

Press Release for Alexa-Skill “Forget-Me-Not”, Group 1

Semester	Winter Semester 20/21
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Challenge	Alexa skill for Alzheimer's patients
Team	Group 1
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Press Release

Munich University of Applied Sciences (MUAS) and the Alzheimer Society Munich help dementia patients to keep beautiful memories

Students at MUAS published an Alexa skill in cooperation with the Alzheimer Society Munich (AGM) and the Digital Transformation Lab (DTLab), which helps those affected to keep beautiful memories for longer.

Munich - 14.03.2021 - Informatics students at MUAS presented an application for Amazon's Alexa voice assistant today. It was created as part of a DTLab course. The DTLab is supported by Amazon's cloud-based solutions (Amazon Web Services) with technological and scientific know-how. The presented skill “Forget-Me-Not” is intended to help dementia patients to transfer memories into their long-term memory.

The short-term memory of dementia patients is not able to process what they have experienced and to transfer it to their long-term memory. Depending on the progression of the dementia, those affected cannot remember their last walk in the park or the family outing they had a week before. This is a pity, as it means they cannot keep many happy moments. Deprived of their memories, this can easily lead to tension or even alienation between them and their relatives.

“Forget-Me-Not” was developed to prevent this. Relatives can receive audio messages about recent experiences via a specially developed web interface, which Alexa can make available to the person affected at any time on request.

When asked what the goal of the students involved in the development was, they replied: "We wanted to make something that would make the diagnosis of dementia easier to bear. We can all imagine how difficult it must be when you have experienced something together with people close to you and then you can no longer remember it.

The following example represents a concrete case: One or more audio messages are recorded and added to an experience. When asked by the user, Alexa provides the desired reminder. For example, the patient can ask, "Alexa, what did I do yesterday?". The process can be stopped at any time by keywords such as stop.

A relative of a dementia patient who was involved in the pilot phase was pleased with the intuitive operation: "At the beginning, I was sceptical about what the whole thing was about. I can just call her (the patient) and talk to her about it. But in the end, you don't have the time to

let all the many beautiful experiences come up again and again in intensity, so that they actually stay in her memory. And using the skill is child's play. Simply a great addition that brings us more joy together again."

The skill can be added to any Alexa-enabled device.