional donation journey with AI

Together, Action for Children and Capgemini's Applied Innovation Exchange took a long look at how the charity wanted its store to operate and the numerous opportunities for innovation that could be pursued. Ultimately, Action for Children and Capgemini's Applied Innovation Exchange agreed to use artificial intelligence (AI) at the core of the solution in the new store while adding digital interfaces to make the entire experience more interactive for customers. With this vision established, the partners began to develop the technology needed to support the shop.

The core of the new store experience was Elf.ai, a gift-predicting system that can detect potential donators' reactions to different options. Built specifically for the Action for Children Secret Santa pop-up shop, this AI solution monitored users' emotional reactions while they used a smart screen to browse through a variety of visuals showing them gifting options. Then, Elf.ai recommended specific gifts for each individual based on their reactions. This solution allowed customers to bypass the usual process of browsing through a stock and instead be directed to specific options that will appeal to them on an emotional level.

In addition to this innovative AI solution, further interaction opportunities were added within the store, providing guests with the ability to connect their in-store experience with social media. Once a user selected a gift, he or she had an opportunity to be transformed into a digital Secret Santa character that could be shared on any social platform. The combination of Elf.ai and an interactive environment created a store that could reach a wider audience and provide a more emotionally impactful donating experience.

> "Elf.ai really added value to the in-store experience for visitors, adding a fun dimension and helping them to choose how they wanted to interact with and support us. Over 500 people participated in the AI experience and remarkably - and wonderfully - almost all of them supported one of our vulnerable children."

Lara Palmer
Brand Marketing Manager
Action for Children

Greater interactivity drives audience engagement

The pop-up store provided a swell of audience engagement with the campaign. Over the two-week period leading up to Christmas that the shop was open, 550 customers used Elf.ai, and after doing so, 93% of them went on to support Action for Children through a donation. The overall campaign raised over 160% of its donation target with Elf.ai contributing to this increased fundraising as well..

Through this project, Action for Children and Capgemini's Applied Innovation Exchange explored new ways to drive support and interest in charity activity. Digital technology and AI in particular have demonstrated the impact innovation can have on the in-store experience as well as the importance of having a plan for expanding engagement with the audience. With a more multi-faceted approach that still included an online portal but also integrated an in-store experience with new digital elements, the charity has demonstrated the capabilities of physical locations in a time when many industries are increasingly focused on online activity.

With the growing success of its Secret Santa campaign across the first two years of its existence, Action for Children is ready to continue innovating in order to expand its charity work.

Through future projects like Elf.ai, the organisation will continue to work towards its vision of a UK where every child has a safe and happy childhoods.

About Capgemini

A global leader in consulting, technology services and digital transformation, Capgemini is at the forefront of innovation to address the entire breadth of clients' opportunities in the evolving world of cloud, digital and platforms. Building on its strong 50-year heritage and deep industry-specific expertise, Capgemini enables organisations to realise their business ambitions through an array of services from strategy to operations. Capgemini is driven by the conviction that the business value of technology comes from and through people. It is a multicultural company of almost 220,000 team members in more than 40 countries. The Group reported 2019 global revenues of EUR 14.1 billion.

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About Action for Children

We believe every child and young person in the country should have a safe and happy childhood and the foundations they need to thrive. Action for Children protects and supports vulnerable children and young people by providing practical and emotional care and support, ensuring their voices are heard and campaigning to bring lasting improvements to their lives. With 476 services in communities across the country, the charity helps more than 387,000 children, teenagers, parents and carers a year.

Learn more about us at
www.actionforchildren.org.uk

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