

Anyone can chat with the White House... through a bot

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With the new presidential "bot" on Facebook Messenger, users can send messages, 10 of which will be read each day by President Barack Obama

It's now easy to chat on Facebook Messenger with the White House— or more accurately through the presidential "bot" released by the Obama administration on Friday.

The White House unveiled what was touted as "the first-ever government bot" on the messaging application—bringing the US government into the age of artificial intelligence.

"Hi, it's great to hear from you—and we're excited to learn what's on your mind," the bot tells users signing up to chat.

Users can send messages, 10 of which will be read each day by President Barack Obama, according to the White House.

Jason Goldman, chief digital officer of the White House, said the new bot is another way for the public to communicate with the administration and the president.

"While receiving messages from the public isn't a recent phenomenon—every day, the White House receives thousands of phone calls, physical letters, and submissions through our online contact form—being able to contact the president through Facebook has never been possible before," Goldman said in a blog post.

"Today, it's able to happen because of the first-ever government bot on Facebook Messenger."

Goldman said the White House has gone a step further by making the bot open-source for other developers to use.

"We're open-sourcing this White House technology, with the hope that other governments and developers can build similar services—and foster similar connections with their citizens—with significantly less upfront investment," he said.

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