

NOSPR enriches interaction with classical music with IBM Watson on IBM public cloud

IBM Services delivers Watson Assistant solution, enabling NOSPR to bring unique sound stories experience for people watching musical masterpieces online

Katowice, 23 July 2020 – IBM Services (NYSE: IBM) and the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra in Katowice (NOSPR), in cooperation with Fujitsu Technology Solutions, ING Bank Śląski, Katowice City Hall, GAZ-SYSTEM and schools associated in the P-TECH program, announced the launch of the NOSPR AI virtual agent with voice interaction. It utilizes IBM Watson running on the IBM public cloud, enabling users to interact in real time with classical music.

By the end of 2020, on the ai.nospr.org.pl internet platform, its visitors will be able to chat with NOSPR AI receiving immediate answers in Polish, while simultaneously sitting in the virtual concert hall. When listening to the interpretation of musical pieces like: Igor Stravinsky's "Firebird" and Camille Saint-Saëns' "Carnival of Animals" performed by the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra from Katowice, NOSPR AI will answer in voice or in writing, what the composer had in mind when creating the piece, what instrument plays the solo part or how much the piano weighs. IBM and NOSPR hope to expand this tool in the coming years.

As part of the NOSPR AI project, rarely published audiovisual recordings of the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra in Katowice have been made available online. This gives an opportunity for listeners to inspire and talk about the world of sounds with artificial intelligence. The NOSPR AI project gives classical music a "voice" - showing it as a living part of culture, which does not need to be perceived through the scheme of its patterns of the greatness and value only. For the first time it becomes a phenomenon which can be freely discussed.

The NOSPR AI project is the culmination of close cooperation of the IBM Services team with music experts from Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra in Katowice, as well as students from schools associated in the P-TECH program and IT group of Fujitsu Technology Solutions. The IBM Services team was responsible for building the system, maintaining and developing the application on the IBM public cloud and training the NOSPR AI virtual agent with voice interaction in the entire process of answering questions in Polish.

The launch of the project was preceded by extensive quality tests carried out by IBM and NOSPR project teams. In less than 3 weeks, 9 thousand questions were collected in the initial training, supported greatly under the P-TECH program by the students and teachers of ZSTiO No. 2 and ŚTZN in Katowice, as well as representatives of ZSTiO No. 3 in Chorzów and I LO schools in Mikołów and members of the Society of the Friends of NOSPR, employees of ING Bank Śląski, Katowice City Hall and Fujitsu Technology Solutions.

In the next stage, the knowledge base was used to train IBM Watson Assistant, on which the NOSPR AI is built, in order to obtain the best answers to questions. The solution has been designed in such a way that it can be 'educated' after production launch. By using IBM public cloud to store thousands of data forming the knowledge base, it is possible to constantly improve the quality and accuracy of answers.

"The NOSPR is constantly trying to be a driving force to change the perception of classical music by showing it in new socio-cultural contexts. For us it was quite natural to establish this cooperation as we are open to explore new ways of communications with the listeners. It is a great value to us to implement this project with the support of such important business, tech and government institutions. The initiative would not probably see the light if each organization wanted to create it on its own," says Ewa Bogusz-Moore, general and program director, NOSPR.

"Our project proves that art as a form of communication can use solutions such as IBM Watson Assistant operating on IBM public cloud to connect the classical music with the contemporary world. We can now to talk about it lightly and gain the opportunity to experience the interpretations of the best symphony orchestra in Poland, anywhere and anytime," says Jarosław Szymczuk, general manager of IBM Poland and Baltics.

"The NOSPR AI project is an example of only seemingly exclusive areas: technology and art. With the cooperation of investors present in Katowice: IBM, Fujitsu Technology Solutions and ING Bank Śląski, we are following the path of digital transformation observed around the world. Thanks to our cooperation, a modern tool for music education will be created, that allows to spread the knowledge of classical music. The project is unique and we are proud of the fact that we participate in it," says Bogumił Sobuła, First Deputy Mayor, Katowice City Hall.

"At ING, artificial intelligence is present every day. It helps us to anticipate and make better decisions, as well as supports processes that we have previously performed manually. This project has interested us because the combination of culture with artificial intelligence is unobvious and surprising. It additionally involves young people and supports their development. The promotion of knowledge related to technology among young people is very important for us, because it gives them the opportunity to plan their future careers consciously. NOSPR AI has proved to us all that artistic creation and artificial intelligence can go hand in hand. Thanks to this extraordinary project, we can easily and pleasantly learn about works, composers, performance and music in general," says Sławomir Soszyński, Vice-President of the Management Board, ING Bank Śląski.

"Our joint project is an effect of great teamwork and a symbol of synergy between the corporate world from the IT sector and the world of art. It is innovation, innovative solutions, innovative technologies that help us build a better world. A world in which we not only trust each other, but also trust the technologies surrounding us. They help us in our daily duties, but also enable us to discover art - in this case classical music - in a completely new dimension. Important is that the project has been completed despite the pandemic that turned the world upside down and established the principles of social distance. Technologies enable us to survive, operate, succeed and create great products also in our home offices," says Aleksandra Durzyńska-Prochowska, Managing Director Poland GDC, Fujitsu Technology Solutions.

More information: <https://ai.nospr.org.pl>

Contact for media

Monika Maciąg-Kruszewska

IBM Communications

+48 693 93 5342

Monika.Maciag@pl.ibm.com

Iwona Sobczyk

Kierowniczka Działu Promocji

+48 512 925 311

I.Sobczyk@nospr.org.pl

Jakub Braziewicz

Weber Shandwick

+48 691 500 173

Jakub.Braziewicz@webershandwick.pl