



Small company with global reach makes connections using AI

Stiky provides 24x7 customer service, answering up to 90% of queries automatically

by Michelle Cloutier
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What parent has not lamented the fact that children often return from school without important belongings such as hats, gloves, notebooks and even textbooks? One such mother decided to solve that problem by starting a label-making company in her garage in Barcelona, Spain.

Today, The Stikets Company, S.L. is a global company, selling its stickers and adhesive product solutions to families and businesses in more than 30 countries, using 15 languages and supporting 12 currencies around the globe. It provides specific marketing to 25 countries and offers support from



help desks in the Philippines, Spain and Colombia.

The company fulfills more than 350,000 orders annually, with many of those occurring seasonally—for example, during the back-to-school rush that takes place around the world.

During those weeks, frantic parents request information from Stikets customer service channels, which Stikets supports using the Zendesk chat solution to connect customers with live agents. However, thanks to the company's exponential growth, there could be long lag times

between a customer request and an agent's response.

"We know that there's a direct correlation between how fast you can solve a problem and the conversion rate," says Antoni Ribas, Cofounder of Stikets. "You need to convert a question or doubt into a sale, even if it comes in at two in the morning."

Unfortunately, customers were waiting up to 24 hours for a response to even simple questions, reducing the chance that they would purchase from Stikets. It wasn't ideal for the company's help desk agents, either. "We want them to dedicate their time to solving the most challenging questions and guiding our customers into the purchase journey, not answering the same questions over and over," says Ribas.

Stikets decided to address this challenge by implementing an AI-

enabled virtual assistant solution. Although Stikets employs only around 50 people, Ribas strongly believes that AI is critical to the future of the business. "I believe that if you don't have AI, you will be out of business in the next few years," he says.

But it wasn't just about finding a solution to a single problem. According to Ribas: "We wanted to invest in the technology, not just in a solution. And to invest in the technology we had to work hand in hand with somebody who knows AI and is in it for the long term." That's when the company found IBM Business Partner Enzyme Advising Group, experts in AI and digital transformation.

Furthermore, because Stikets operates almost entirely in the cloud, whatever AI solution it found had to be cloud-based, compatible with its

other systems and platforms, and scalable with the seasonal nature of the business. Enzyme recommended the [IBM Watson® Assistant](#) virtual assistant solution, running on [IBM Cloud®](#).

"We saw that IBM Cloud would offer us the flexibility to start with a customized but dependable solution and scale it to what we do," says Ribas. The IBM Watson Assistant solution would allow Stikets to minimize its infrastructure investment through a solution-as-a-service (SaaS) payment model. "This is our first step into cognitive technology and artificial intelligence. But we know that this is not going to be the only one; this is going to be the first of many."

“With Sticky, our customers are clearly getting 24x7 attention. It’s something that we didn’t have before.”

Antoni Ribas, Cofounder,
The Stikets Company, S.L.

Stiky, the AI virtual assistant, resolves up to

90%

of queries

Stiky conducts on average

165

conversations daily

Customer satisfaction rating

92%

positive

AI virtual assistant provides real-time answers

Together, Stikets and Enzyme used IBM Watson Assistant technology running on IBM Cloud to develop a custom virtual assistant nicknamed Stiky. The virtual assistant provides around-the-clock support to customers by answering frequently asked questions about products, shipping, pricing and more. The IBM Watson Assistant solution integrates with the company's Zendesk application, which automatically creates help tickets that are routed to live agents for follow up.

Enzyme used agile methodology, and Stikets initially trained the virtual assistant on several basic responses for its Spanish page, to deploy a first



version of Stiky in just one week. Enzyme and Stikets then continued to enhance the solution, adding four more languages and training it to answer more complex questions. By mid-2020, Stikets had deployed the solution on 12 of its websites.

Deploying the fully functional virtual assistant took just 10 weeks, including integrating Stiky with the client's Zendesk platform. "It was a base hit," says Ribas. "Enzyme said it was going to take 10 weeks, and it did. I was very impressed by that."

Enzyme integrated its Enzyme Watson Accelerator technology, which is based on the Node-RED development tool, with the IBM Watson Assistant solution. The accelerator enriches the customer's inquiries with further intelligence. It defines input variables, contexts and conditions based on user input in Stiky, as well as outputs such as specific conversation behaviors and integration with other customer systems. It extends the IBM Watson Assistant functionality to include multichannel and multilanguage

management and third-party integrations. "We were able to do this very quickly because of the architecture of IBM Watson Assistant and IBM Cloud," says Isabel Celma, Director, Enzyme.

Enzyme also provided the integration services to link Stiky with the client's Zendesk solution to address the most complex questions that need help desk agent support. "We are happy to say that the integration has been seamless, which is something that I was initially worried about," says Ribas.

Ribas was also impressed by the seamless integration of the virtual assistant with its other systems. "It's not just integrated into one system," he says. "We have a customized e-commerce platform and other systems, and we were afraid this would disconnect them, but it didn't. I have to really congratulate the Enzyme people on this as well as our IT department. It was a great effort on both of their parts ... and they did an amazing job."

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Antoni Ribas, Cofounder, The Stikets Company, S.L.

Improving customer satisfaction and service

By working with Enzyme to develop a virtual assistant using the IBM Watson Assistant platform running on IBM Cloud, Stikets has increased its real-time support to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If Stiky cannot answer a question, the client's integrated Zendesk solution automatically generates a ticket, which customer service agents answer by email, often in under two hours—even during peak seasons.

Today, Stiky resolves 80% of all queries—up to 90% in Spain and conducts an average of 165 conversations daily. The virtual assistant covers a workload equivalent to 2.5 full time employees, freeing staff to focus on other, more pertinent tasks. After just a



few months of use, Stikets's integrated customer care system received a 92% positive customer satisfaction rating.

"We now have a much higher level of service," notes Ribas. "With Stiky, our customers are clearly getting 24x7 attention. It's something that we didn't have before."

After launching Stiky, Stikets made some interesting discoveries about its previous levels of customer service. "When we analyzed Stiky's conversations, we discovered that about 55% of interactions occurred outside of business hours," says Ribas. "I was upset. That meant that before Stiky, 55% of our customers' inquiries on our

website had to wait till the next day or even Monday for an answer—or the customers would just go to the competition.”

The company also discovered that it had previously lacked the capacity to answer all the questions it received during business hours. “So not only were we not attending to requests outside of business hours, but also within business hours we couldn’t even reply to the amount of questions that were coming in,” says Ribas. “Stiky put a stop to that.”

The virtual assistant also helped the company prepare for the back-to-school season in Spain in 2020. Because of ongoing uncertainty surrounding the government’s plans to reopen schools amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Stikets was unsure of when to gear up for the season. But, according to Ribas, “We saw the traffic go up on the virtual assistant about shipping, even though nobody really knew when school was

going to start.” When the government announced school reopening, Stikets and its customers were ready. “It’s something that without the virtual assistant we would not have been able to see. It wasn’t seeing the future, but it really gave us a sense of what the market wanted.”

Ribas has big plans for Stiky and for the IBM Watson Assistant solution. “Our goal is to see that Stiky becomes a virtual assistant for customers, guiding them through the whole sales process and leading them there with the technology,” he says. “And we have plans to use the IBM Watson technology for different functionality, for example, applying it more broadly in marketing and sales.”

As for a small company like his using AI technology widely throughout the organization, Ribas believes that now is the time for companies like Stikets to invest in AI and cloud technologies

for the future. “Five years ago, it was impossible to afford or to take such a big risk because the price would be too high,” he says. “But now it’s gotten to a point where it’s nonsense not to do it.”

A big part of his decision includes not only the IBM Watson technology, but also Stikets’s growing relationship with Enzyme. “We value the technology, the quality,” Ribas says. “But in our case, it’s also about the partner, not just about the technology.”

In return, Enzyme also plans to continue and grow its relationship with Stikets. “From the beginning, they were really clear that they wanted to grow up in cognitive and in the cloud,” says Celma. “They’re an agile company, and even though they’re small, they think really big.”

Ribas concludes, “This is the first step with Enzyme, and now we want to do many more projects.”



About The Stikets Company, S.L.

Established in 2010 by a mom who needed a better way to label her children’s belongings so they would not get lost, [Stikets](#) (external link) is a label manufacturer and distributor headquartered in Barcelona, Spain. Today, with only 50 employees, it produces an array of label solutions, including all-purpose, shoe, photo, iron-on, bag tags and custom labels. The company currently fulfills more than 350,000 orders per year from more than 30 countries, both for personal and professional use. Sales of 100% custom labels for the corporate sector now represent 12% of business volume.

Solution components

- IBM Cloud®
- IBM Watson® Assistant



About Enzyme Advising Group

IBM Business Partner [Enzyme](#) (external link) is a professional services firm based in Barcelona, Spain, that provides consulting and technology advice to companies around the globe to help them in the digital transformation of their business. The group helps its clients implement solutions and services that increase their profitability and enable them to respond to the new digital services that their customers demand. Enzyme employs approximately 75 people across its locations in Barcelona and Madrid.