

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/setting-user-expectations-for-ai>

When creating an AI product, says Voicea founder and Cisco Contact Center VP and GM Omar Tawakol, you have to be careful as you set user expectations. He compares the launch of Siri (which promised a lot and disappointed early adopters) with the launch of Alexa (which was more realistic, and delivered the basic functionality that users expected), and suggests that's it's best to carefully bound user expectations first, and then overdeliver.



Transcript

Those are really hard.. One of the things we learned from Google, we actually talked to the team at Google about this, is when they first started, what they did is, they said, you're gonna put in a key word or two, in the search engine, the very beginning.. And I'm gonna show you 10 links, and we think one of these 10 links will be useful.. Look at the humility of the framing of the problem.. It wasn't you're gonna say natural language, and I'm gonna show you exactly the one link you wanted.. So, it's an explicit interaction where you tell it, this is what I want, and it answers to you.. Look at Siri, when they launched, they started out with this, kind of really big advertising, with some of the best actors and actresses, setting your expectation that you're gonna have full on conversation.. And how did you feel about that? It kinda sucked.. It didn't work as well, and it took time for them to get better.. Alexa came in with the opposite framing..

They were like, hey, here's this thing, just tell it turn on the lights or set a timer, play a song and it'll do it.. And then over time it started growing skills.. So, look at the difference.. So we tried to do the same thing, blend, hey, make it easy for people to explicitly say, okay, EVA, schedule the next meeting for Monday at 10 a.m., thanks EVA.. Very explicit, and kinda do some implicit things, where it's just doing things in the background.. And this is just one of the really interesting problems when you're designing an AI product, is dealing with the fact that people have unbounded expectations as consumers, you gotta bound it, and over deliver on that bounding, so that you don't disappoint them...