

MINING BUSINESS DATA

Build better Dialogflow chatbots

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DialogFlow (API.AI) introduces the Prebuilt Smalltalk agent

If you are a regular on the API.AI forum, you might have noticed multiple requests to customize small-talk in API.AI.

Before

So earlier, Smalltalk was just this opaque 'domain' that you could import into API.AI. Once you imported the SmallTalk domain into your agent, it could do some simple chitchat. Technically, you still have it, but I don't recommend using it by clicking on the Enable toggle.

Small Talk SAVE

respond with predefined phrases. Use the form below to customize responses to the most popular requests.

User: How are you?
Agent: Wonderful as always. Thanks for asking.

User: You're so sweet.
Agent: Thanks! The feeling is mutual.

☐ Enable NOT RECOMMENDED: Adding SmallTalk by toggling the Enable

What is the better way? Read on to find out.

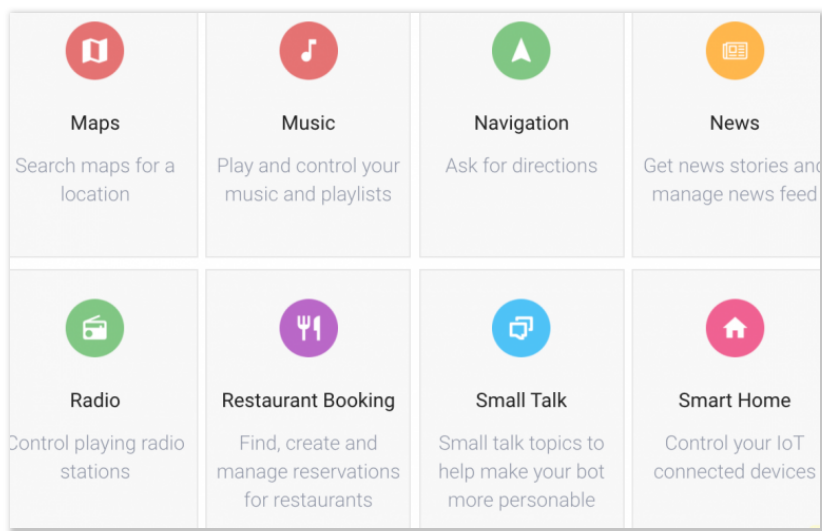
Limitations

Here are some of the limitations which you used to have with the older version of the SmallTalk.

1. You couldn't see all the questions it could answer. It was quite a blackbox
2. You couldn't really modify the answers very precisely. You needed to fill out a questionnaire for the most popular questions which were also specific to your own chatbot, but you weren't very sure which variant of the question would trigger the answers
3. They used to interfere with other intents which were similar to smalltalk, and you couldn't really prevent that.

Whats new

The API.AI team made a prebuilt agent with all the questions for the SmallTalk. Best of all, now the Intents are completely transparent to the agent builder.



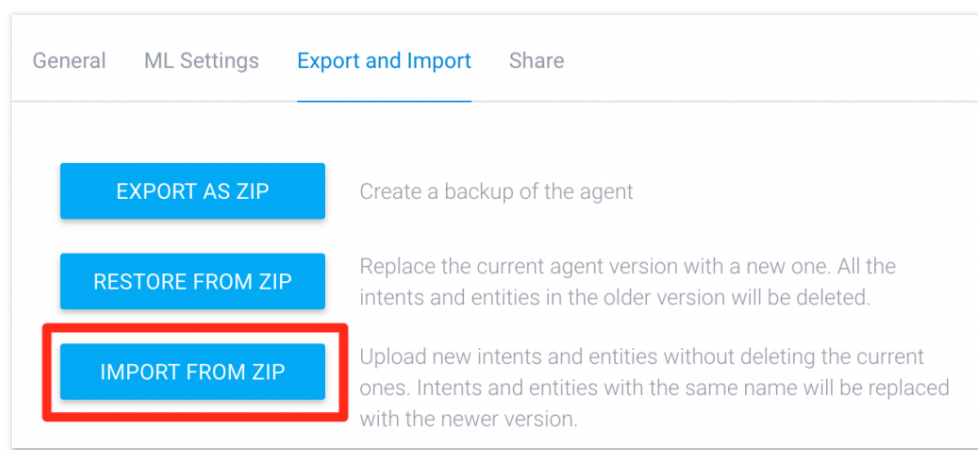
Once you import this agent, you can see a lot of questions already added for you - at the moment, I see 83.

How I recommend using it

If you are starting from scratch, there should be no confusion about it. Just import the prebuilt SmallTalk agent, rename it to the chatbot you are building, and start adding new intents.

If you already have a chatbot built out, or you are in the process of building one out, you can also add all the intents from the SmallTalk agent by

- 1 Importing the prebuilt SmallTalk (which will first create a bot called Small-Talk)
- 2 Going to the settings page of this bot, and clicking on the Export button and downloading the ZIP file to your local machine
- 3 Going to your existing bot's settings page and clicking on Import from Zip. Be sure to choose "Import From Zip" and not "Restore from Zip", because you are appending new intents to your existing intents.



Oh, and also:

Step 0: Never do any of these things without first taking a backup of your *existing agent* by using the Export function. Even with that precaution, if something happens and you mess up, you can only get back all the intents and entities, **but not the training the agent already has.**

So, how have you used the SmallTalk in your bot? Let me know your thoughts/feedback in the comments below.

Article by aravindmc / API.AI / [Leave a Comment](#)



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I help businesses prototype/design/build DialogFlow chatbots. [Click here](#) if you are interested in working with me.

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