



## AUTOMOTIVE AI CHATBOTS

# More Promise than Reality

*9senses Market Analysis: Only 16 out of 129 automotive providers in the DACH region use AI chatbots for customer service - with significant variations in quality*

- Only 16 of the 129 automotive providers tested in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria operate an AI chatbot in customer service
- Overall ratings of the audited bots range from 1.5 to 4.0 out of 5 – average 3.2
- 10 of the 16 bots hallucinate, making up content

The German-speaking automotive industry lags significantly behind other countries and industries in the use of AI in customer service - and where AI is already being used, it rarely meets the expectations placed on it. This is the finding of a comprehensive market study evaluating 129 providers on “AI Chatbots in Customer Service in the German-speaking Automotive Industry” conducted by 9senses AG in the second quarter of 2026.

## Low Implementation, Mixed Quality

Besides an unexpectedly low AI implementation rate of just 12.4 % on the websites of the 129 providers examined, a clear pattern emerges among the audited AI chatbots: the user interface of the bots examined is often well-designed (average UI score: 3.6 out of 5), while response and dialogue quality lag noticeably behind, each scoring around 3.0. Furthermore, there is a wide variation in quality, not only between chatbots but also within the same bots.

## Hallucinations, Abortions, Silent Loss of Trust

Among the scenarios tested, the bots performed the worst on average in new-car recommendations – exactly the area that contributes most directly to sales. Only 6 out of 16 bots passed the hallucination stress tests using a deliberately fictitious vehicle model. For the most part, the bots are disappointing, offering little business value (average score of 2.3) and posing a high frustration risk for those using them.



## What Distinguishes Best Performers

The difference in quality is not due to the knowledge base, but to the dialogue architecture - in each of the five use cases tested, at least one bot demonstrates how it should be done, yet hardly any bot achieves this level of performance across all evaluation dimensions.

The relevant question is no longer: AI chatbot - yes or no? It is: What level of quality is required for an AI chatbot to make a positive contribution at all? And a bot that doesn't contribute to the business is not neutral - it ties up budget, attention, and trust without giving anything back.

*Dr. Johannes Kunz, Founder und CEO, 9senses AG*

## About the Study

The study "AI Chatbots in Customer Service in the German-Speaking Automotive Industry" (Q2/2026) is based on a structured analysis of the German-language websites of 129 car manufacturers and major multi-brand dealerships in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. The 16 AI chatbots identified were rated on a scale of 1 to 5 using the 9senses Chatbot Audit. The full study is available from 9senses.

## About 9senses

9senses AG is a global consulting firm with Swiss roots. Its focus is on the value-creating use of AI. 9senses supports organizations in the design, evaluation, and optimization of AI-powered solutions and has developed the 9senses Chatbot Audit, a structured process for the independent quality assessment of chatbot solutions.

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