

**Reto Kaeser (alias Kyle Reese) and Alessandro U. Viretta (alias Terminator)
present**

I'll be back

...

what Terminator and the recent trends in web communication have in common

ASUT Lunch-Talk Sept 23, 2016

A very brief history of instant messaging

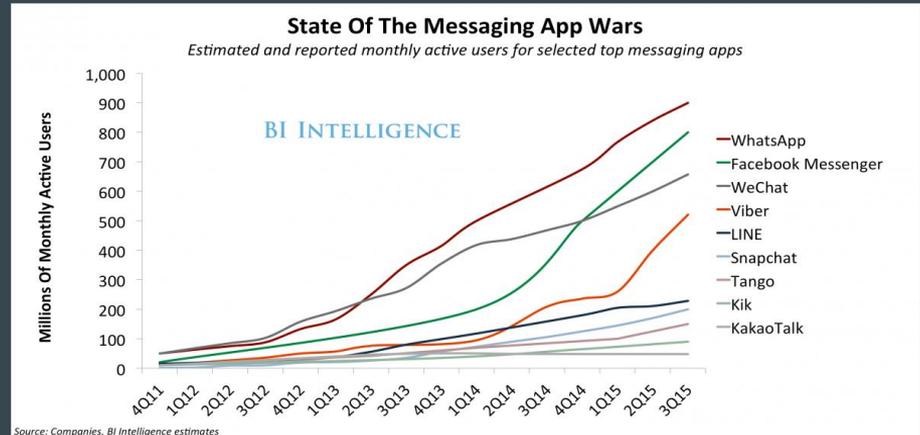
The mid-60's saw MIT's CTSS which was arguably the first "chat" platform

The 80's: 1982 with the C64 with Q-Link (later AOL) and 1988 Internet Relay Chat (IRC)

The 90's brought us ICQ in 1996 and one year later AOL's AIM and of course **SMS** in 1992.

Whatsapp was founded in 2009 - in March 2015 Whatsapp was sending 30bn P2P messages per day vs. 20bn SMS

(Side note: by June 2016 100m voice calls per day were being made on Whatsapp)



Why is messaging so interesting?

There is not a “market for messaging” anymore than there has ever been a singular “market for email”.

Mobile-centric messaging is a paradigm with a clear set of user expectations

Asynchronous by default, synchronous when appropriate

Long lived, multi-topic conversations (mirror of our real life)

The conversation list (reflects importance of relationships)

The comfort of messaging

“I believe comfort, not convenience, is the most important thing in software, and text is an incredibly comfortable medium. Text-based interaction is fast, fun, funny, flexible, intimate, descriptive and even consistent in ways that voice and user interface often are not.”

Jonathan Libov

Which raises the question - If messaging is so useful and so popular...
why only message with friends and family?

Forget apps: Let's just send a message

The challenge of Apps: Develop, get approval, get people to download and get the same people to enable a bunch of permissions

Because of *app fatigue* we use on average 3 to 7 apps

Downloading apps and navigating between them can be a hassle

25% of downloaded apps are abandoned after a single use!

Remember how we moved from desktop app to browser app?

Now messaging apps are becoming the new os/platform

It's just messages: No need to learn user interfaces

<https://techcrunch.com/2015/09/29/forget-apps-now-the-bots-take-over/>

<http://www.economist.com/news/business-and-finance/21696477-market-apps-maturing-now-one-text-based-services-or-chatbots-looks-poised>

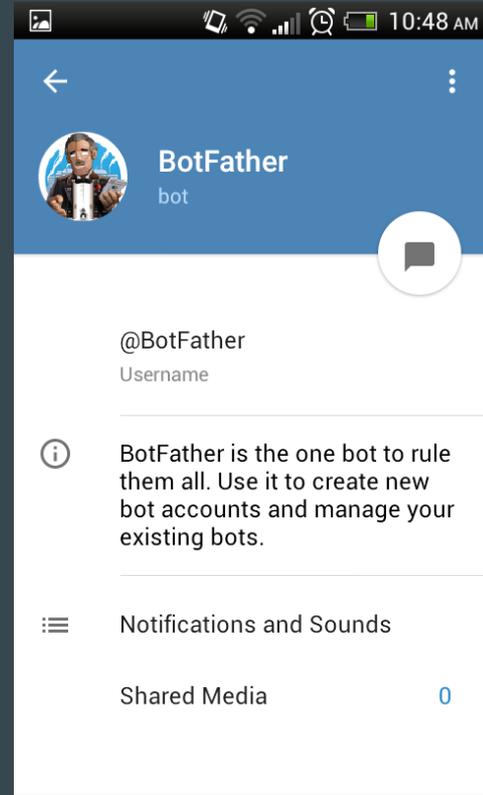
Bot: A kind of smart software agent

IRC bots have been around since the early times

Slackbot: personal assistant and helpful bot

Telegram launches a bot API in June 2015

To create a bot just chat the BotFather!



The rise of the bots

Enablers

Identity - resulting in rich context

The ability to mix and match human & machine interaction thanks to AI (no voice parsing)

HTML5/CSS3 (<http://azumbrunnen.me/>)

Official hype start: Jan 19, 2016

Present status

“2016 will be the year of conversational commerce.”

Over 3'700 GitHub “slack bot” repositories

Over 4'600 GitHub “telegram bot” repositories

Chris Messina, inventor of the #hashtag

The Valley's and one Swiss bet (a small sample)



Digit checks your spending habits and saves money from your bank account.



VIV is an intelligent interface to everything (under dev)



Sudo lets you talk to your CRM (under dev).



Eternime creates an immortal bot that chat like you do (after death).



Schedules and shifts meetings to optimize agenda

The bot problem

*“That Terminator is out there.
It can't be reasoned with, it can't be bargained with.”*

We have neural networks, deep learning, AlphaGo

Computers are still dumb as a box of rocks

Semantics (“Meaning”) is a hard nut to crack

Bots are not another mind, are not “aware”

AI is still just an illusion of intelligence (sorry for ruining your day)

<https://www.technologyreview.com/s/602094/ai-language-problem/>



Half human, half machine

Some companies, like x.ai, employ humans

...pretending to be robots

...pretending to be humans.



That's clearly a problem,
for users and investors alike.

Hasta la vista, baby

Awesome.ai, ranked among the top five “Brilliant Bots” in the Slack App Store.

Funded
Dec 2015

Folded
Aug 2016

That was fast!

Are bots doomed?



We don't think so

From A.I. to I.A. (Intelligence Augmentation)

Anyway, human-like A.I. is not going to happen any time soon

Bots might replace some apps, but that's not so relevant...

The good news is that:

Bots will become pervasive and blend into our lives

Bot will augment our intelligence (that's I.A.)

Bots will free up time for what we do best: **creativity, innovation**

Make humans giddy by a different user interface

Simple

It has low barriers to entry for devs and users alike, it needs no install, it's always working in the background.

Friendly

It speaks our language, it's structured as stories, it delivers information if and when it's needed.

Work in progress



For digitalSTROM AG: adaptive and learning concierge bot for home automation (demoed at IFA 2016 in Berlin)

For a NY company: bot assistant for fast-food managers to spot frauds, keep track of performance, improve up-selling, monitor service quality

For a fintech startup: bot advisor to augment or replace person-to-person interactions by learning user profiles

Early stage project: Medgate-like bot doctor for medical triage

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