

Case Study

An Interactive Expert Resource: How Avoxa delivers pharmaceutical and medical expertise via AI chatbot



Avoxa – Mediengruppe Deutscher Apotheker (German Pharmacists' Media Group) – is a subsidiary of ABDA (Federal Union of German Associations of Pharmacists) and comprises specialist pharmaceutical media, trade fairs, congresses, drug databases and digital services. Pharmazeutische Zeitung (PZ) is the leading specialist media outlet for pharmacists in Germany and reports on developments in professional and health policy, pharmaceutical research and practice, and current scientific developments. PTA-Forum is a specialist media outlet for pharmaceutical technical assistants and is published in conjunction with PZ.

The starting point: lots of information – but little dialogue

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians rely on reliable, up-to-date and comprehensible pharmaceutical and medical content in their daily work. The specialist media PZ and PTA-Forum offer exactly that – in the form of comprehensive, editorially reviewed knowledge archives.

The existing website search made it clear that there was still considerable potential for more convenient and efficient use. Particularly in the case of multi-layered and complex issues, there was an opportunity to better link content from different sources and subject areas. Even with context-sensitive

questions, it became apparent that a more concise and structured presentation of the available information could offer significant added value. In addition, targeted mobile optimisation of search queries promised to make use on smartphones and tablets much more user-friendly and reduce website abandonment.

Avoxa therefore concluded that PZ and PTA-Forum were not yet fully exploiting their potential in terms of usage intensity and click-through rates. The key challenge was to provide high-quality content in such a way that users could obtain clear and precise answers in the shortest possible time – through dialogue and without having to spend a lot of time searching.

This is exactly where 'Ask the AI of PZ and PTA-Forum' came in: an AI chatbot that accesses verified content from the PZ and PTA-Forum websites and generates context-sensitive, natural language answers that also respond to complex follow-up questions.



The AI chatbot 'Ask the AI of PZ and PTA-Forum' enables natural language dialogues with users.

Wie verändern die aktuellen Reformpläne im deutschen Gesundheitswesen? Speziell zur Apothekenstützung im ländlichen Raum?

Frag die KI von PZ und PTA-Forum ⓘ
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Kurz zusammengefasst: Die aktuellen Reformpläne zielen auf mehr Aufgaben, weniger Bürokratie und gezielte finanzielle Stützung – besonders für Landapoteken.

- Laut Artikel vom 16. September 2025: Landapoteken sollen über höhere Nacht- und Notdienstpauschalen kurzfristig gestärkt werden; der 20-Cent-Zuschlag für pDL wird dafür umgeleitet. Zusätzlich sind Zuschläge speziell für Landapoteken vorgesehen, mehr Zweigapotheken, flexiblere Öffnungszeiten und Personalregelungen (inkl. PTA-Weiterqualifizierung zur temporären Leitung/Vertretung). Außerdem sind Telepharmazie, erweiterte Austauschmöglichkeiten und das Ende der Nullretax aus Formgründen geplant. Impfen mit Totimpfstoffen und einfache Diagnostik in Apotheken sollen ausgebaut werden.
- Am 4. Dezember 2025 wurde berichtet: Das Kabinett soll am 17. Dezember das ApoVG beraten; Ziel bleibt die Stärkung ländlicher Apotheken und wirtschaftliche Verbesserung. Notfallreform: Apotheken sollen Notdienstpraxen versorgen; zudem ist eine Reform der Bonpflicht geplant.

Für den Kontext zu früheren Eckpunkten: Anpassungen am Honorar mit Anhebung des Fixums und Absenkung des prozentualen Anteils wurden bereits skizziert, plus Telepharmazie und Entbürokratisierung.

Möchten Sie Details zu den geplanten Zuschlägen oder zur PTA-Weiterqualifizierung lesen?

♀ Quellen

REFORM-FAIRPLAN
BMG: Referentenentwurf im Oktober

VORHABENLISTE
Kabinettsplanung mit «Apothekenstärkung»

Gib mir bitte Details zur Berichterstattung vom 4. Dezember 2025.

Frag die KI von PZ und PTA-Forum ⓘ
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Laut einem Artikel vom 4. Dezember 2025 steht das Apothekenversorgungs-Weiterentwicklungsgesetz (ApoVG) nach aktueller Planung am 17. Dezember auf der Kabinettsagenda; parallel ist die zugehörige Verordnung (ApBetrO/AmPreisV) noch nicht terminiert. Ziel der Reform: öffentliche Apotheken – vor allem im ländlichen Raum – durch Bürokratieabbau, mehr Eigenverantwortung und zusätzliche Versorgungsaufgaben zu stärken und ihre Wirtschaftlichkeit zu verbessern; das Gesetz soll nicht zustimmungsbedürftig sein. Zudem plant die Bundesregierung für Februar die Notfallreform mit flächendeckenden Integrierten Notfallzentren (INZ); Apotheken sollen Notdienstpraxen mit Arzneimitteln und apothekenpflichtigen Medizinprodukten versorgen, dazu sollen Versorgungsverträge geschlossen werden. Im Dezember wird außerdem ein Gesetz zur Kassenpflicht erwartet: stufenweise Abschaffung der Belegausgabepflicht und digitale Belege ab 1. Januar 2029; Einführung einer Kassenpflicht ab 100.000 Euro Umsatz ab 1. Januar 2027 und generelle Kassenpflicht ab 1. Januar 2029, plus strafrechtliche Maßnahmen. Möchten Sie die geplanten länderspezifischen Zuschläge und die Anhebung der Notdienstpauschale im Detail lesen?

♀ Quellen

VORHABENLISTE
Kabinettsplanung mit «Apothekenstärkung»

From idea to dialogue: Development of an RAG-based knowledge system

Avoxa, together with the editorial teams at PZ and PTA-Forum, decided to collaborate with Retresco in order to combine its own journalistic quality with specialised AI expertise. The aim was to develop an interactive, dialogue-based specialist information service in the form of a fully-fledged AI chatbot. This should be intuitive to use, offer high-quality content output and enable natural language dialogue. The focus was on low-barrier access, precise and context-sensitive answers, and genuine dialogue capability instead of one-shot answers.

The editorial archive of PZ and PTA-Forum served as basis. Retresco contributed its tried-and-tested RAG technology, including semantic retrieval, precise vector searches and automated parsing. Development took place in close, iterative collaboration between the editorial team and Retresco.

As part of the technical implementation, the archive material was standardised and harmonised, converted into structured chunks, vectorised and enriched with context-sensitive reference logic. In addition, a content pipeline was established for regular updates. The natural language dialogues are formulated using a common language model.

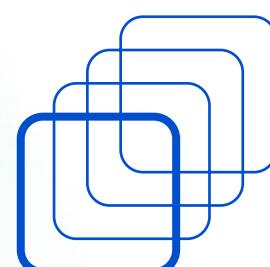
Particular emphasis was placed on seamless integration into the existing front end of PZ and PTA-Forum: the chatbot was embedded as a design-compliant widget and appears both on overview pages and within individual articles. An immediately visible, open question module makes it easy to get started, while curated sample questions provide guidance. Targeted follow-up questions also enable a multi-level dialogue, making the system an intuitive and technically reliable companion in everyday work.

The challenges on the path to a natural language dialogue system

The implementation of the AI chatbot combined two very different requirements: on the one hand, it had to take into account the latest health policy news, and on the other hand, it had to reliably process pharmaceutical and medical content that would remain valid in the long term. This balance between topicality and consistency required precise content control, which was made possible by a clearly defined content pipeline, stringent quality controls and a specifically weighted retrieval system. At the same time, natural language real-time dialogues placed high demands on precision and fluid conversations. Iterative prompt optimisations, closely timed test cycles and joint reviews ensured a precise, stable and consistently fluid dialogue flow.

Mobile optimisation also presented specific challenges: typing on small displays and navigating complex content made usage difficult in the past. Responsive design, one-tap access and sample questions, and clear user guidance proved to be effective measures in this regard. Relevance control in follow-up questions was also important. Dialogues can now be deepened with context-sensitive follow-up questions that are precisely tailored to the content.

To ensure maximum transparency, traceability and trustworthiness, information output is based exclusively on predefined primary sources and are subject to clear validation mechanisms. The result is an AI chatbot that provides reliable information and streams accurate real-time dialogues.



'Our innovative chatbot makes specialist content accessible in a completely new way. We have placed particular emphasis on seamless, design-compliant integration as a widget. The RAG chatbot enables natural language, multi-level interactions and significantly lowers the barrier to entry for users. This allows us to make targeted use of new technological possibilities.'

Peter Gerich
Head of Digital (Publishing), Avoxa



New level of quality for interactive specialist information

'Ask the AI of PZ and PTA-Forum' has quickly become a relevant tool for professional users. The chatbot now answers several hundred queries every day – and this number is rising rapidly, not least thanks to continuous optimisations. Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians benefit from clearly structured, dynamically generated answers, which are supplemented by in-depth source references and transparent links to further articles.

Context-sensitive referencing of previously generated dialogue passages enables natural conversation. Follow-up questions and queries such as 'Please explain the second point in more detail' can thus be easily and effectively addressed and answered – an important step towards multi-level, natural language exchange.

This creates a user experience that closely resembles natural professional assistance and significantly improves the quality of interactive information. Right from the start, an above-average click-through rate to linked sources was achieved, accompanied by high engagement rates and low abandonment rates. At the same time, both dwell time and reach are continuously increasing. A key factor contributing to this is that the AI chatbot is regularly optimised as part of new Retresco releases.

Overall, the RAG-based system significantly reduces the research effort for users and strengthens the position of PZ and PTA-Forum as innovative specialist media.

Success factors for dialogue-based pharmaceutical and medical information

The AI chatbot 'Ask the AI from PZ and PTA-Forum' shows what is important when using AI and RAG in pharmaceutical and medical specialist media. The decisive factors is not so much the language model used to formulate the answers, but rather the powerful retrieval and quality of the underlying content. User-oriented dialogue through introductory, example and follow-up questions is also important. Suggested questions drive user interaction and support ongoing dialogue.

High engagement depends on minimising barriers to entry: seamlessly integrated, pop-up chat

windows on landing pages and within individual articles significantly increase usage. Furthermore, a modern and intuitive look and feel is essential for user appeal.

Key lessons from the Avoxa chatbot: implementation should follow an iterative path, starting with a minimum viable product (MVP) and expanding features over time. Systematic user feedback is essential to drive further development and inform new releases.

At the same time, the AI chatbot from PZ and PTA-Forum is being continuously developed – with a clear focus on innovation, quality and user orientation.

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