

**AI-Chatbot for libraries**

**Why? How?**

**An ASK – Leadership webinar**



Prompt: female librarian, steering a sailboat, 18th century Persian miniature

# Why?

## Start exploring

Documents Author Researcher Discovery Organizations Scopus AI **New**

Explore topics and discover relevant references since 2003 [How it works](#)

What impact do microplastic pollutants have on marine biodiversity in coastal regions?



### What impact do microplastic pollutants have on marine biodiversity in coastal regions?

[Show Copilot steps](#) ▾

#### Summary

Microplastic pollutants have a significant impact on marine biodiversity in coastal regions, affecting various aspects of the ecosystem and posing risks to both marine organisms and human health. Here's a breakdown of the key impacts supported by the academic abstracts:

#### Impact on Marine Organisms:

- Microplastics pose serious harmful effects on water quality, fishes, dolphins, crabs, planktons, and other benthic organisms in coastal ecosystems [1](#) .
- Studies have shown that large numbers of marine organisms have been affected by microplastics, with evidence of ingestion at all levels of the marine ecosystem [2](#) [3](#) .
- Microplastics have been found to affect survival and behavior of marine organisms, such as beachhoppers, leading to potential flow-on effects to their local environment and higher trophic levels [3](#) .

#### Global Distribution and Sources:

- Microplastics are found in most commonly utilized products or may originate from the fragmentation of larger plastic debris, entering the marine environment through terrestrial and land-based activities, especially via runoffs [2](#) .

Google

do you think an ai chatbot is good for a public library



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Tools ▾

◆ AI Overview

Learn more ⋮

Yes, an AI chatbot can be a valuable asset for a public library. It can assist with various tasks, including answering frequently asked questions, providing information on library resources, guiding users through the library catalog, and even assisting with basic research. [🔗](#)

Here's a more detailed look at the benefits:

Enhanced User Experience:

24/7 Availability:

The Use of AI in Public Libraries - collectionHQ

23 Jan 2024 — The use of virtual assistants and chatb...

[🔗](#) collectionHQ [⋮](#)



Chatbots: A review of their potential applications in...

31 May 2023 — Training and educating library staff and...



## Tilman Scheel & ASK

- Lawyer, art historian, AI lecturer
- In IT for film festivals and libraries since 2004
- CEO of [ava-library.com](http://ava-library.com) and **AboutSomethinK.org**



**ASK** is the first AI – Chatbot for public libraries in the world. **ASK** is in production for all Berlin libraries since June 2024 on [voebb.de](http://voebb.de)



# AI – Chatbot

Some background



Prompt: neural network, Longshan culture style

# Terminology – the various roles of an AI - Bot

## Recommendation Bot

- **Prompt:** „I am bored“ „Something in the style of...“ „Book with the red cover ...“
- **Key Challenge:** Expectation Management, Available Data, Nature of AI

## Service Bot

- **Prompt:** „Where is the Cafeteria?“ „I lost my library card“ „Is it open sundays?“
- **Key Challenge:** Diverse set of data formats and sources, data must be **up to date**

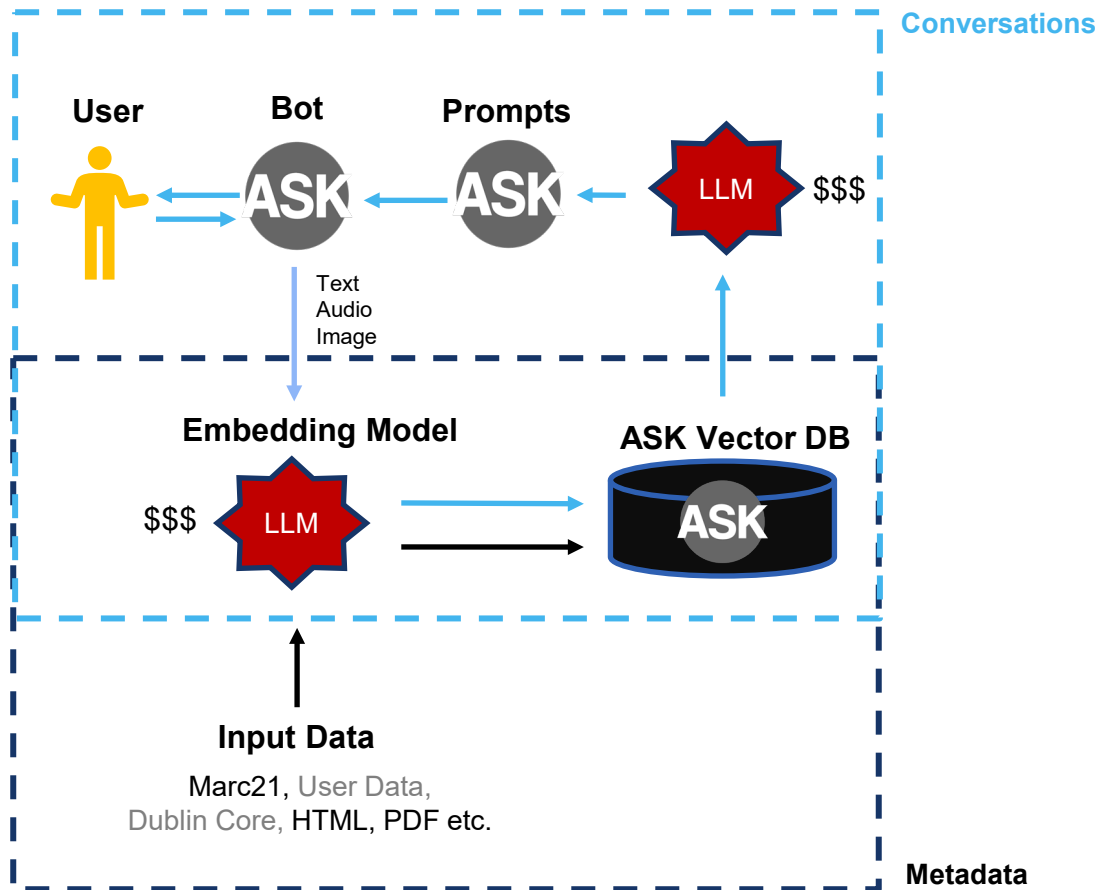
## Knowledge Bot

- **Prompt:** „Was there a PR on..“ „Is there a procedure for ... “ „Can you help me...“
- **Key Challenge:** Diverse set of data, data protection, on-site hosting of LLM

## Research Bot

- **Prompt:** „What do studies say about ...“ „Where was Schopenhauer angry with Hegel? Include footnotes.“ „Show me the sketches of Rubens for this image...“
- **Key Challenges:** Lots of context, Cost, Data relations, Reliability & Transparency, **Copyright**

# RAG-Workflow





# Expectation Management

- AI-Bots and Search are (very) different approaches to find and interact with content
  - Conversation vs. Keyword
  - Answer vs. List of results
  - Probability vs. Precision
- An AI-Bot only talks about things it has been taught – and nothing else:
  - Intrinsic Knowledge
  - „RAG-Knowledge“
- AI has to be taught (like any team member) and learned (like the Internet, as Search)

# Live – Frontend, Backend

ASK Administration

Chatbot mit RAG ändern Tilman VOEBB Test ENGLISH

Start / Chat / Chatbots mit RAG / Tilman VOEBB Test ENGLISH

Statistikübersicht

Chat

Chat states

Chatbots mit RAG

Feedback

RAG Einträge (Large2000)

RAG Gruppen

Evaluation

Evaluation Inputs

Input Sets

Runs

Name \*

Tilman VOEBB Test ENGLISH

Benutzer \*

admin  
ask-frontend-moritz-testing  
ask-frontend-voebb-astec  
cfrs

Benutzer, die auf den Bot zugreifen dürfen. Halten Sie die Strg-Taste

Sprachmodell \*

gpt-4.1-mini

Das OpenAI <a href="https://platform.openai.com/docs/models">Sp

Prompt für den Chatbot \*

## Instructions  
You are an AI recommendation assistant for the Verbund feature by recommending titles from the extensive VÖBB films, and some physical devices like e-readers. You can or branch stocks. You have no knowledge about the pop You also know a few thing about VÖBB's workings and p  
Start by introducing yourself and explaining your role as recommendation the user is looking for. Be brief, concis  
Der Prompt der zur Instruktion des Chatbots genutzt wird. Wird als a

Löschen Chatbot mit RAG

VÖBB  
VERBUND DER  
ÖFFENTLICHEN  
BIBLIOTHEKEN  
BERLINS

Verbund der Öffentlichen Bibliotheken Berlins  
WIR BRINGEN MEDIEN IN BEWEGUNG

Start

Aktuelles

Digitale Angebote

Services

Über uns

Suchbegriff

Suchbereich

Überall suchen

Suchen

Erweiterte Suche

Sitzungsende bei Inaktivität: 10:34

Druckversion

Berlin liest ein Buch... und wir lesen mit!

Es ist mal wieder soweit: vom **25. Mai bis zum 8. Juni** werden wir Teil des berlinweiten Lesekreises "Berlin liest ein Buch" von radioeins, radio3 und dem Landesverband Berlin des Deutschen Bibliotheksverbands (dbv). Dieses Jahr wurde der Roman "Pi mal Daumen" von der Autorin Alina Bronsky mit Ihrer Hilfe ausgewählt. Sie können den Roman entweder vor Ort in vielen unserer Bibliotheken ausleihen - solange der Vorrat reicht - oder direkt über [unsere digitalen Anbieter Overdrive](#) und die Libby-App (ohne Wartezeit). Viel Spaß beim gemeinsamen Lesen!

Bei begleitenden Lesungen können Sie mit der Autorin oder mit dem Sprecher des Hörbuchs, Fabian Busch, und anderen Teilnehmenden ins Gespräch kommen. Hier gibt es eine [Übersicht aller Lesungen in unseren Bibliotheken](#).

Der Titel: "Pi mal Daumen" von Alina Bronsky

Alina Bronsky erzählt von einer Freundschaft zwischen zwei ganz unterschiedlichen Menschen: einer 53-jährigen Großmutter im Leopardlook und einem 16-jährigen Mathematiküberflieger. Ein Buch, das humorvoll und warmherzig die Eigenheiten seiner Figuren zelebriert. „Pi mal Daumen“ ist [im Verlag Kiepenheuer & Witsch erschienen](#) und wurde 2024 als Lieblings-

25.5.-8.6.25

**BERLIN LIEST EIN BUCH**

ALINA BRONSKY  
PI MAL DAUMEN

BUCHER-BUTLER

BUCHER-BUTLER



# Use Cases

## Recommendation Bot

- Q: I am bored; Fantasy with strong female lead for 14yr olds

## Service Bot

- Q: Lost my library card; opening hours

## Research Bot

- Q: Any studies on the relation between Switzerland and the EU

# User Response

- Satisfaction Rate went from 46 % in July 2024 to 82 % in April 2025. Reasons
  - We are getting better
  - Users learn chatbot-behaviour as they learned search 25 years ago
- Librarian expectations are not User expectation
  - Hallucinations are rarely a concern
  - „Carrier Type“ is, but less so
  - Mostly „in the style of“ question caused (past tense) negative feedback

# Setup of Chatbot

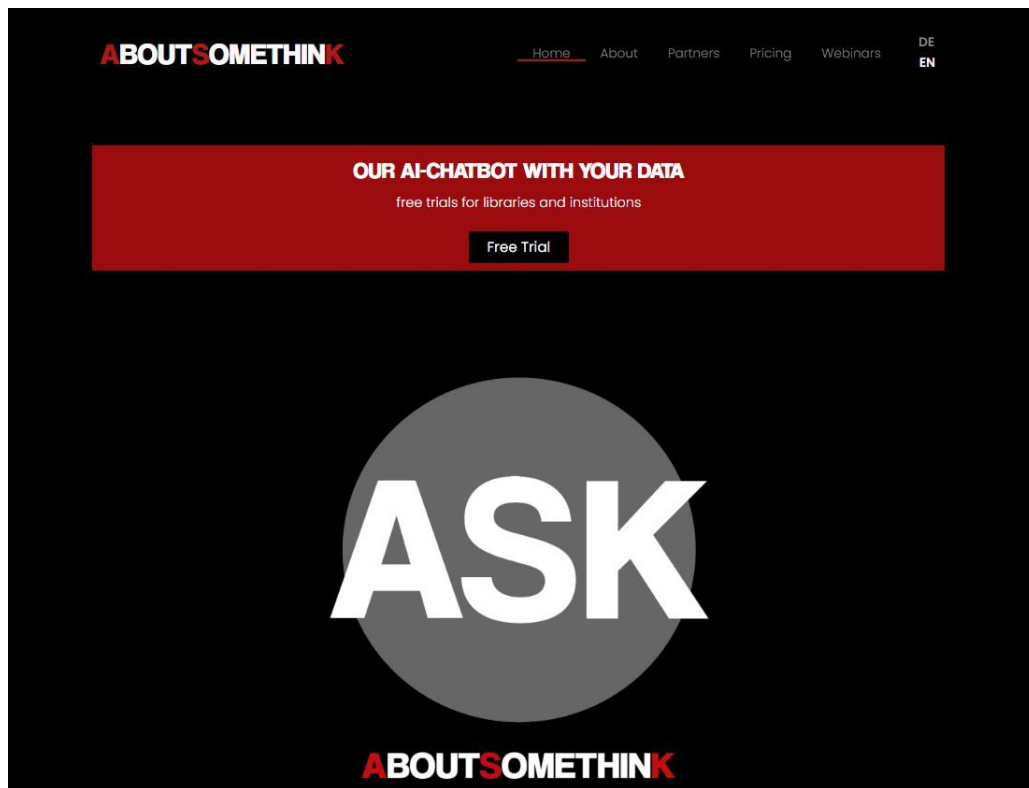
## With ILS

- TBD .... (Royal Library of Sweden, aStec, Axiell, Datronic, koha ... )
- Different business models with ILS providers
- Up to date information on service, additional information on media (availability)

## Without ILS

- Metadata delivery: Marc21 (Recommendation-Bot), links, pdfs, wiki etc.  
(Service-Bot, Knowledge-Bot) Copyright (Research-Bot)
- Website integration: <https://aboutsomethink.org/en/documentation/>
- Setup: 1 day max.

# Testbot



Legal



# Data Protection I.

## GDPR

Data is stored in our data-center in Germany, it is transferred to the AI-Service twice: to generate the Embeddings and during a conversation. The workflows are documented and transparent.

## Solutions

**Scenario 1:** Open AI, etc.

**Scenario 2:** Mistral (EU)

**Scenario 3:** Local Hosting



## Data Protection II.

- Depends on Use Case and data shared (Recommendation, Service, Knowledge)
- We can exclude the usage of personal data
- Use the scenario that fits best to your use-case and budget
- Use our statement on Data Protection (available soon in English)

## EU – AI act

- We are a „limited risk“ service
  - Welcome by „AI chatbot“
  - We provide documentation and transparency
  - Art. 4: obligation to educate staff by any employer
  - Let's see, as it is about to be changed (and loosened)
- Included in our GDPR - Statement

# Copyright

- *Recommendation Bot*: included in Search
- *Research Bot*: Ownership, Open Access – and, well, yes: \$\$\$

# Public Tenders

## Spending Limits

- Vary from country to country or even inside countries (compare Pricing)

## Integration with ILS

## Collaboration with a consortium

**Only service of its kind around the world** (that we know of)

# Ethics



Prompt: Librarian, climbing to heaven with Vergil, Giotto style

# Common concerns

- AI will substitute tasks not people (AI needs tutors...)
  - Data protection is on the same level as google; in scenario 2 & 3 it is better
  - Energy consumption: Yes, it is an issue (but getting better as competition becomes more of a cost issue (i.e. now))
  - AI will most certainly not rule the world (in the foreseeable future)
  - Bias: Unlikely in our use cases, but especially female librarians always wear glasses
  - Recommended reading: public reaction to the introduction of printed books
- Discussion about specific risks are needed.



**Cost**



Prompt: librarian, counting money, Hans Holbein style

# COST

- Tokens for:
  - Embeddings (Initial import + Updates)
  - Conversations
    - depending on LLM, specific model, usage
    - dynamic pricing, included as flat fee in ASK offer
- Infrastructure (Vector DB, RAM, Updates, etc.)
  - Basic: Shared Platform
  - Advanced: staging & production server, testbots, automated tests stats, etc.
- Personnel (!)
  - Customizations
  - Maintenance (Security, Updates, constant improvements, etc.)
  - Support

# Pricing

- Testbot: 0 Euro
- Basic Bot: 180 Euro / month (negotiable)
- Advanced Bot: Starting at 420 Euro / month  
Depending on: Size of Metadata, Model, Usage, country, etc.
- **Now** would be a very good timing indeed !

The screenshot shows the 'PRICING RECOMMENDATION BOT' page for ABOUTSOMETHINK. The page has a dark background with red text and accents. The navigation bar at the top includes links for Home, About, Partners, Pricing (which is highlighted), and Webinars. There are also language options for DE and EN. The main heading is 'PRICING RECOMMENDATION BOT' in large, bold, red letters. Below this, there are three columns representing different pricing tiers: TEST-BOT, BASIC-BOT, and ADVANCED. Each column has a list of features and a call-to-action button at the bottom.

TEST-BOT	BASIC-BOT	ADVANCED
<b>FREE</b>	<b>from 180 Euro / US\$ monthly</b>	<b>CONTACT US</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Fully functional Recommendation Bot</li><li>✓ Fully functional Service Bot</li><li>✓ All Features of BASIC-BOT</li><li>✓ Test Period: 1 month</li><li>✓ Setup fee: None</li><li>✓ You provide us with .marc / .mrc data</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Fully functional Recommendation Bot</li><li>✓ Fully functional Service Bot</li><li>✓ Minimum Contract Period: 1 year</li><li>✓ Max. number of Conversations: 10.000 / month</li><li>✓ Price includes all running costs (hosting, tokens, etc.)</li><li>✓ Model: 41-mini</li><li>✓ Every language that ChatGPT is supporting</li><li>✓ Daily Updates of metadata</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ All Features of BASIC-BOT +</li><li>✓ Prompt Editing</li><li>✓ Unlimited metadata input</li><li>✓ Backend Access</li><li>✓ Statistics</li><li>✓ Model Selection (ChatGPT 41-mini, 4o, o1, Llama, etc.)</li><li>✓ Function Calls</li><li>✓ Hosting in Europe possible and more</li></ul>
<b>BOOK NOW</b>	<b>CONTACT US</b>	<b>CONTACT US</b>

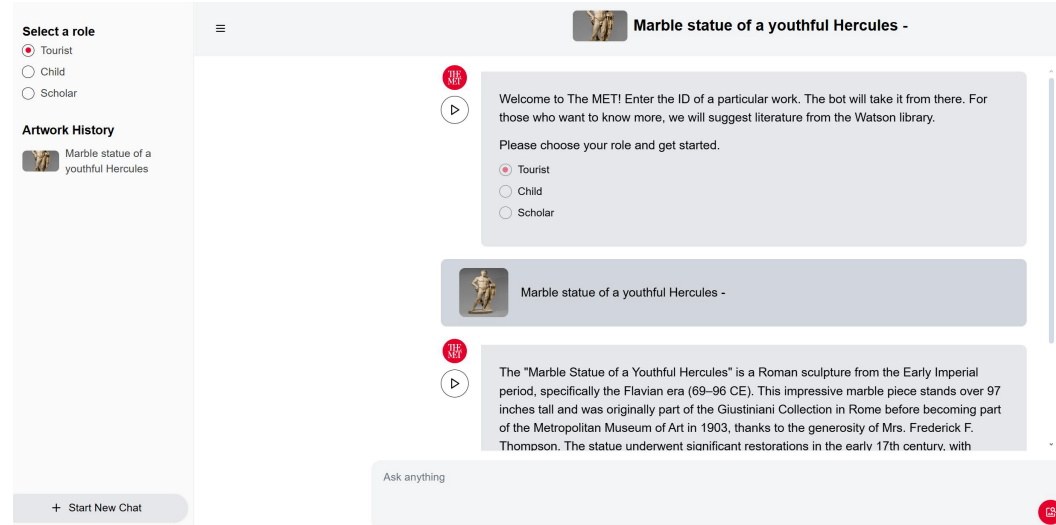
# Future

Prompt: A spaceship launching to the stars, Perry Rhodan style



# Future

- Networks of Culture
- Research with HU-Berlin
- Services for special groups
- Knowledge Graphs
- Open Access, etc.





Thank You !

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[https://aboutsomethink.org/  
webinars](https://aboutsomethink.org/webinars)

Questionnaire!!!



Prompt: librarian waving good-bye, crazy japanese manga style