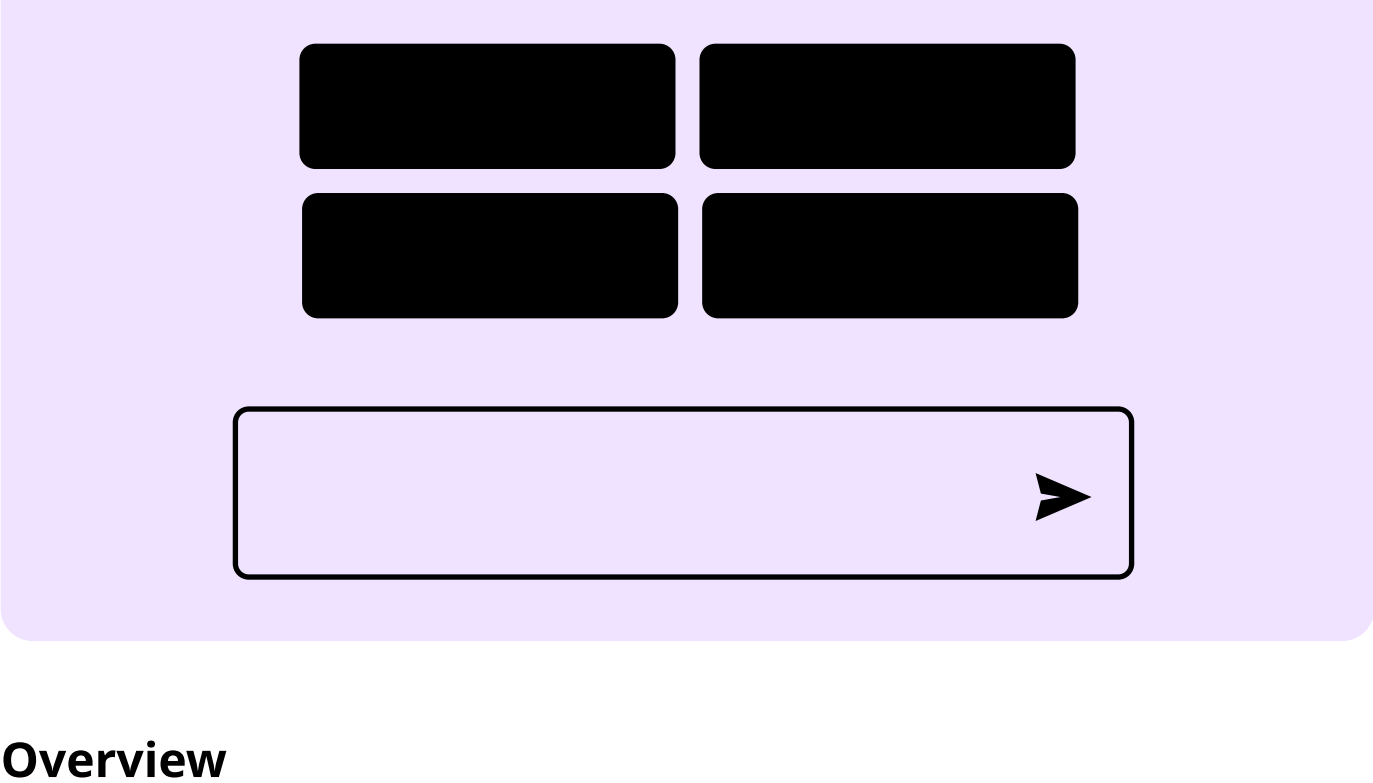


THE ICEBREAKER

Draw the user in, make the first step and exemplify the possibilities.



Overview

Starting a conversation with a stranger is difficult for most people. Starting a conversation with a machine is even stranger. We don't know what the machine is capable of and whether we need to be formal and polite or just casual and brief.

We generally have a good idea on how to interact with another human being and what are the social norms around a conversation. When it comes to talking to a machine, since this is still new to most people, there's no clear mental model and no norms.

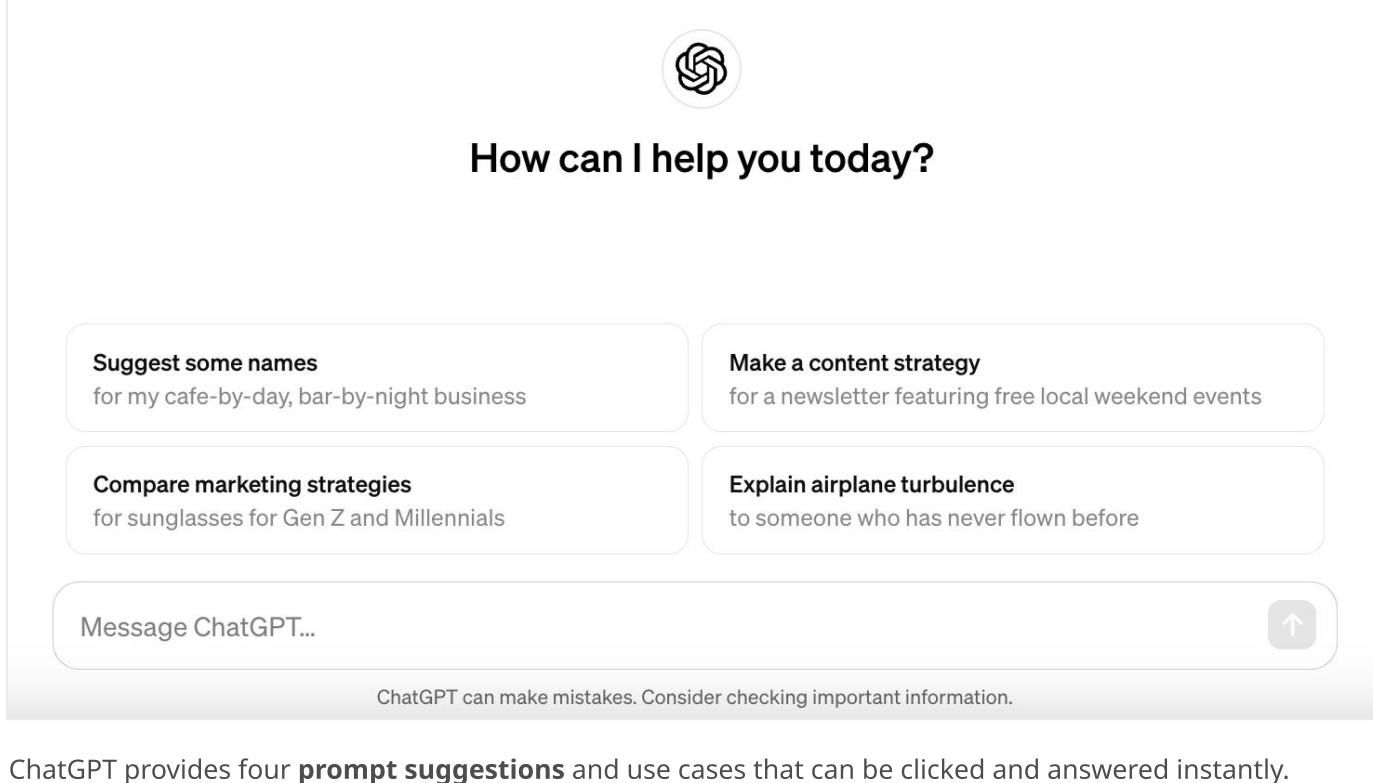
This makes people hesitant to take a first step and hurts the adoption rates of products that offer conversational experiences powered by LLMs.

- In summary, here are the main challenges that come with the big, white, lonely text input box:
- user needs to take the first step, to break the ice
 - it's not clear what the machine is capable of doing
 - it's not clear how the requests need to be formulated (length, detail, style, tone of voice)
 - reliance on recollection instead of recognition

Solution

You can use any of the following techniques, or combine them together for a more robust solution to all these challenges.

Prompt suggestions



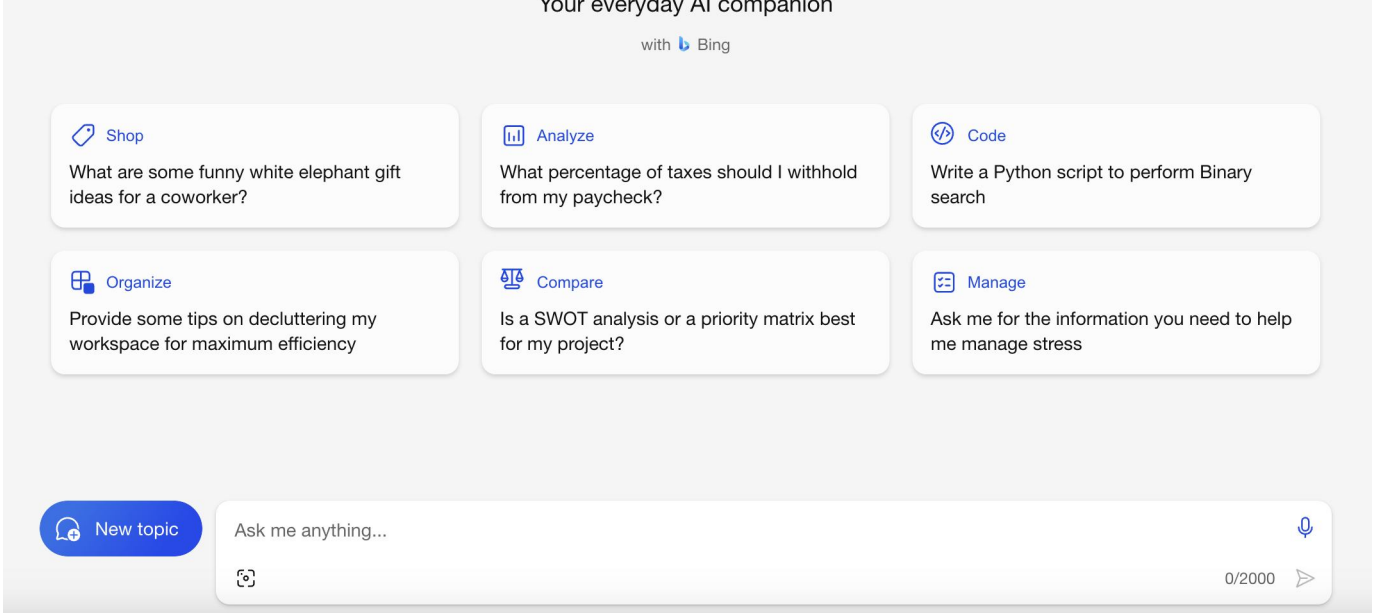
ChatGPT provides four **prompt suggestions** and use cases that can be clicked and answered instantly.

Generally these appear as a small collection of nudges in the middle of the screen or right above the prompt input box. With a single click, the user can run her first prompt and get an instant introduction to the experience.

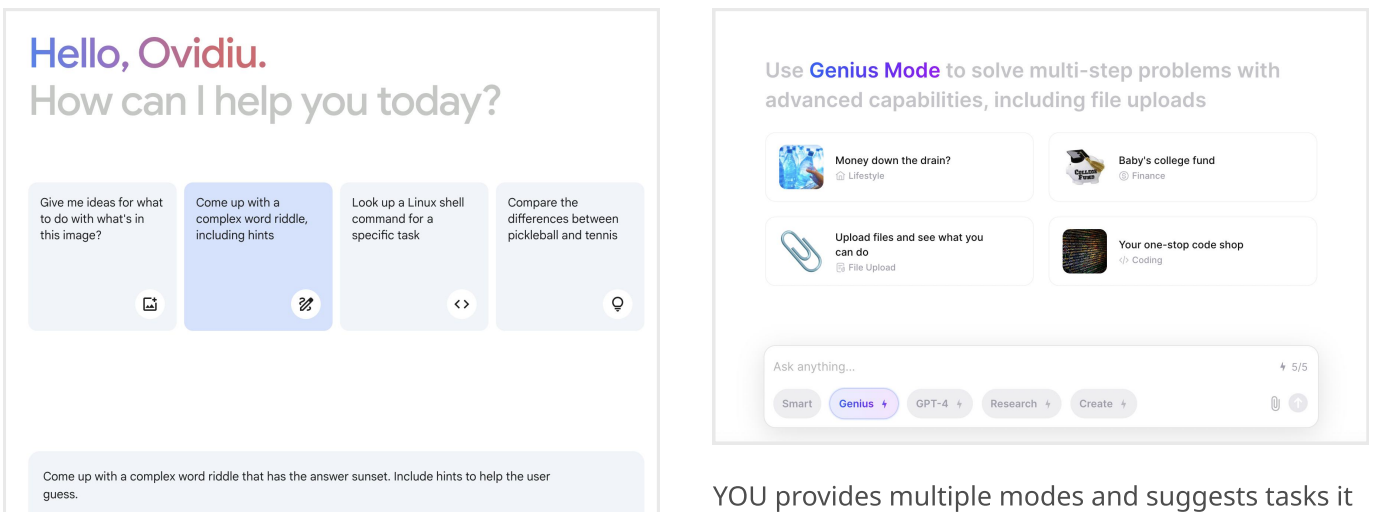
In addition to making it super easy to start engaging with the machine, this is also a great opportunity to communicate the most useful capabilities available. This is done by providing a diverse set of examples.

By viewing some examples, users also learn how to address the LLM, what kind of language to use and how to formulate their requests.

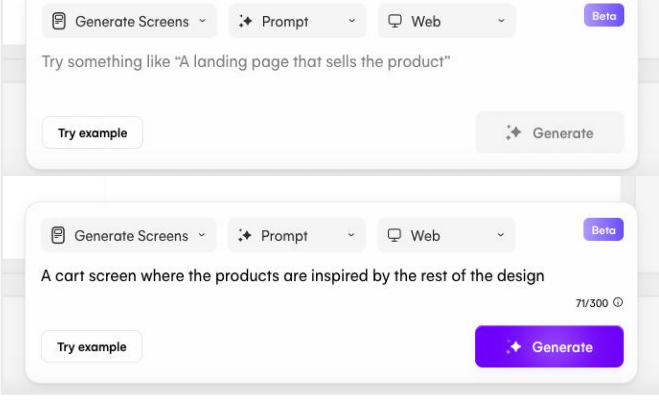
- Tips:
- Display a limited number of suggestions, between 3 and 6, not to overwhelm the user with too many choices and avoid decision paralysis. The main goal of the icebreaker is to elicit action.
 - Rotate the content to keep it interesting. Once the novelty wears off, the user is less likely to interact with this section. By displaying different or even personalized examples, the suggestions remain relevant and useful for a longer time.
 - Good prompts can be lengthy, so display a shorter version of the prompt to save space and keep things simple. Submit the long version when the user interacts with it.



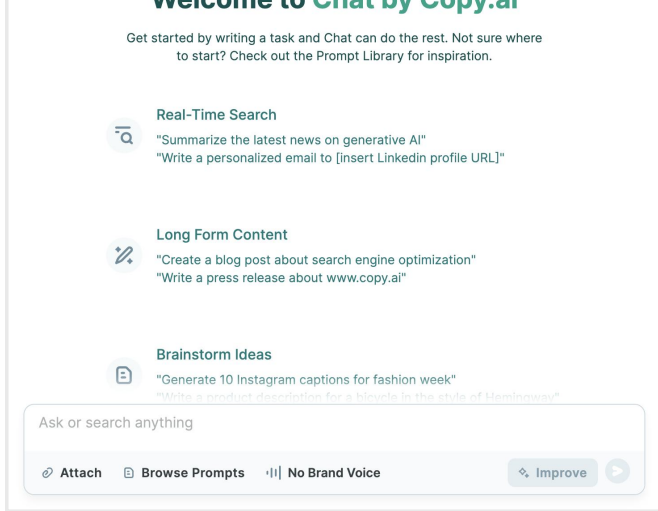
Bing provides six examples, in a more visual and structured way.



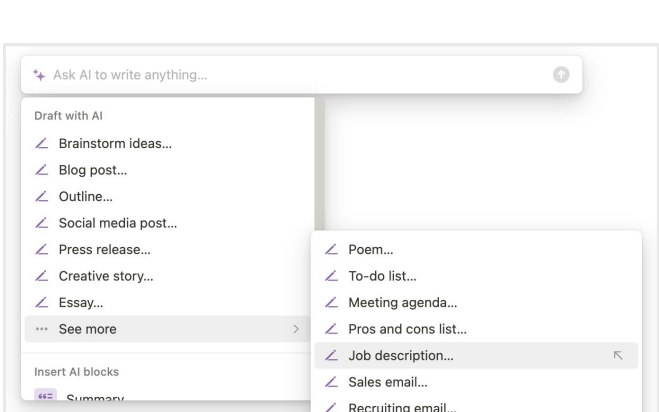
In Gemini, clicking on a suggestion populates the prompt area and allows the user to edit before submitting the request.



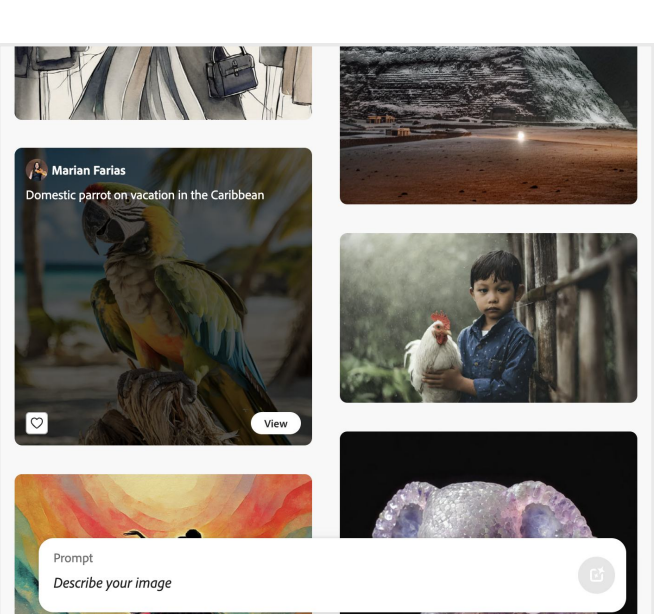
Uizard offers a “try example” button that populates the prompt input with a different example every time. It's like playing the prompt roulette.



Copy.ai displays multiple suggestions for each use case category. The use of quotes is a clear indicator on how to write the prompt. Even though the suggestions are clickable, there is no clear signifier for the interaction.



Notion automatically displays a dropdown with suggested use cases when the AI prompt is invoked. Selecting an option populates the input field with a prompt template.



Adobe Firefly displays a gallery of beautiful pictures. The prompt used for generating each picture is displayed on hover.

Prompt placeholder

Using placeholder text in an input field helps guide users on what to type, which is a common and effective design practice. The prompt input component is essentially a text field with a submit button, making it suitable for this approach.

Given the broad capabilities of LLMs, the challenge lies in providing instructions that are generic enough not to limit the imagination, yet specific enough to spark action.

- Good examples include:
- “Try something like: a landing page that sells a product”
 - “Describe your image”
 - “Ask AI to write anything...”
 - “Ask or search anything...”

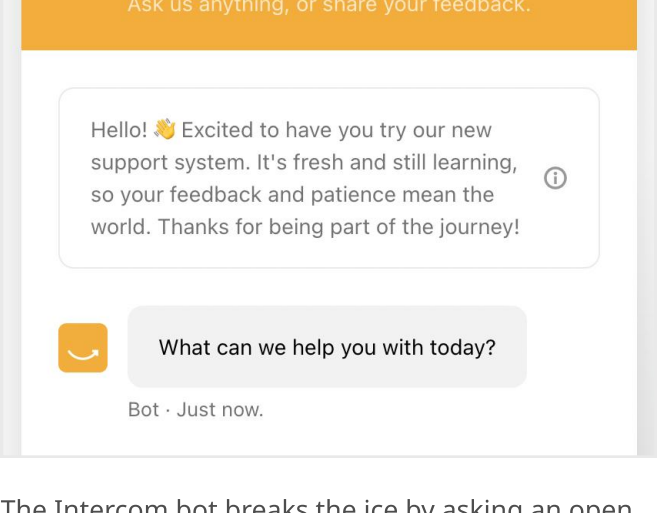
Less effective placeholders are:

- “Enter a prompt here”
- “Message ChatGPT...”

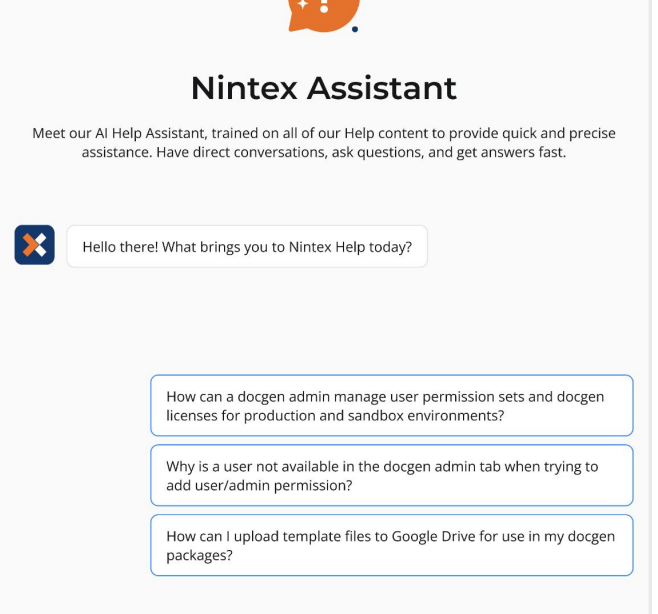
Ice breaker message

The machine breaks the ice by starting the conversation with a greeting and an open ended question. This makes it easier for the user to engage.

It's also a chance for companies to establish their brand's voice and tone in the conversation.



The Intercom bot breaks the ice by asking an open question.



Nintex Assistant combines the power of the icebreaker message, prompt suggestions and prompt placeholder to achieve 85% engagement from new users.