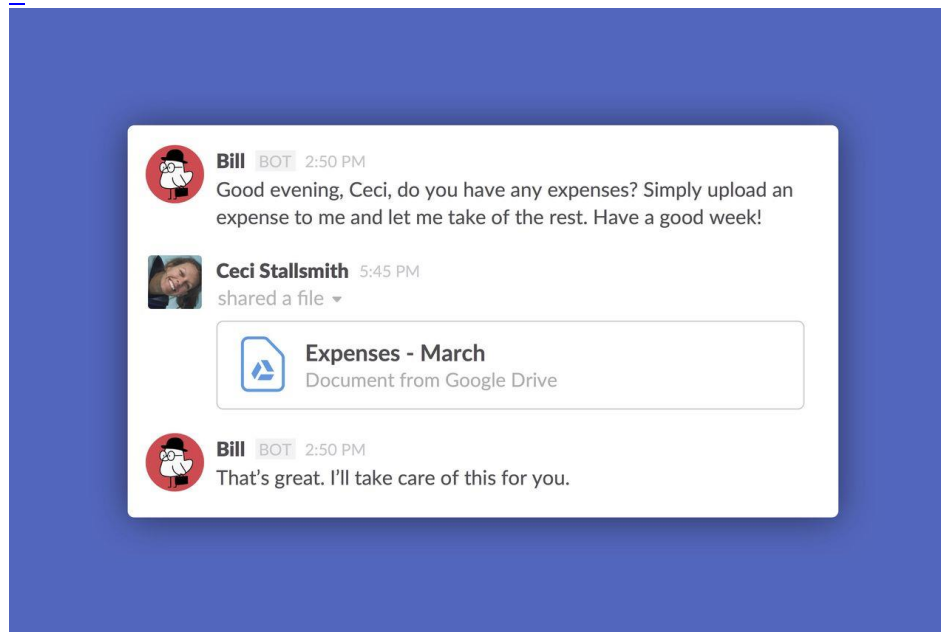


Why bots are the new big thing, and what that means for ordering pizza

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2016 is shaping up to be the year of the bot. Late last month, Microsoft made a big bet on tools that will help developers create artificial intelligence software meant to improve the lives of humans by completing small tasks, and last week [Facebook launched an entire bot platform for its communication tool, Messenger.](#)

I invited my buddy and colleague Casey Newton — [who wrote one of my favorite features on bots](#) — to explain the technology. Newton has some predictions for the applications of bots that I think you'll find interesting. But in the meantime, [the most useful bots may be the ones that just order a pizza.](#) [The episode pairs well with our recent episode on artificial intelligence,](#) so be sure to give that a listen, too!

