

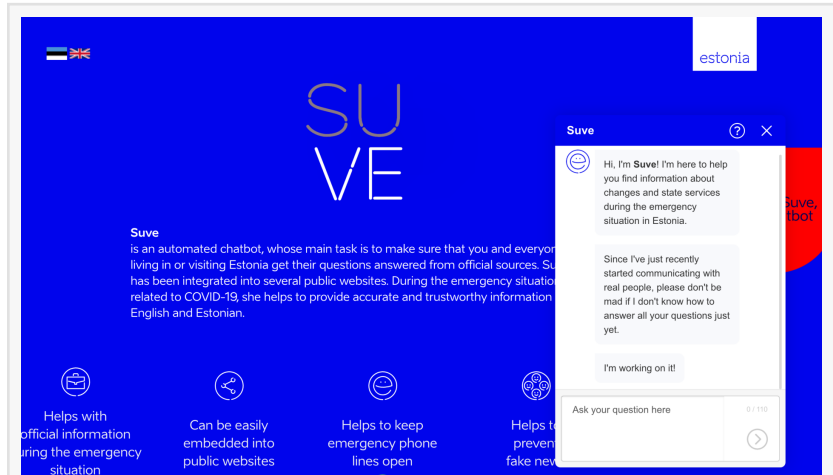
# Estonians created a nationwide chatbot to offer Covid-19 advice

TALLINN, ESTONIA, April 8, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Named “the most advanced digital society in the world” by Wired, the Estonian government has built an automated chatbot called Suve, which provides accurate and trustworthy information about the emergency situation and the coronavirus. The chatbot uses information from government agencies and provides answers in Estonian and English.

Estonia is well known for its embrace of digital technology with a model of digital governance, government e-services, e-voting, e-banking, e-healthcare, a focus on education and free public transportation. The idea to create Suve came about thanks to Hack the Crisis, a hackathon organised by the Estonian startup community, Garage 48, and Accelerate Estonia.

Marten Kaevats, Adviser of the Strategy Unit of the Government Office, said receiving trustworthy and updated information is crucial during the emergency situation. “The chatbot offers us a new additional possibility to receive information about changes, while also alleviating the pressure on information hotlines,” said Kaevats. Michaela Snopková, one of the creators of Suve said: “The idea of a nationwide chatbot had been in people’s minds before the crisis, but the hackathon gave us a real chance to bring it to life very quickly. With that, hopefully we can ease the load on information hotlines even a little bit.”

According to Snopková, who works as a consultant for foreign specialists on a daily basis, many people’s questions do not require personal consultation, but just to be directed to where they can find the right information. “There’s no need to call your family doctor or information hotline to ask whether it is currently possible to travel to Finland or ask about sick leave. Suve provides answers to these kinds of questions. In this way, doctors can be reached by those who have coronavirus symptoms or are suffering other medical conditions and therefore need quick, specific advice,” Snopková said.



Suve the chatbot. Source: <https://eebot.ee/>



Woman taking photos of enter e-estonia sign. Source: Jelena Rudi

Suve the chatbot has already been added to many websites. Through active use, the chatbot can learn and answer questions more accurately. Thanks to the work contributed by volunteers, the chatbot will soon be able to speak in Russian too. In addition, Suve collects and transmits unanswered user questions to editors, which helps to develop the chatbot.

Chatbot Suve was one of the ideas that emerged from the Hack the Crisis hackathon organised by Garage48 and Accelerate Estonia – a part of a plan by Estonia’s startups to hack the current crisis. The goal of the eeBot team – the virtual parents of Suve – was to find quick and impactful IT-solutions to minimise the effects of the crisis.

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