



# Google's Business Messages


Brand Playbook

v1.1 | Last updated 06/01/20

Google

# Release Notes

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 Please ensure you're always using the latest version of the Playbook. Download the latest version on the [Business Messages developer site](#).

Version	Notes
	December 16, 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Added <a href="#">oAuth</a> section</li></ul>
v1.1	June 15, 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fixed typos</li></ul>

## Using this Playbook

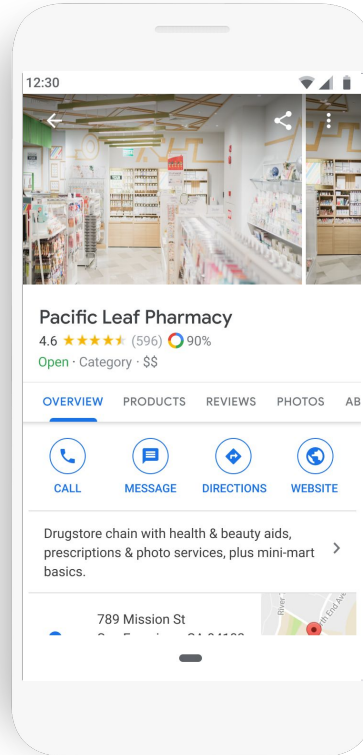
- ① **Build the Basics:** Design your Business Messages experience with a helpful first time experience, appropriate use of rich features, comprehensive and up-to-date information, and easy access to live agents.
- ② **Add Automation:** Provide users with quick support through automation that handles simple user inquiries and hands off to live agents when necessary.

# Overview

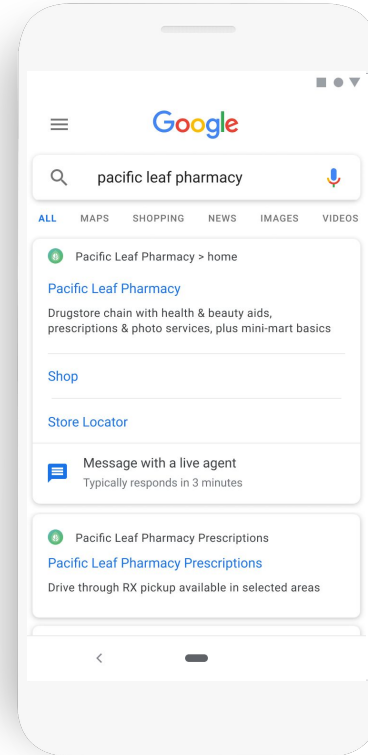


# Messaging Entry Points

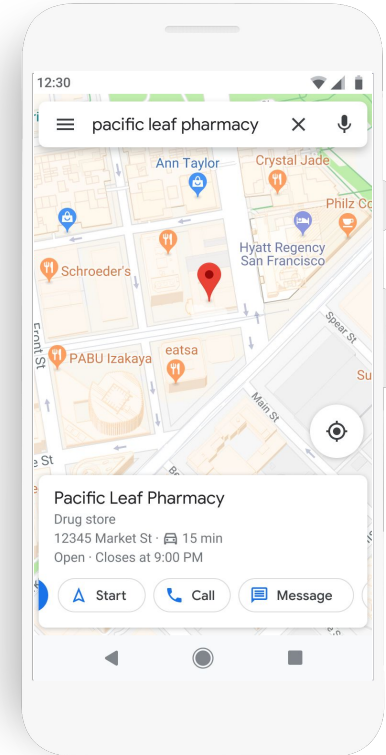
Users can initiate a conversation with a business through Search or Maps



Local Search



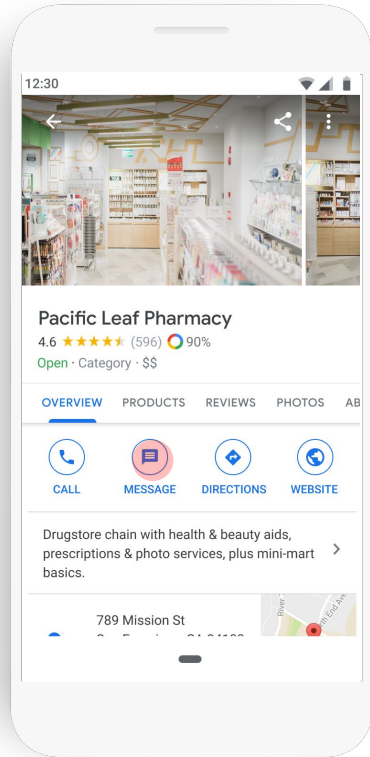
Organic Search



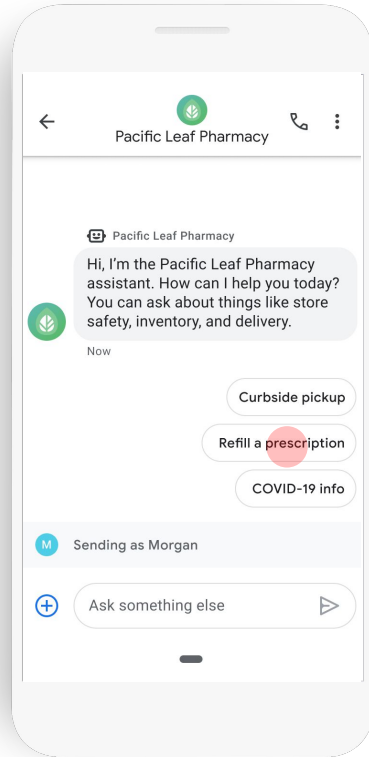
Maps



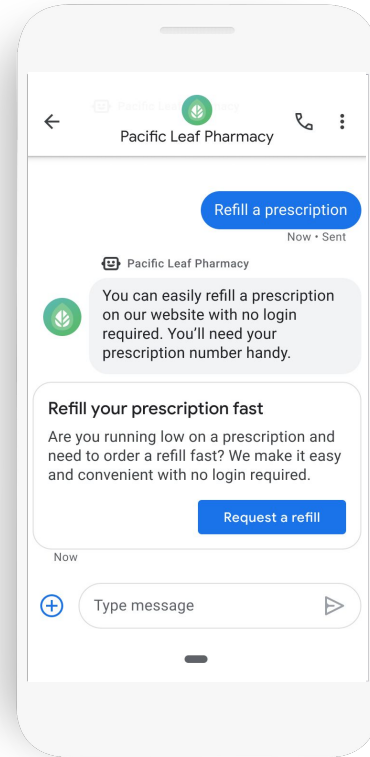
# General User Flow



Entry point



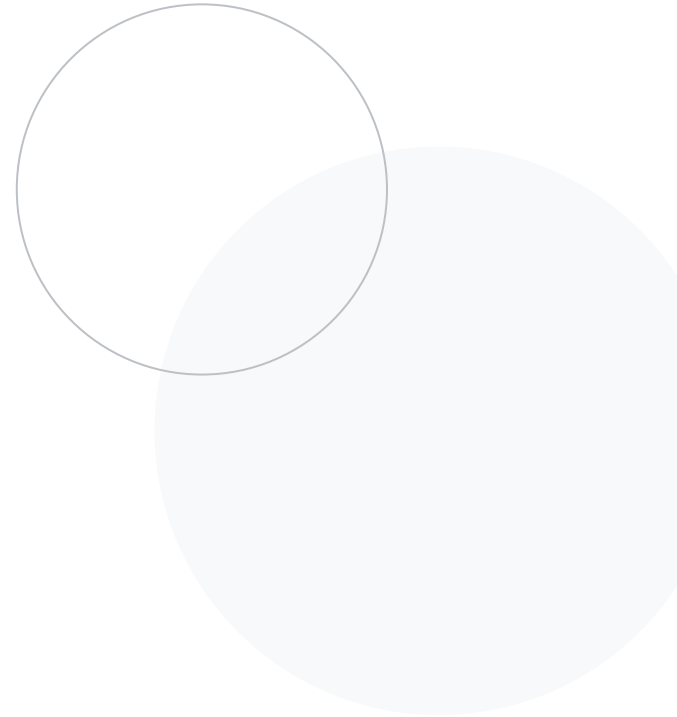
First time experience



First message sent

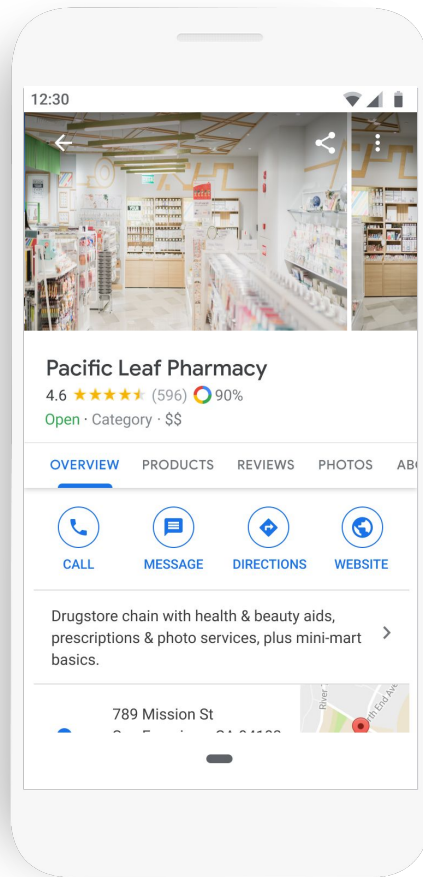


# Features

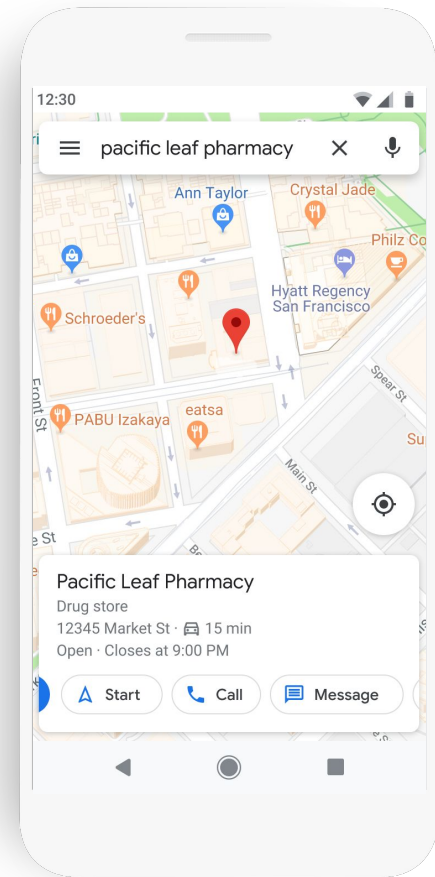


## Contextual Entry Point Information

Entry point information like type (e.g. Organic Search vs. Maps) and location (e.g. Mountain View store) is passed alongside messages allowing agents to better service users



Local Search



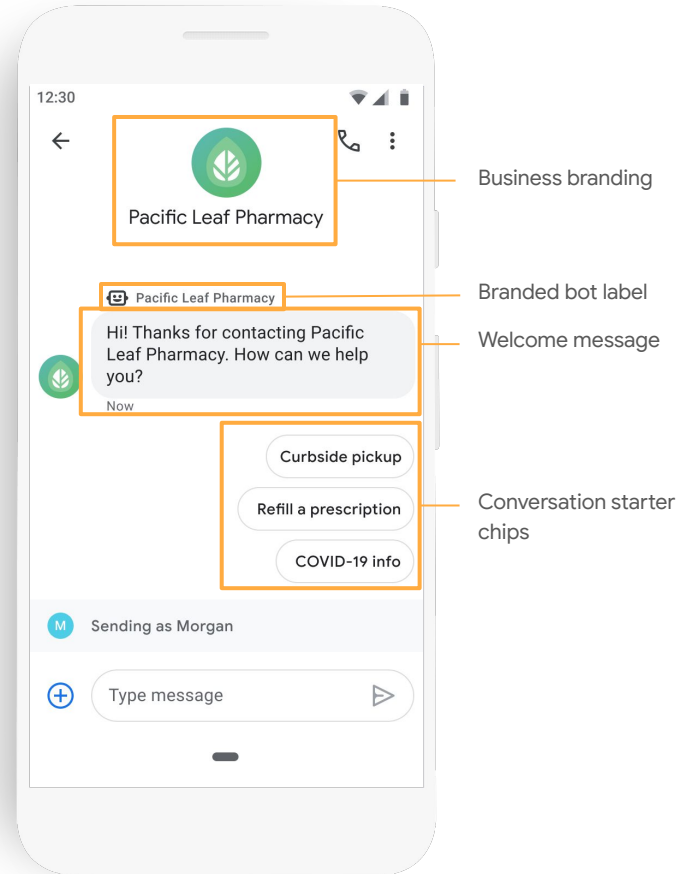
Maps



## First time experience

1. Business branding (logo + business name)
2. Welcome message
3. Conversation starter chips

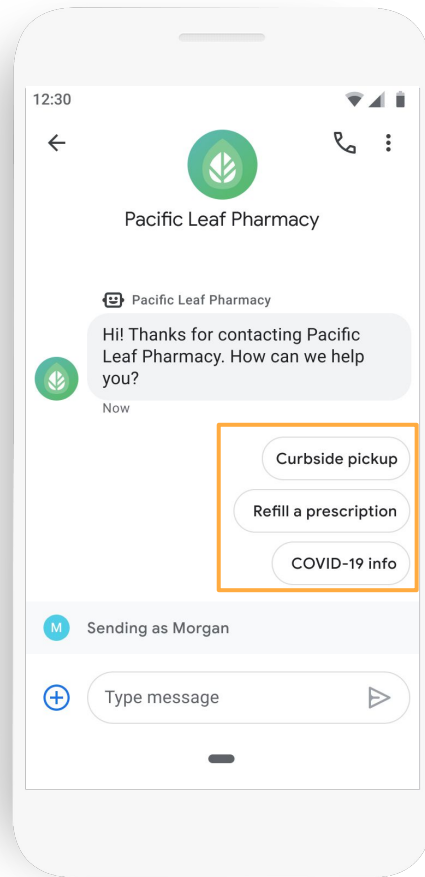
[Developer docs](#)



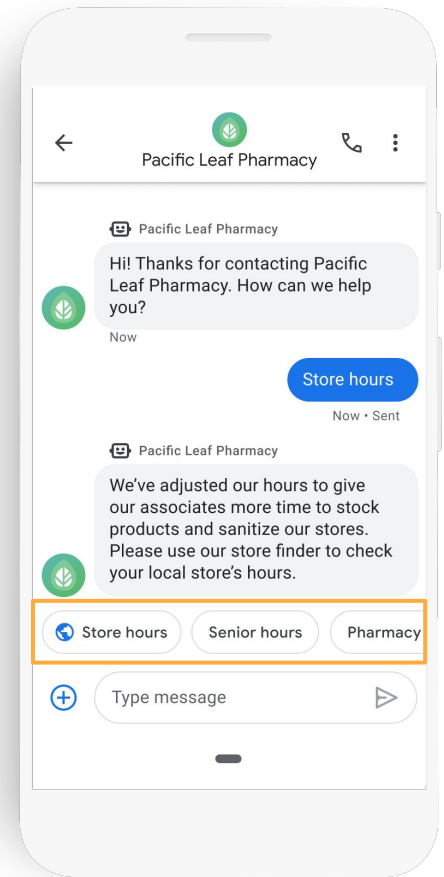
## Chips

1. Conversation starters
2. Suggested replies
3. Suggested actions

[Developer docs](#)



Conversation starter chips

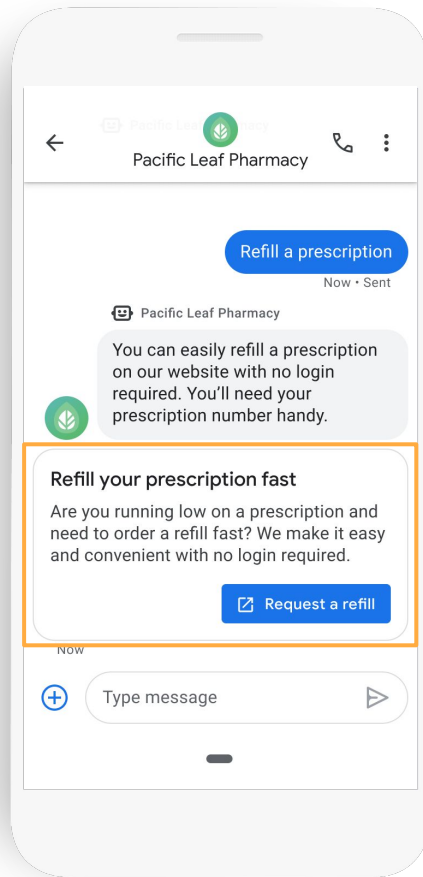


Suggested action & suggested replies

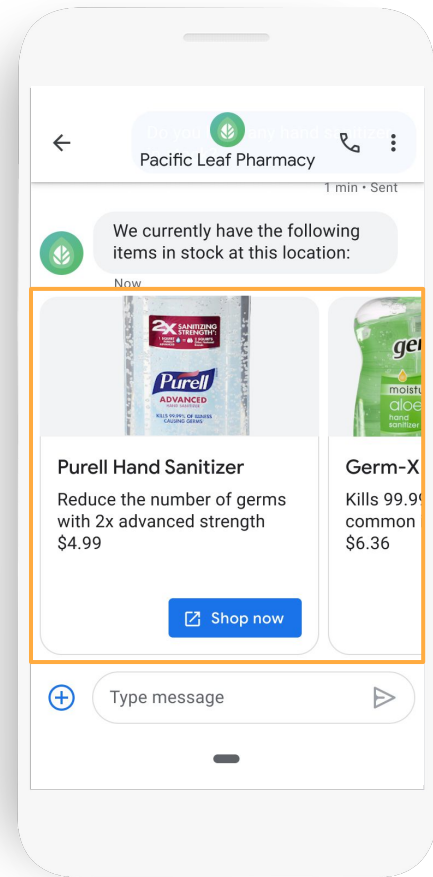
## Rich cards & carousels

Display URLs as a rich card to link out to site pages when it is a critical next step. When presenting multiple options to choose from, use a rich card carousel

[Developer docs](#)



Rich card

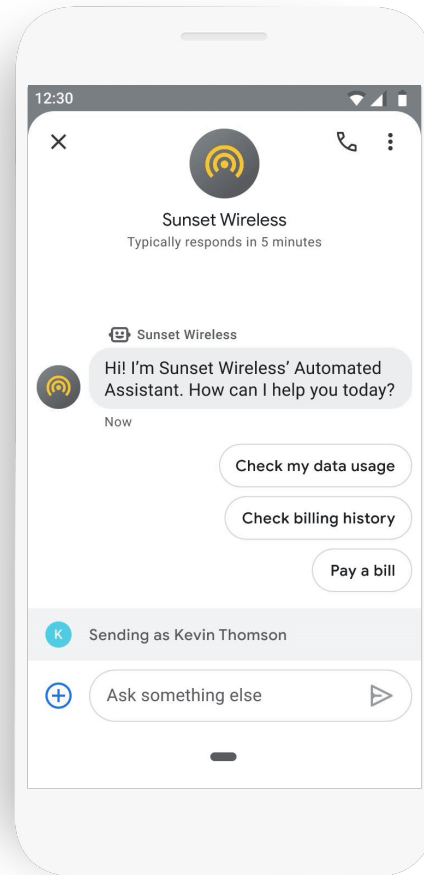


Rich card carousel

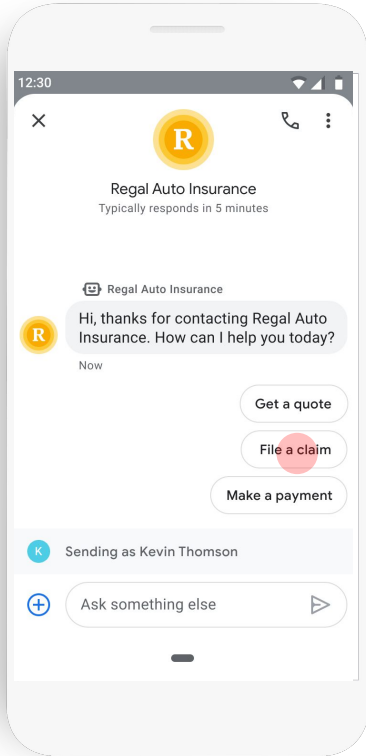
## OAuth

Verify users' identities and provide personalized information in a secure way

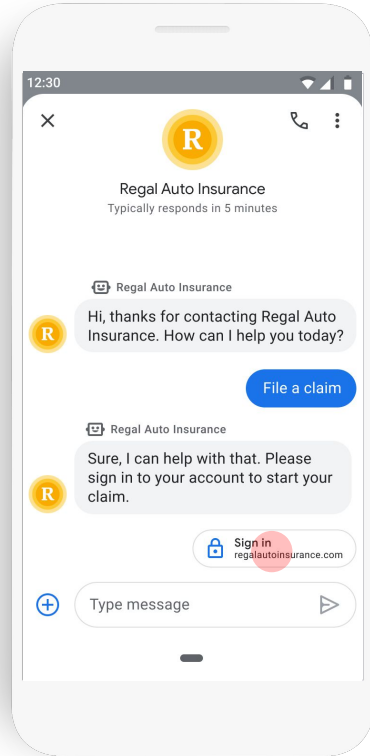
[Developer docs](#)



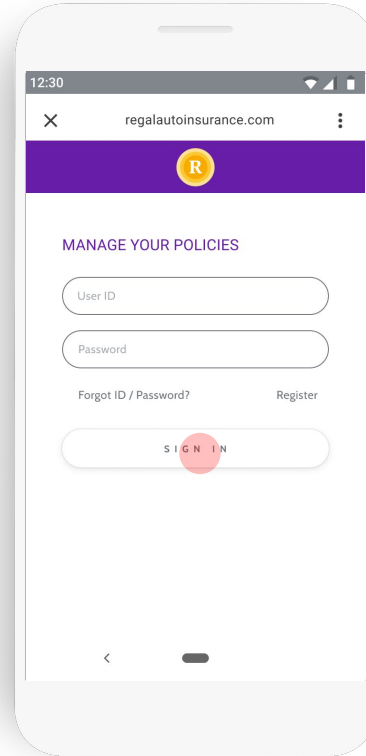
# oAuth Example



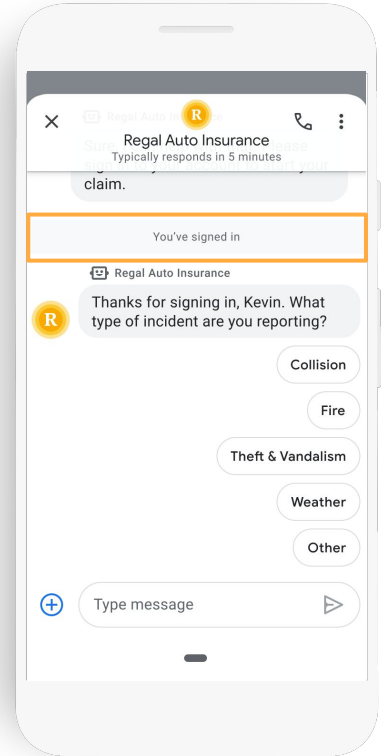
User chooses workflow



User prompted to sign in via chip



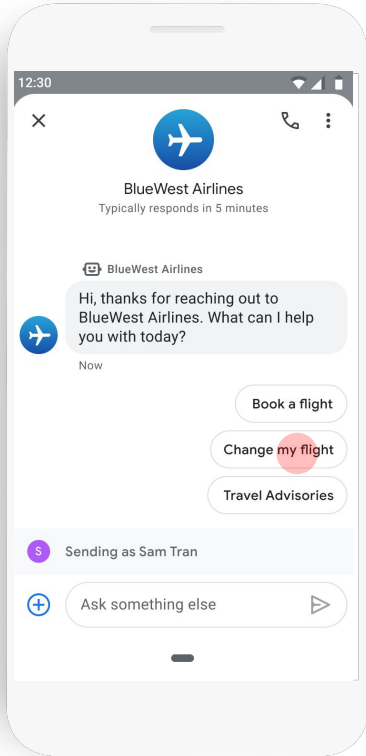
User directed to URL to sign in



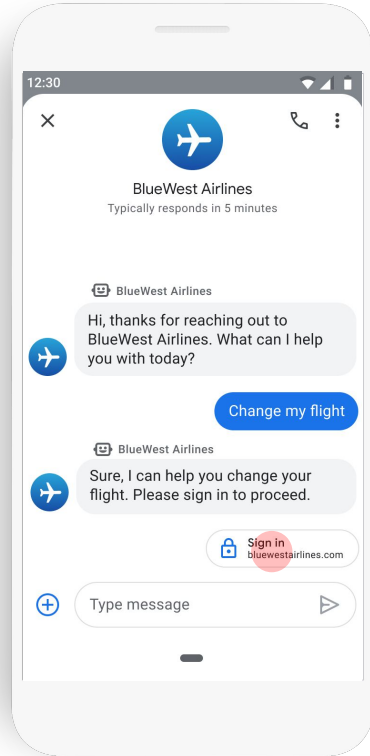
Authentication is successful and user is returned to conversation



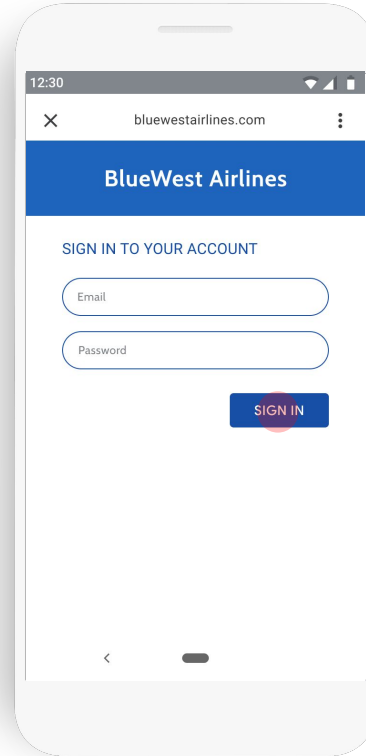
# oAuth Example



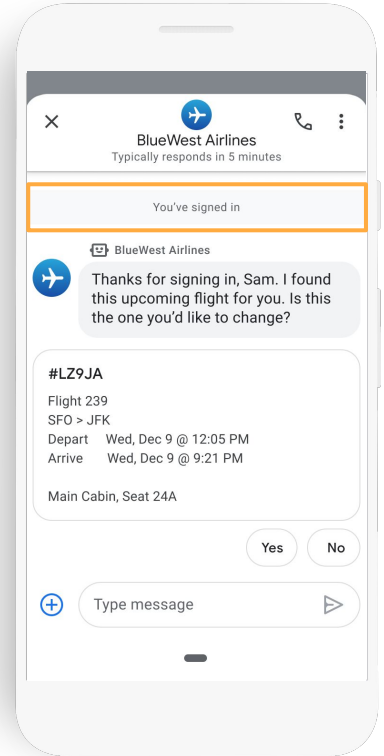
User chooses workflow



User prompted to sign in via chip



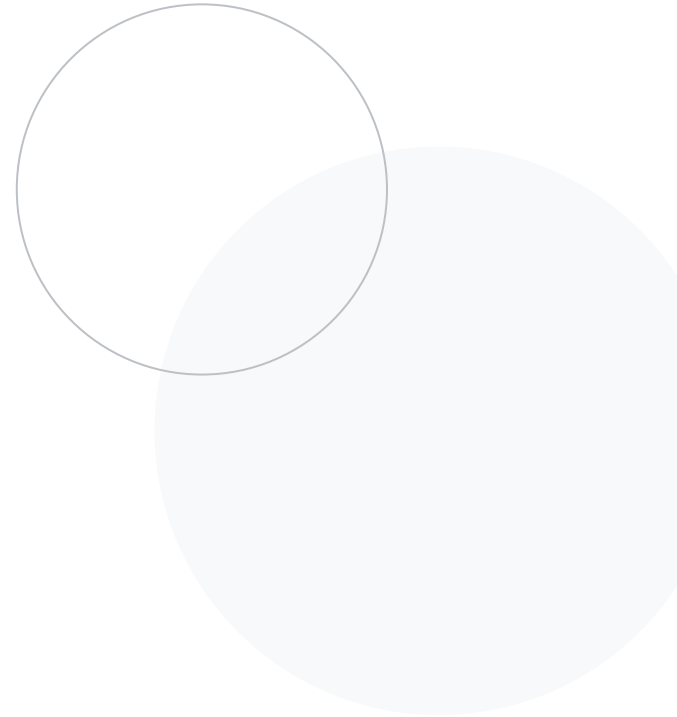
User directed to URL to sign in



Authentication is successful and user is returned to conversation



# Build the Basics



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Prioritize communicating key information and updating regularly so your customers can get informed without calling

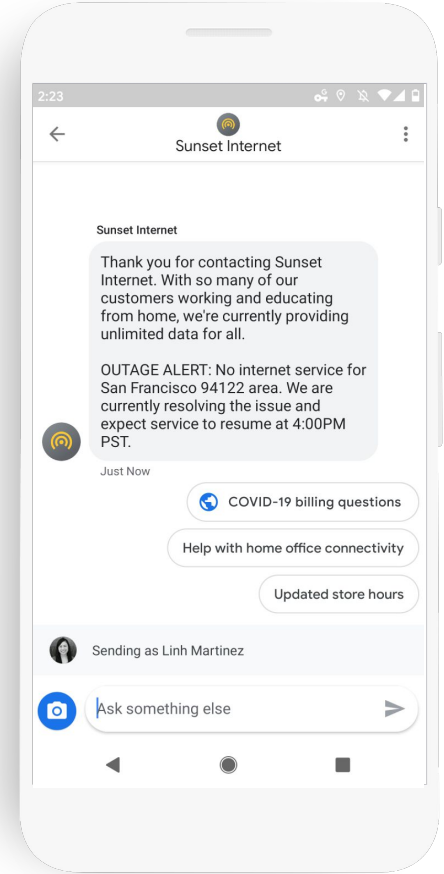
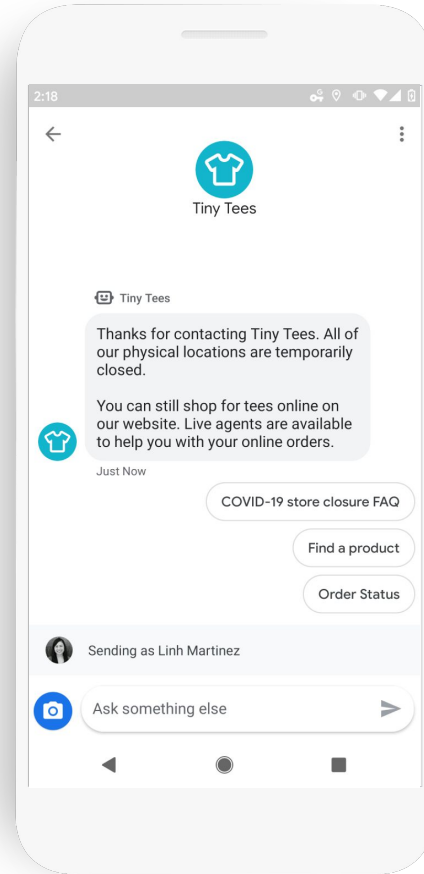
- ① Place updated information in welcome messages like store hours, closings, & agent availability
- ② If live agents are no longer available or experiencing very long wait times, inform the user
- ③ Create chips in the welcome message to answer most common questions or link out to web pages with more information
- ④ URLs should be made as a smart chip and not in message

*If they must be in-message, URLs in messages must be formatted using the full link to be detected and made clickable. Please use short URLs from your primary brand site e.g. <https://www.brand.com/shortlink>*



## Informative welcome messages

1. Clearly state if stores are closed and if live agents are available
2. Inform users about any critical status/outages



# Tools to help you keep your agent updated

## Downloadable console

1. Quickly create and edit new agents for testing and launch
2. Update the welcome message and chips from a web-based UI

Agent Name

Logo (1024x1024px PNG)

Custom Agent ID

**Conversation settings:**

Locale

Welcome message

Privacy policy

**Conversational starters:**

Suggestion

Postback data

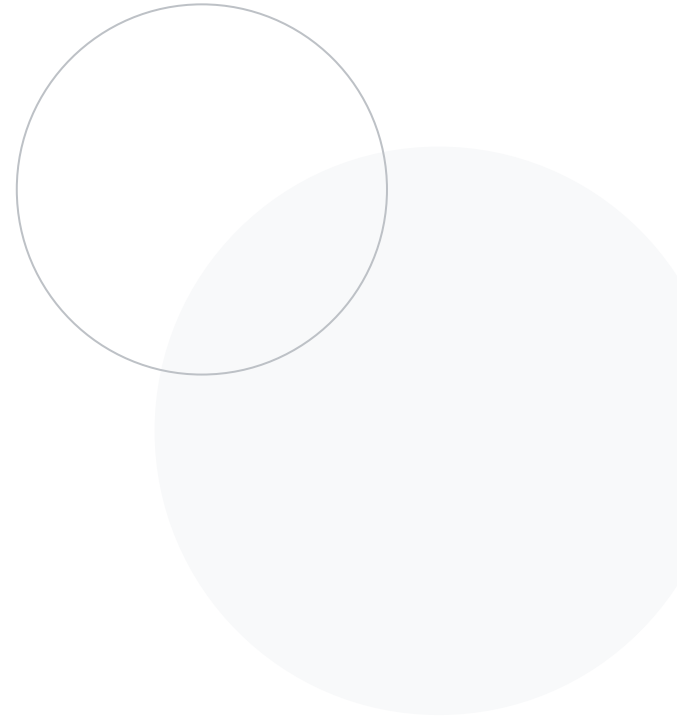
Suggestion

Postback data

Suggestion

Postback data

# Going beyond the basics: Add Automation



# Add Automation

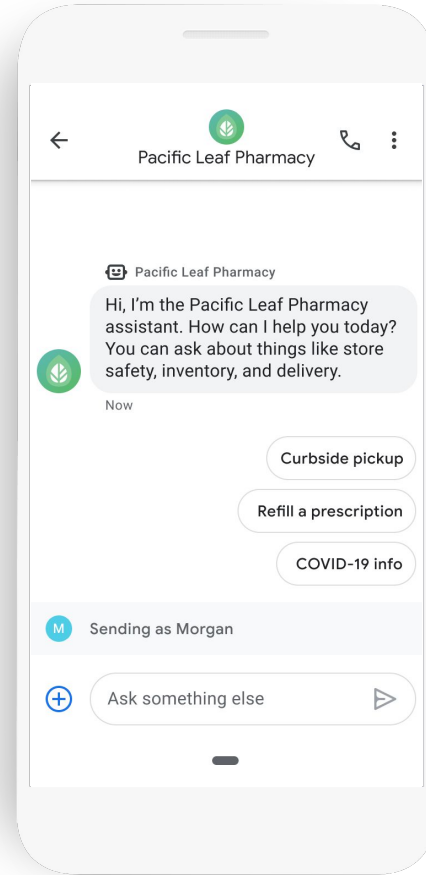
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Building a robust bot with complete end to end journeys is the ideal, and leads to happier customers

- ① Be prescriptive about each step, by using chips and cards to walk a user through an entire journey
- ② Build user journeys that can be completed end-to-end in chat without dead-ending
- ③ Hand off to web to complete complex workflows like payments that can't be accomplished with cards, but ensure the user can either complete it there or the workflow resumes in chat
- ④ Break workflows into smaller chunks of text with easy decisions for the user to make, avoid long messages with lots of text
- ⑤ When a user reaches the end of a journey, display the welcome message chips again so the user can start a new task

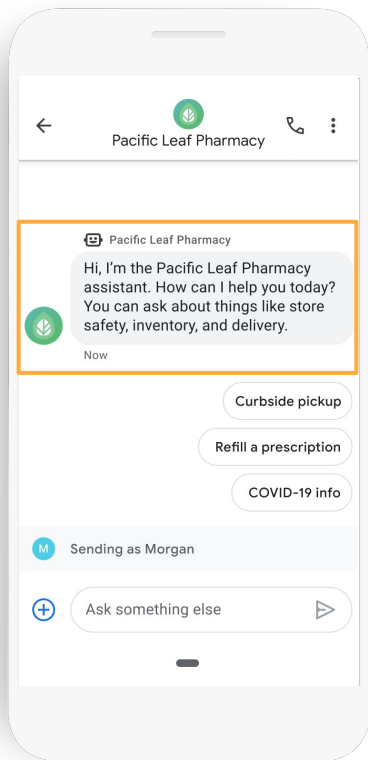
## Provide helpful welcome messages

1. Warmly greet the user
2. Describe the bot's capabilities by including suggested topics that can be asked

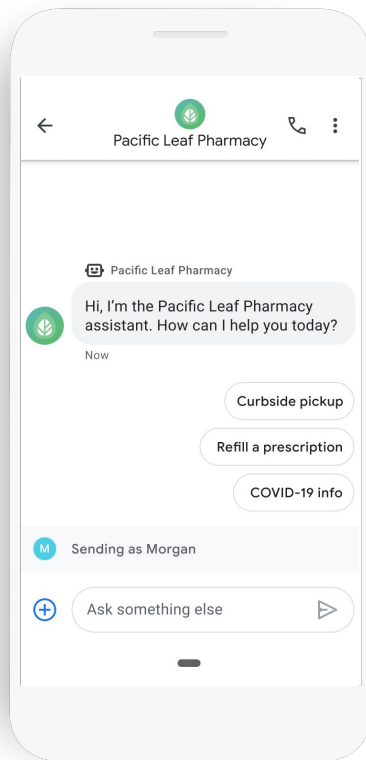




Use the welcome message to let users know what types of questions they can ask

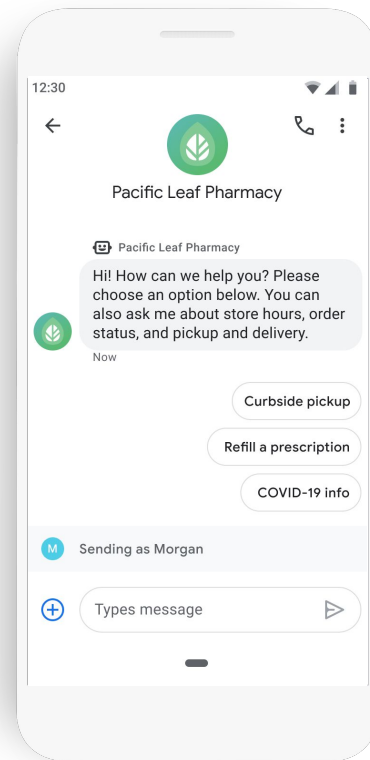


Let users assume they can only get help with what's shown by the chips



Explicitly refer to the Conversation Starter chips in the welcome message

Ex: "Click on an option below", "Click on a chip to get started", etc. Some older devices may not support chips.

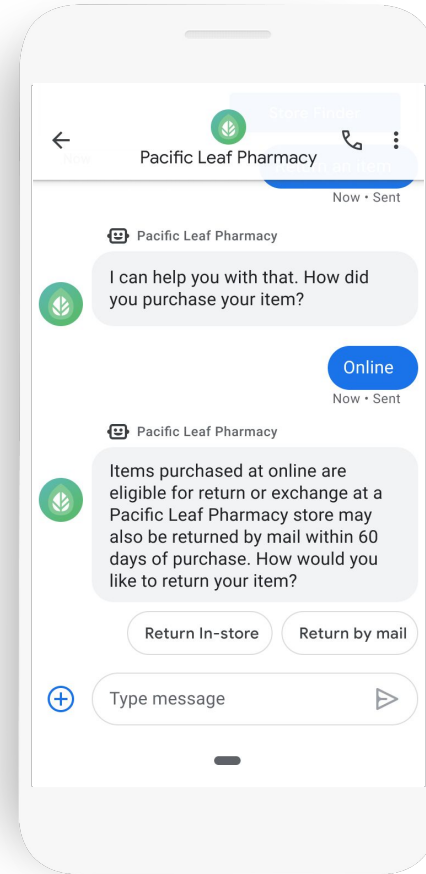


VS

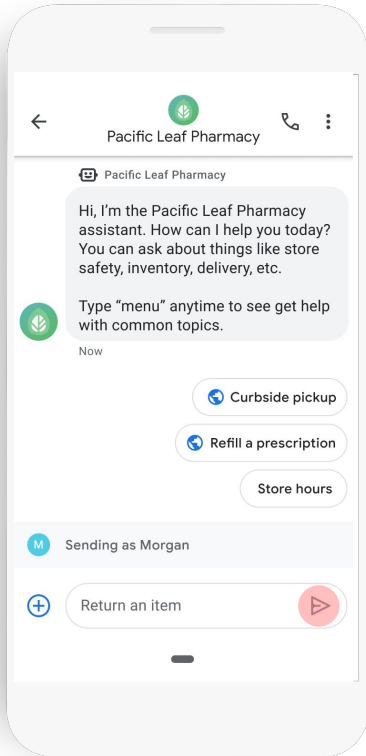


## Breakdown workflows into simple steps with chips

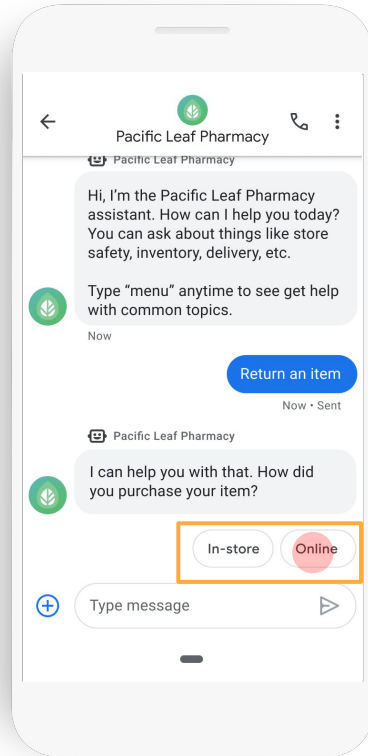
1. Provide easy decisions for users to make using chips
2. Be persistent when using chips to guide users
3. If asking for text input after using chips for interaction, remind user to type by saying, “You can tell me your answer”



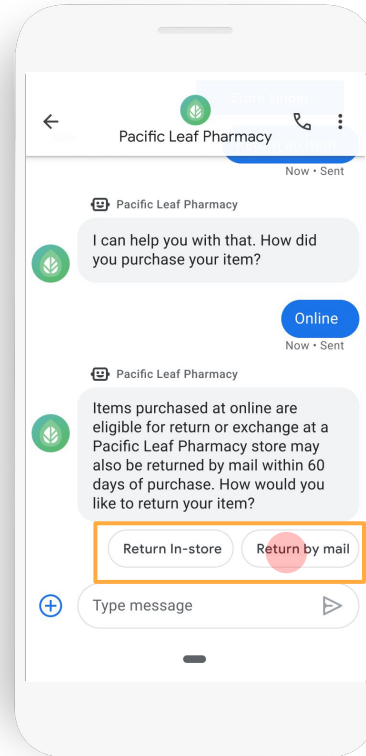
# Breakdown workflows into simple steps with chips



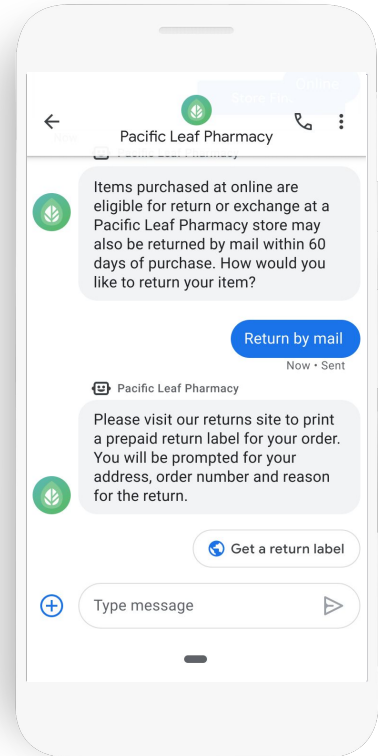
User types in free form text



Respond with short message. Provide users with easy decision using chips



Use chips to guide the user



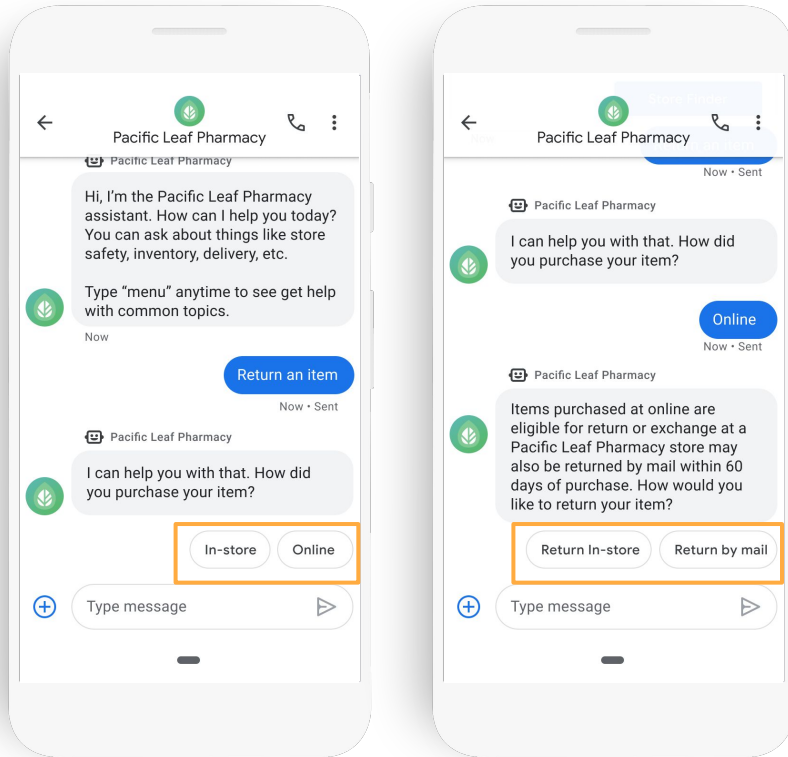
Use action chip to link to web workflows







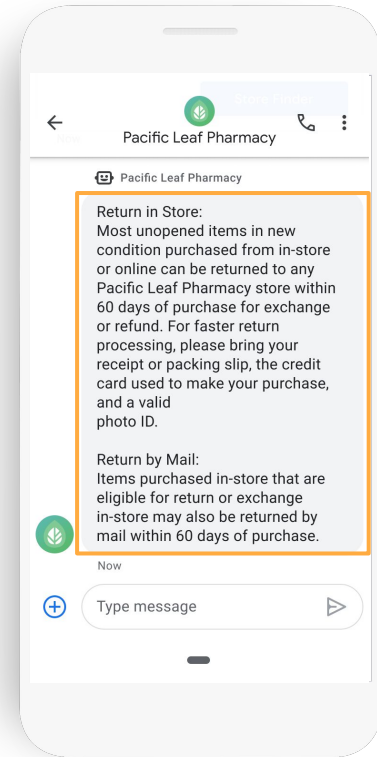
Write short messages and guide users with chips for easy decisions



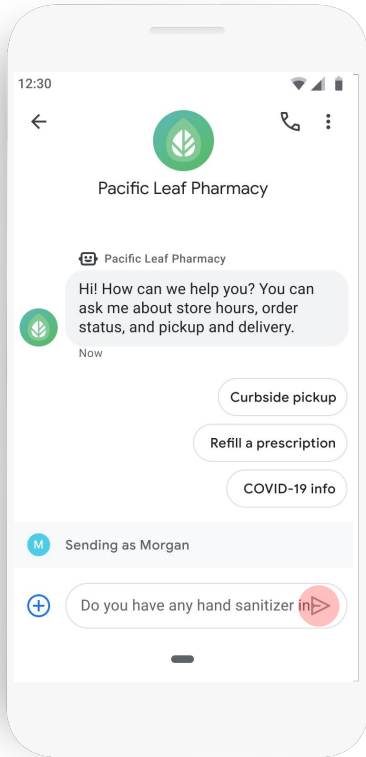
VS



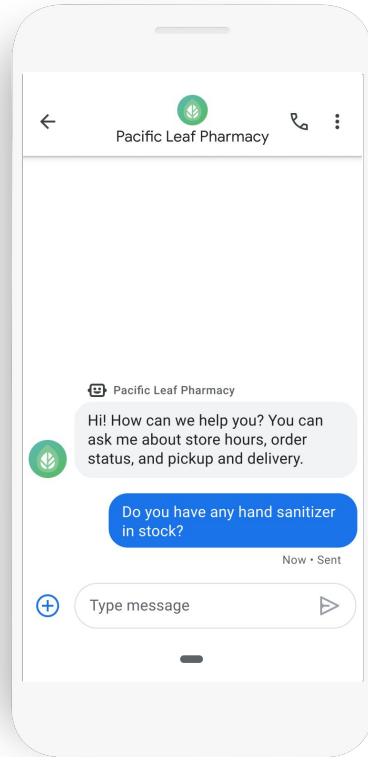
Use large chunks of text with no actionable steps



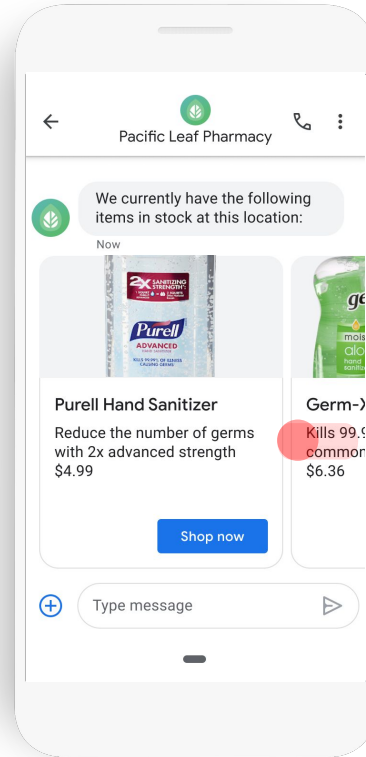
# Use rich card carousels when presenting multiple options



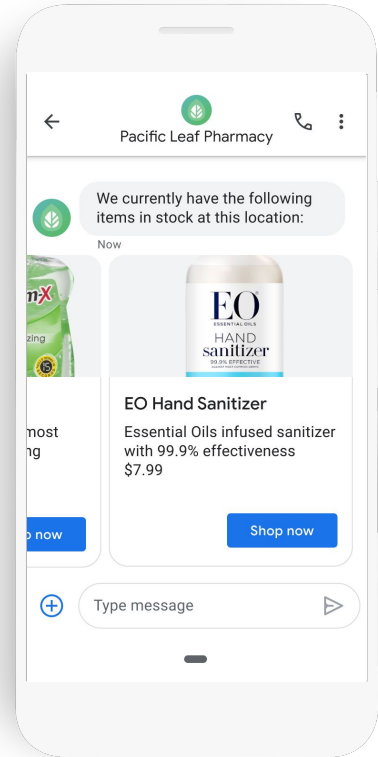
User types in free form text



Message is sent



Bot response with rich card carousel

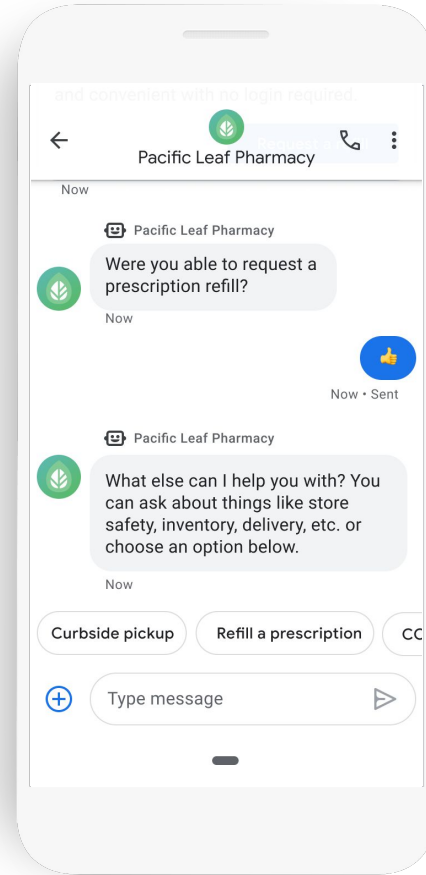


Swiped left to see more cards

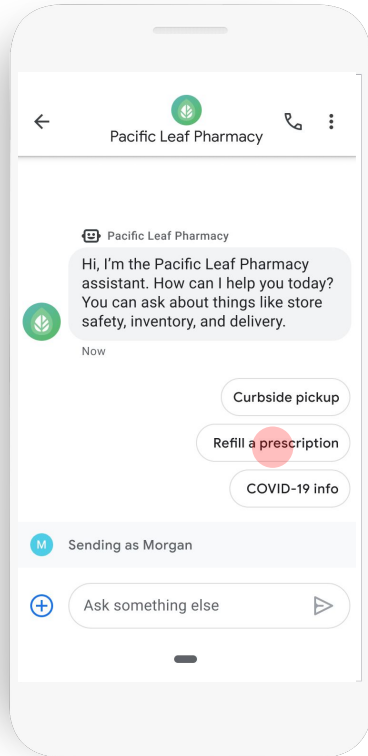


## Display welcome message chips at end of journey

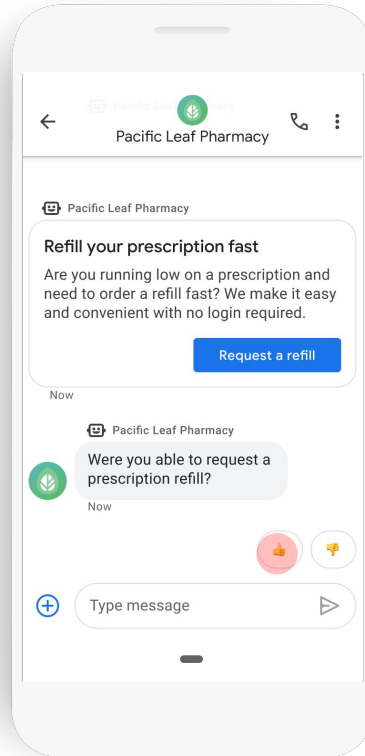
Guide users to ask another question or start a new task with chips



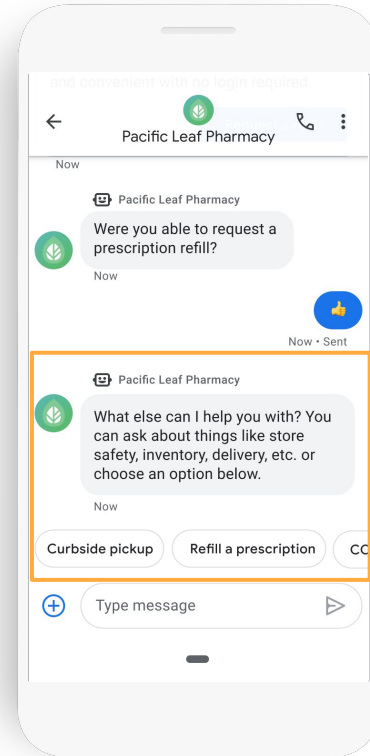
# Display welcome message chips at end of journey



User chooses task



User completes workflow on web and returns to conversation

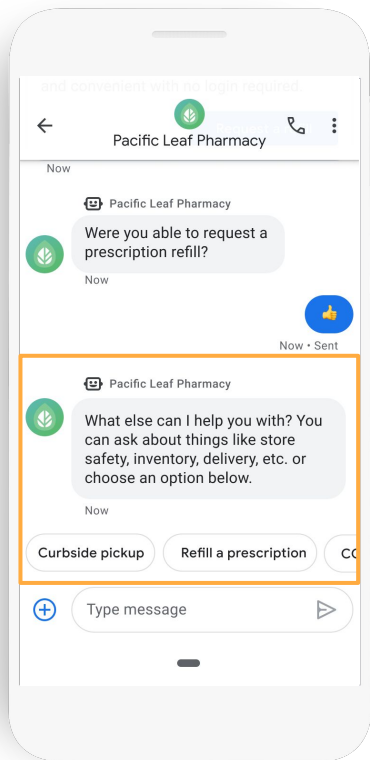


Provide welcome message chips so user can start a new task





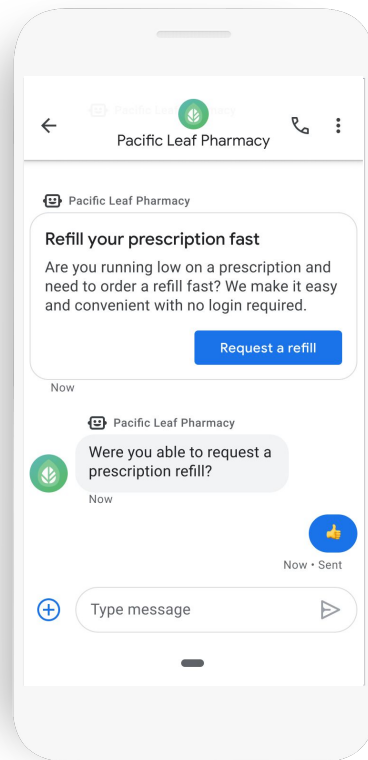
Display a message and chips at the end of the journey to allow users to start a new task



VS

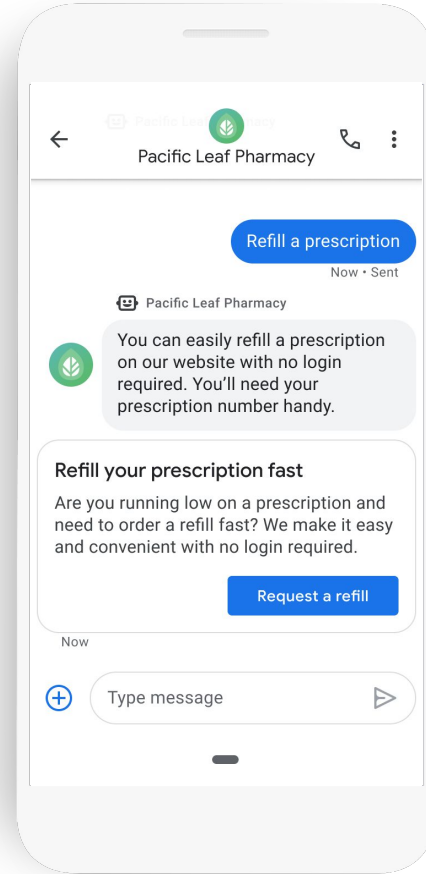


Give users a deadend with no actionable steps

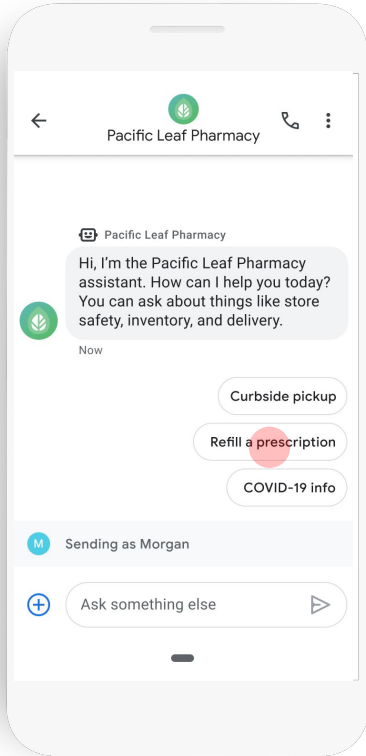


## Handoff complex workflows to the web

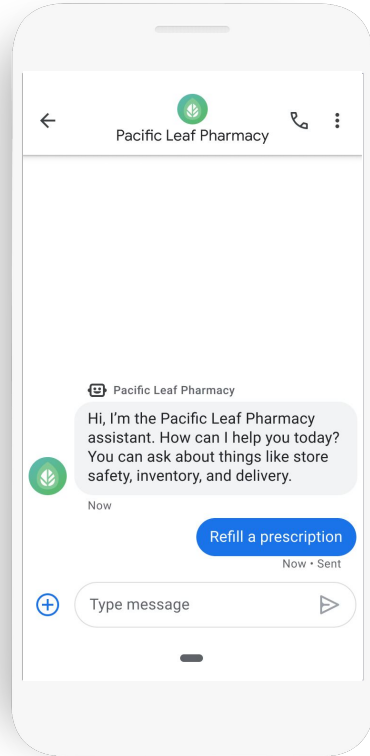
Use rich cards to link out to web workflows



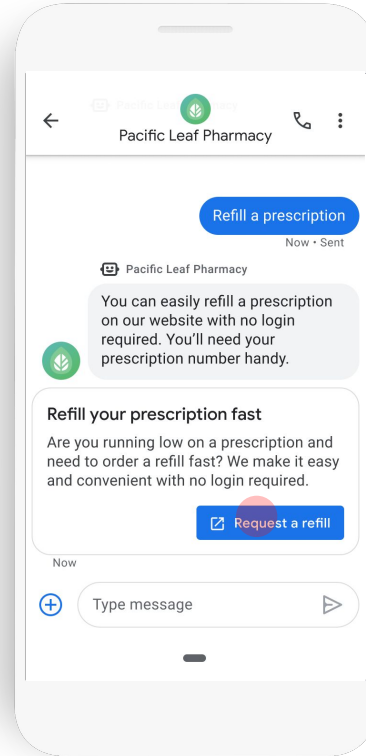
# Handoff complex workflows to the web



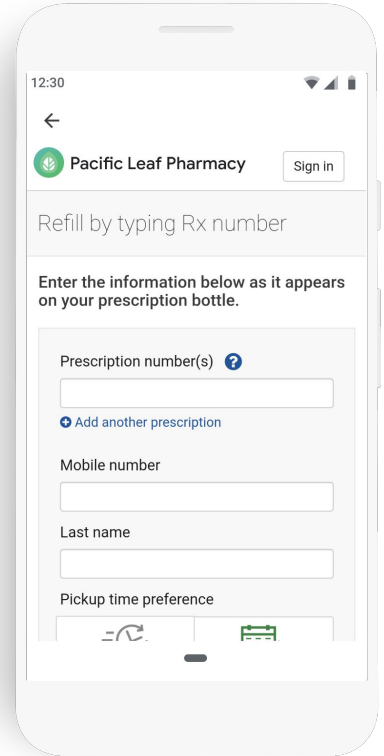
 User taps on prescription refill chip



User sends message



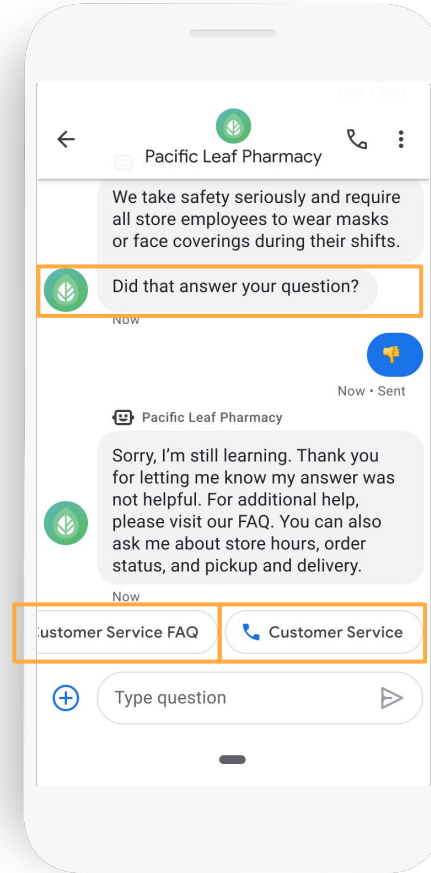
Automated bot response with rich card linking to workflow on web



User completes workflow on web

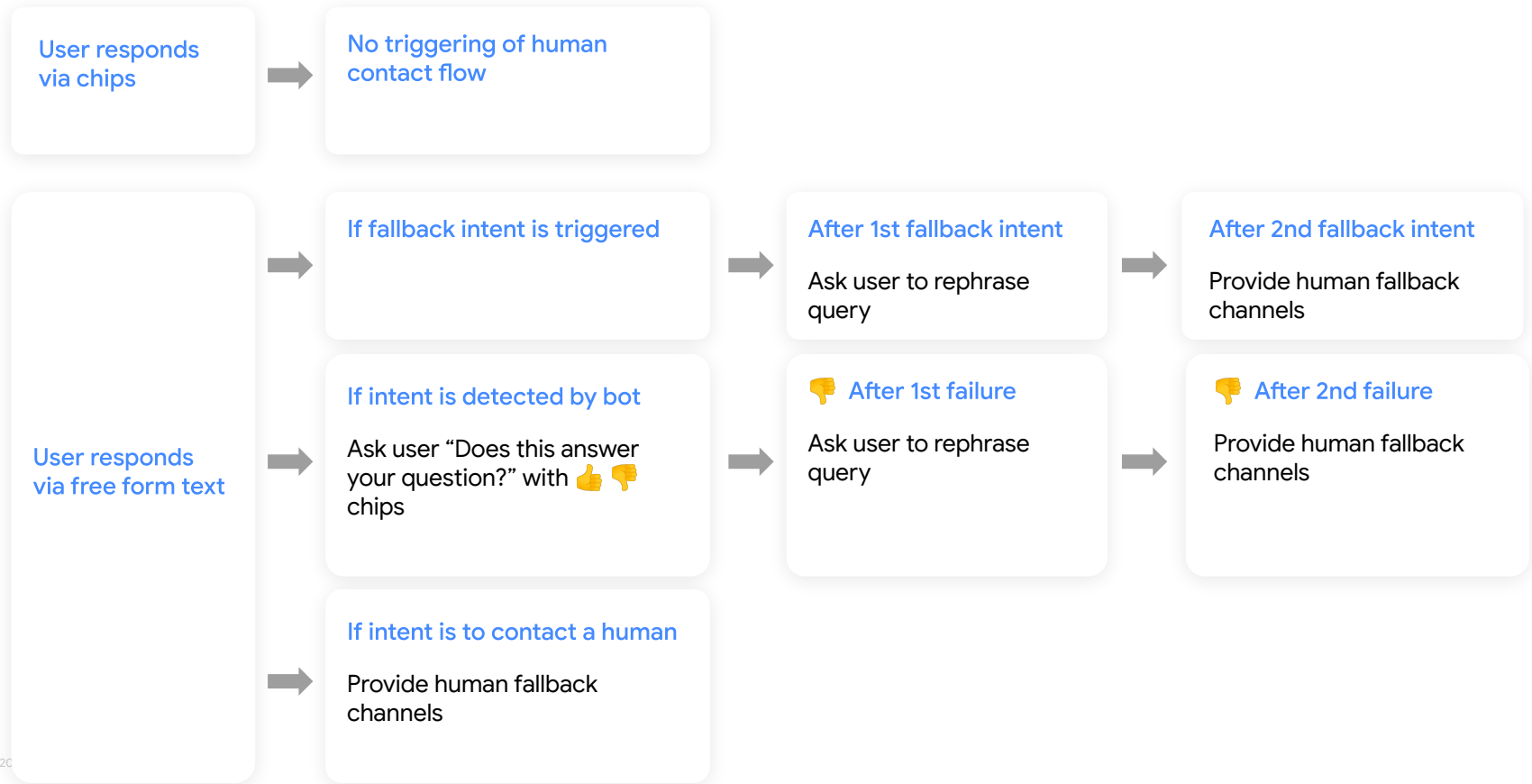
## Gracefully fall back to human support when required

1. Ask users to rephrase if fallback intent is triggered. After 2nd fallback intent, provide human fallback channels
2. When intent is detected, allow users to provide feedback by asking “Does this answer your question” with thumbs up/down chips. Provide human fallback channels after 2nd failure
3. Provide human fallback channels when user intent is to contact a human



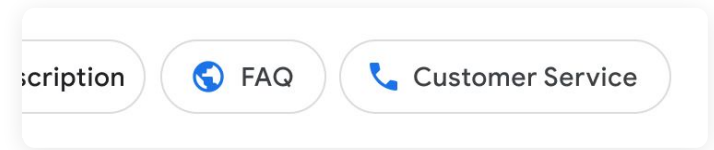


# Gracefully fallback to human support when required



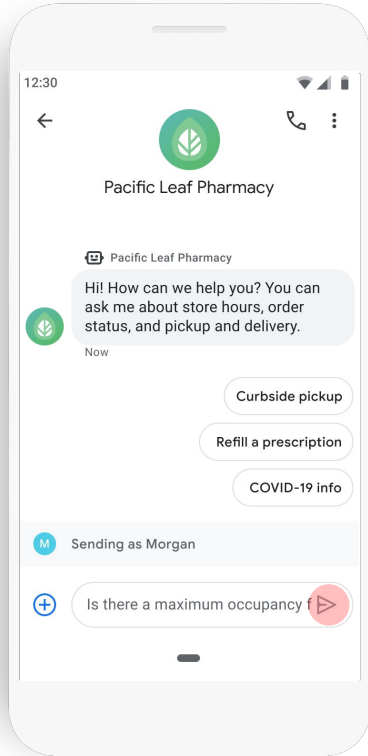
# Human fallback channels

- After two fallback intents or two failures occur, use a Call chip to provide a human support option
- Include a FAQ chip link as an additional fallback channel
- Display the human support option last

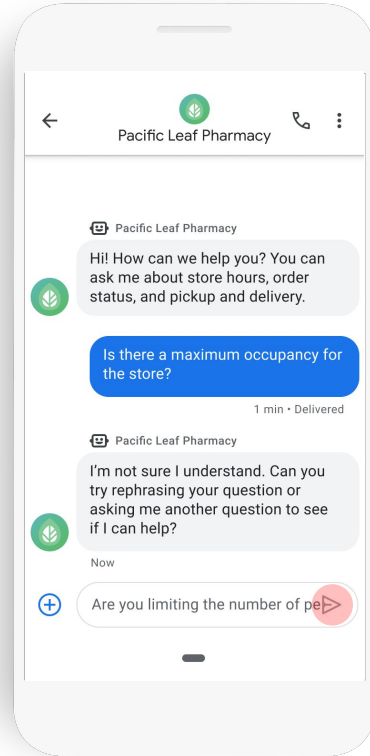


# Gracefully fallback to human support when required

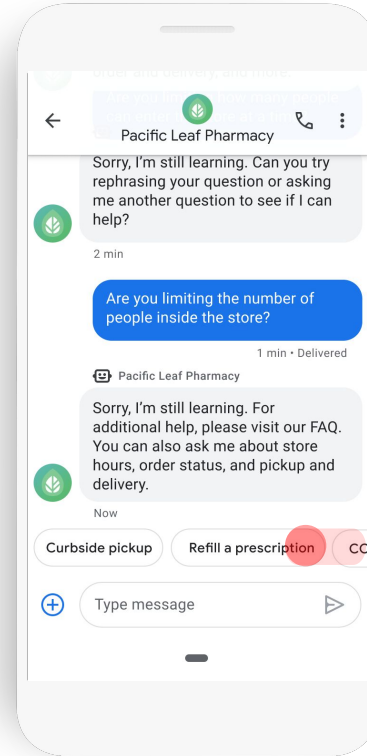
(If fallback intent is triggered)



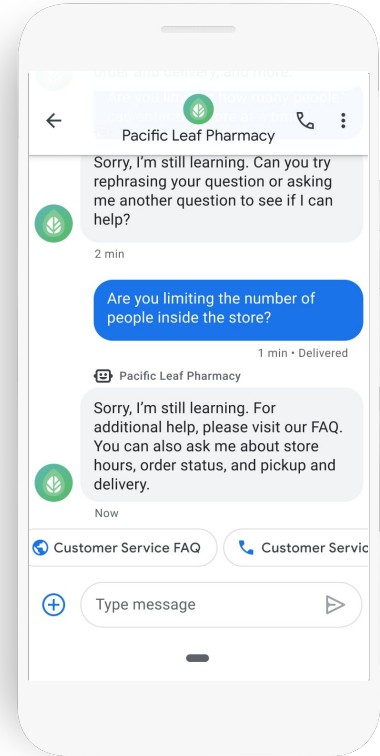
User types in free form text



1st fallback intent: bot asks user to rephrase query



2nd fallback intent: bot response with suggested chips (call chip included)

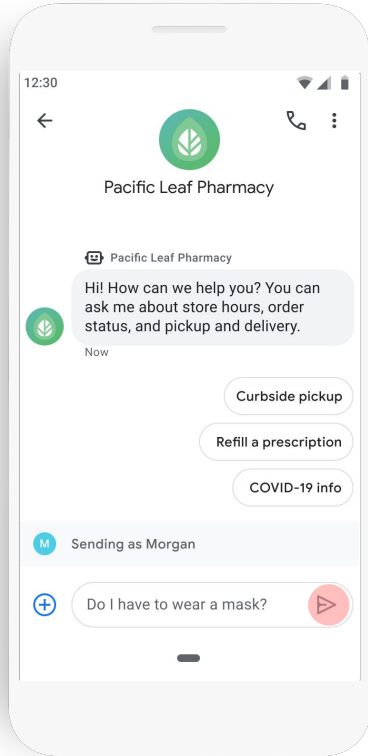


Chips swiped left to show FAQ and Call actions

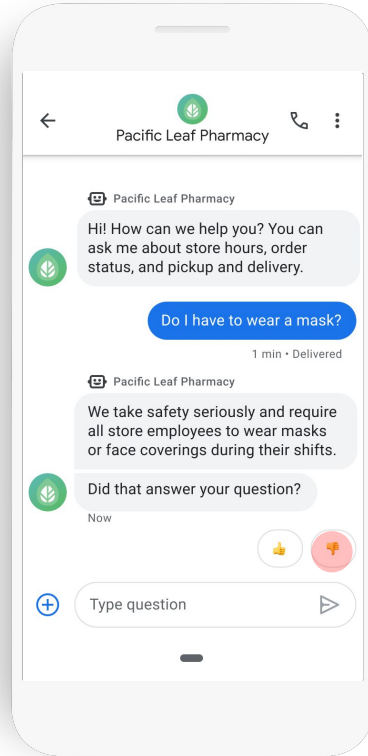


# Gracefully fallback to human support when required

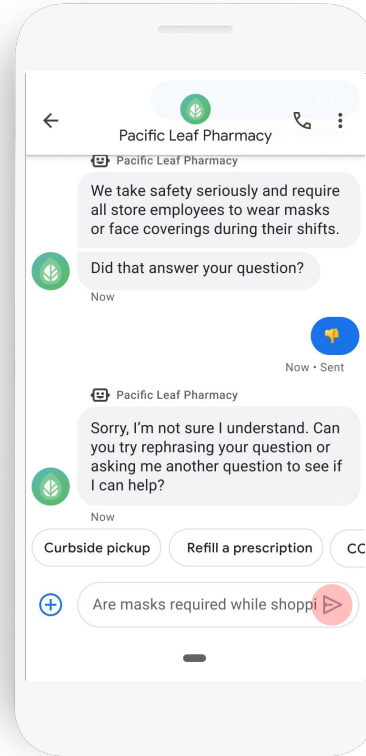
(If intent is detected by bot)



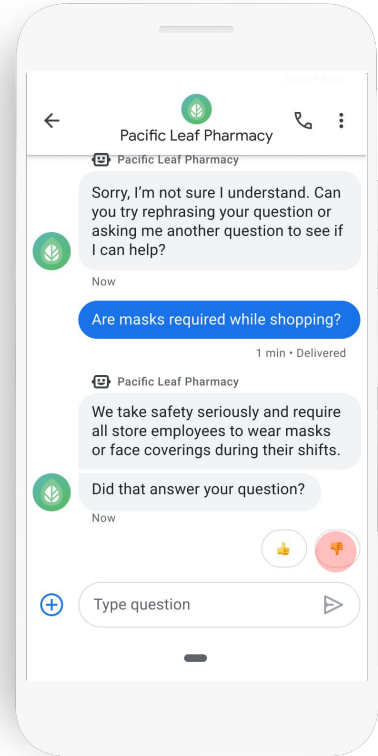
User types in free form text



Bot detects intent and asks for feedback



First thumbs down = 1st failure

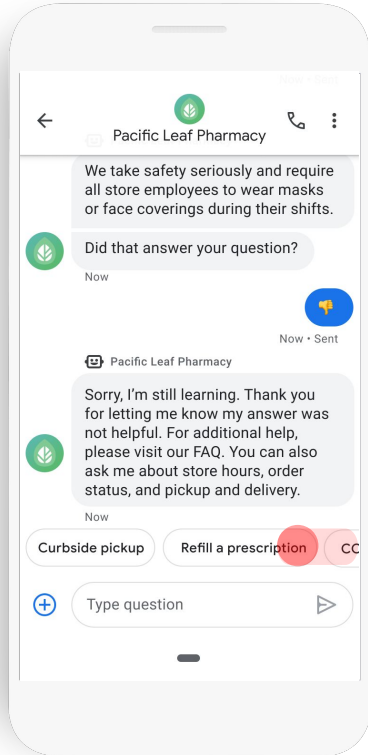


Second thumbs down = 2nd failure

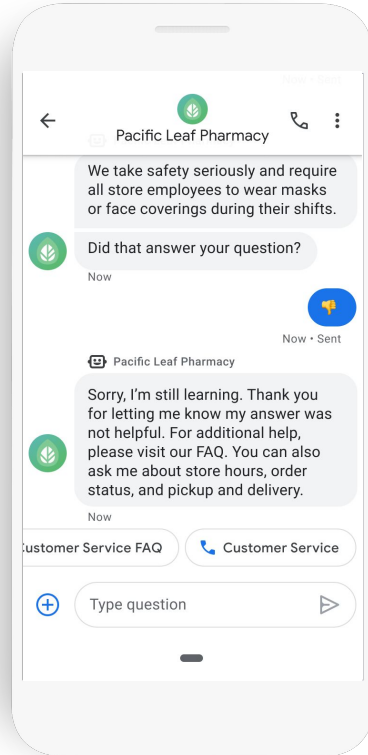


# Gracefully fallback to human support when required

(If intent is detected by bot)



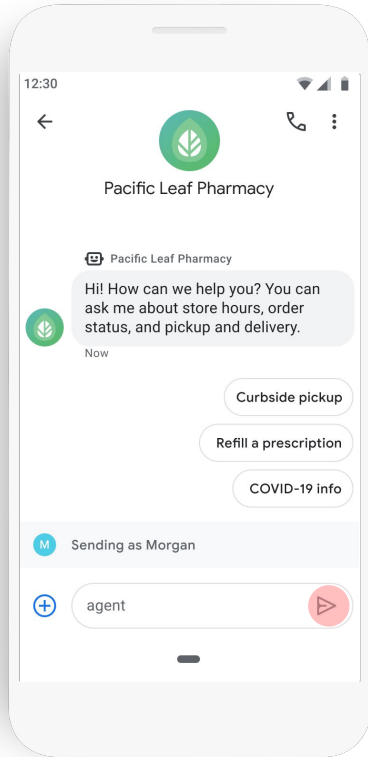
Bot response with suggested chips  
(call chip included)



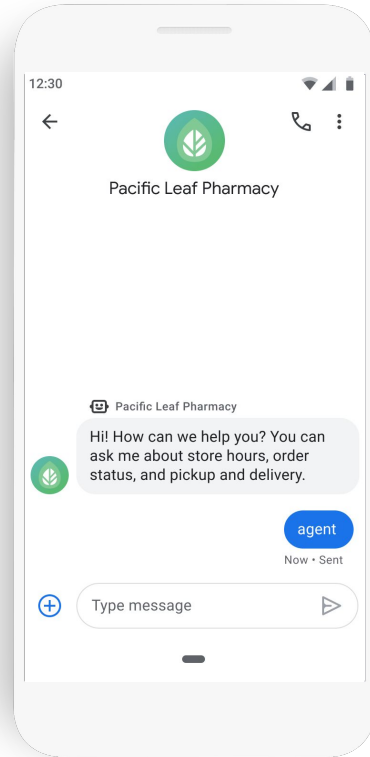
Chips swiped left to show FAQ and  
Call actions

# Gracefully fallback to human support when required

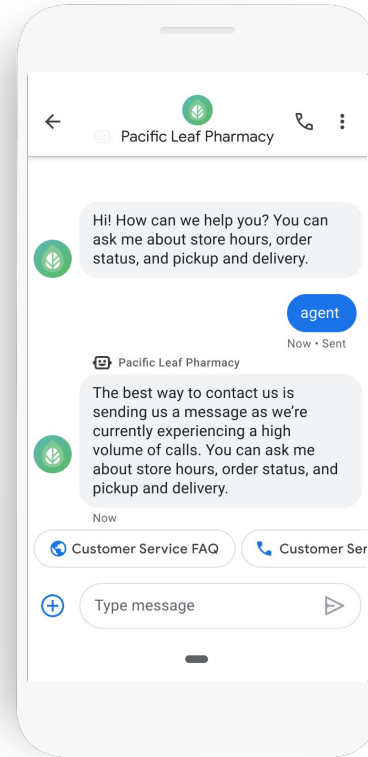
(User intent is to contact human)



User types in free form text



Message sent



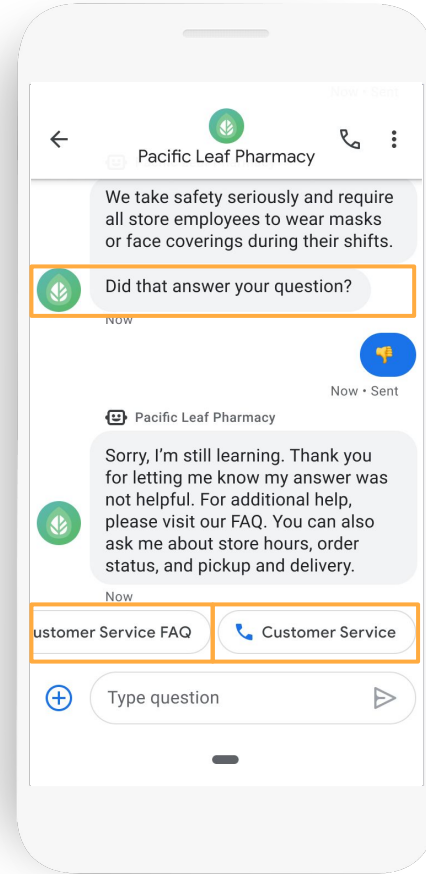
Bot response with FAQ and call chip



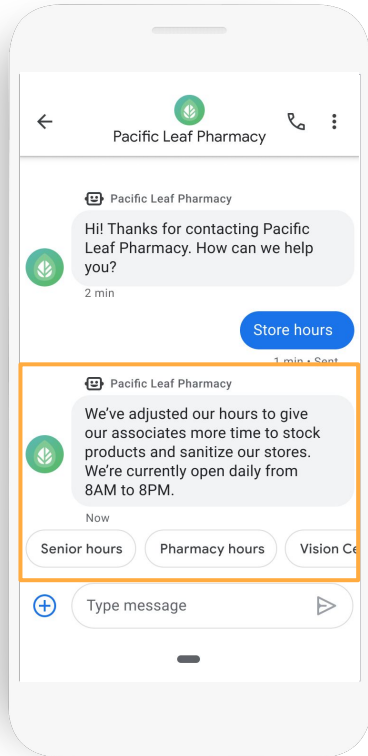
## Provide text fall back for rich features

Some users with older devices may not see chips and rich cards. Include guidance on what options users have to continue the conversation

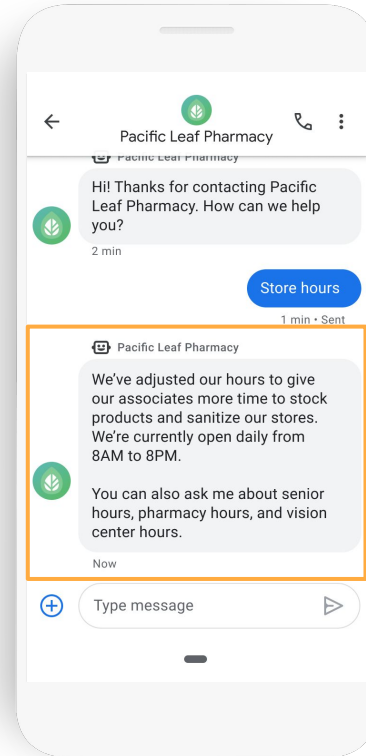
[Developer docs](#)



# Suggested reply chips text fallback



Default experience

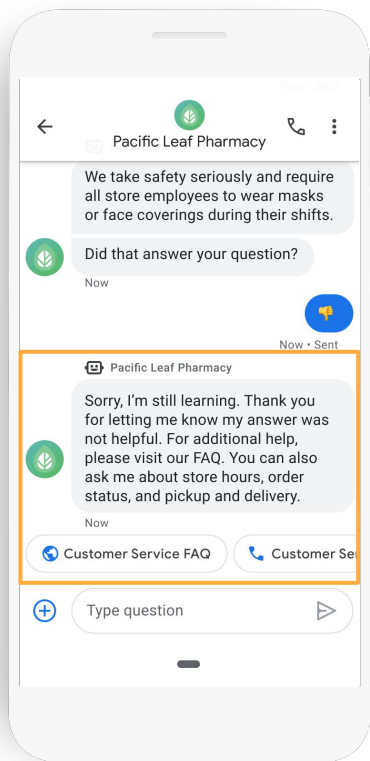


Include suggested reply options within the message to guide users

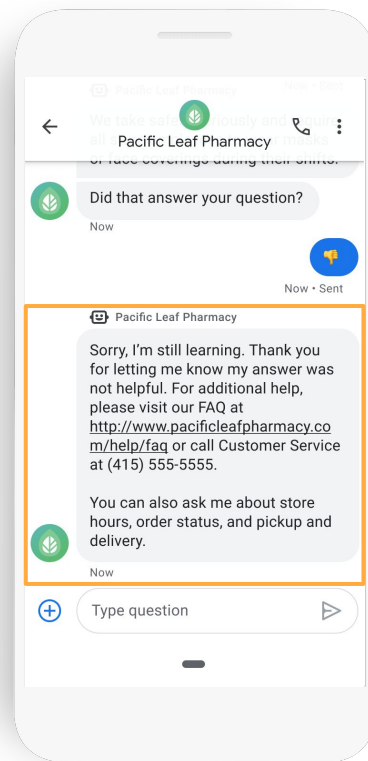




# Suggested action chips text fallback



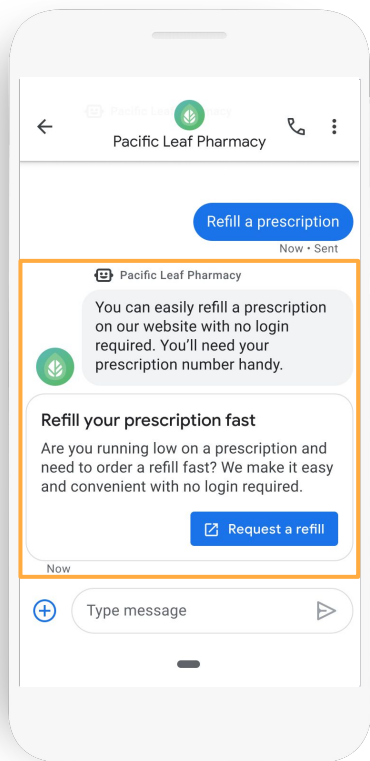
Default experience



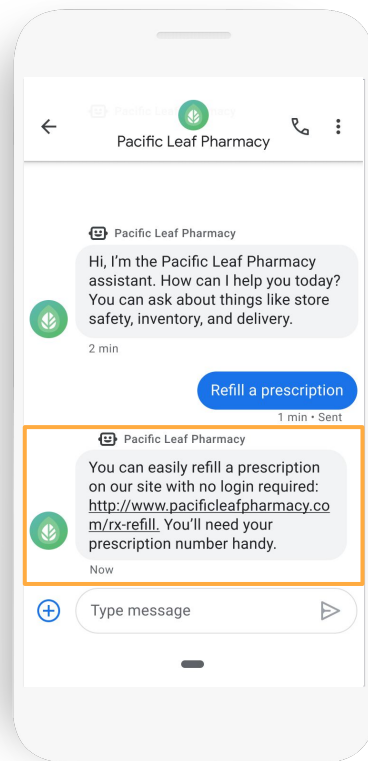
For chips that include an open URL or Dial action, include the URL and phone number within the message



# Rich card text fallback



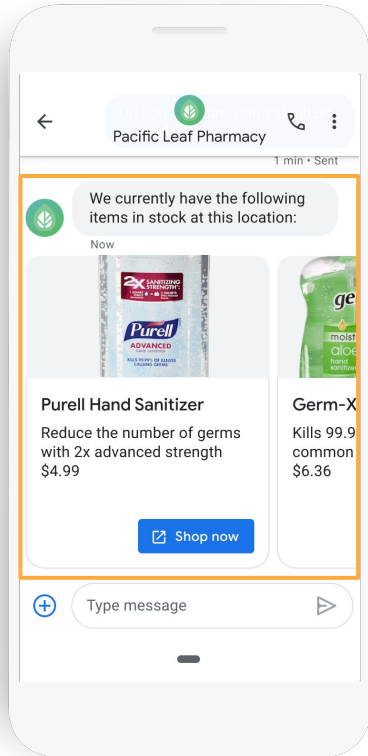
Default experience



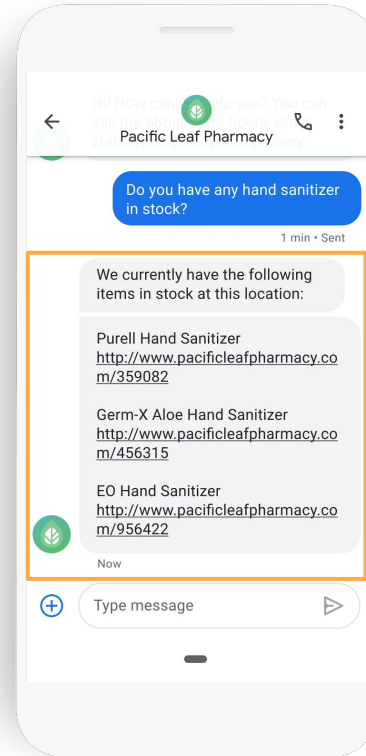
Text fallback includes URL within message



# Rich card carousel text fallback



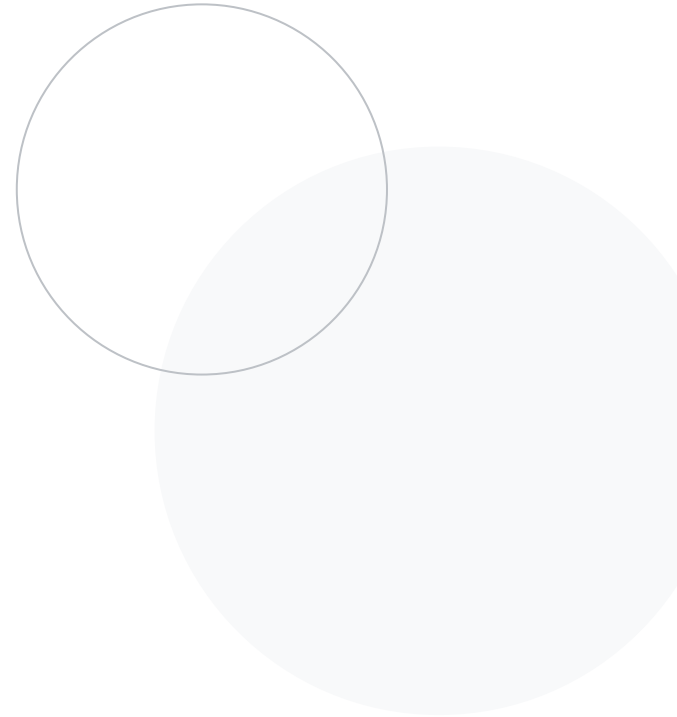
Default experience



Text fallback includes rich card title and URLs



# Writing Guidelines



# Bot Writing Guidelines

## Write with personality

- Your bot is an extension of your brand
- Keep conversational style and personality consistent throughout the conversation
- Create a voice and tone guide and stick to it

## Be yourself

- Remember that it's a conversation between the user and your bot. Use human-like conversational language to create a personal connection with the user engaging with your bot
- Bot responses should be short and simple and not sound mechanical. Don't copy and paste content from your website to reuse.
- Be helpful and let the bot assume responsibility for errors
  - "Sorry, I didn't understand that..."
  - "I'm still learning"

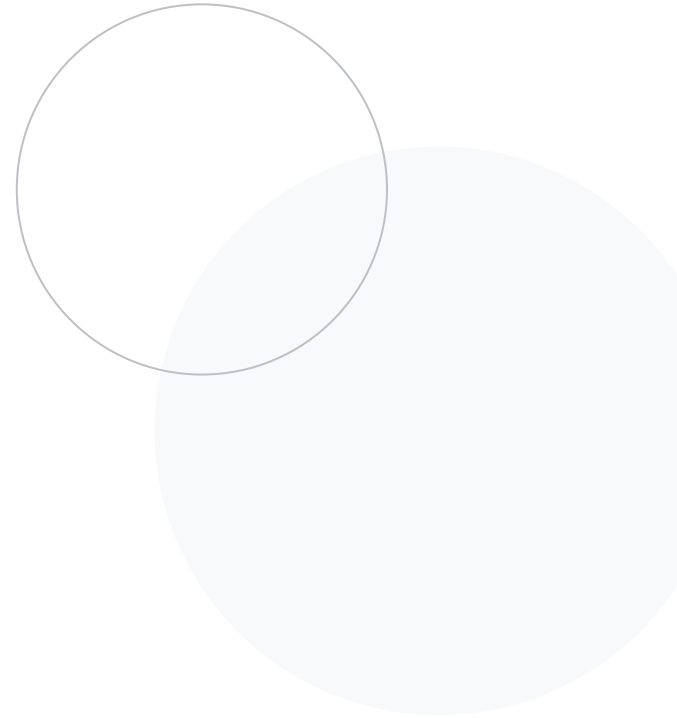
## Keep it fresh

- Keep the conversation fresh by writing several versions of the same prefix to avoid repetition. For example:
  - "Here's some info on COVID-19."
  - "OK, info on COVID-19..."
  - "COVID-19? Here's what I found..."

### Resources

- [Conversation Design](#)
- [Language Style Guide](#)

# Checklist



# Checklist

<h2>Basic Functionality</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ Can the user complete at least 2-3 key customer service workflows and obtain information through bot responses, not just from site links?</li><li>❑ Have you provided a plan for adding 2-3 additional workflows that can be completed end to end within the bot?</li><li>❑ Can workflows be completed end-to-end either within the chat or handed off to web with no dead ends?</li></ul>	<p>Workflow examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Opening hours</li><li>● Inventory</li><li>● Order status</li><li>● Submit a complaint/issue</li><li>● Store capabilities</li><li>● Store FAQ information ( single workflow)</li></ul>
<h2>Branding</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ Is the official business name and logo shown in the header? No nicknames or personas</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● “Pacific Leaf Pharmacy”, not “Pacific Leaf” or any variations of official name</li></ul>
<h2>Welcome Message</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ Is your greeting warm and helpful? Does it describe the bot’s capabilities by including suggested topics?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Hi, I’m... How can I help you today? I can help with x, y, z</li><li>● You can ask questions about...</li></ul>
<h2>Conversation Starter Chips</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ Are at least 3 chips being used, preferably 5?</li><li>❑ Do chips work as expected and provide answers to common questions that the business is likely to receive given its industry? Do they lead to any dead ends?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Store hours</li><li>● Provide links to store finder, Covid FAQ, etc.)</li></ul>

# Checklist (cont'd)

## Suggested Chips

- ❑ Do the chip labels use specific text that clearly guide user expectations? Does the bot's response make sense based on the chip label?
- ❑ When the user reaches the end of a workflow or the bot responds with an answer, is the user provided with chips to ask a new question/start a new task?

- Store hours
- Pickup and Delivery
- COVID-19 Info
- Issue with recent order

## User Queries

- ❑ Does the bot answer expected questions phrased in a variety of ways from full sentences to single word inquiries?

- "What time does the store open?" and "hours" should both trigger the store hours response

## Graceful Fallback

- ❑ Does the bot provide a graceful fallback response?
- ❑ Does the bot response make sense when it doesn't understand the query?
- ❑ Does the bot acknowledge that it didn't understand and provide alternative suggestions (eg rephrase the question, ask different type of question, provide suggested questions)?
- ❑ After two fallback intents or two failures, does the bot provide a chip link to customer service FAQ and fallback to human support via a call chip?

- I'm still learning
- Try rephrasing your question or asking something else
- You can ask me about...



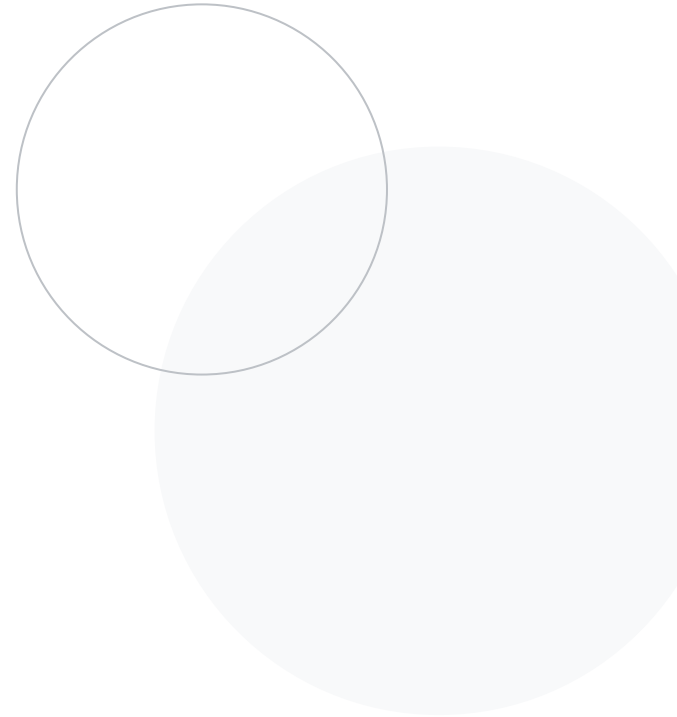
# Who to talk to for help from Google

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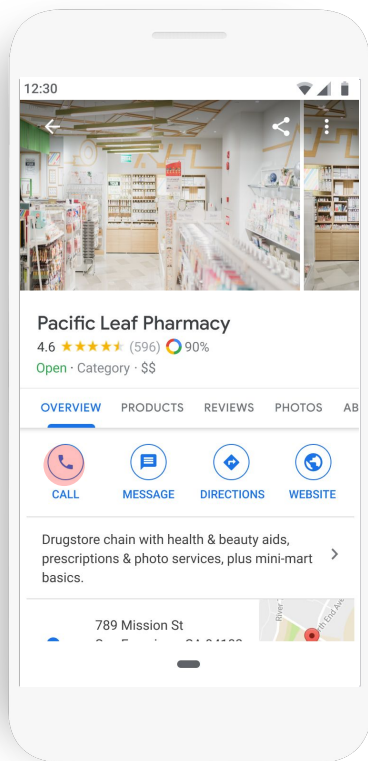
Email: [bm-inquiry@google.com](mailto:bm-inquiry@google.com)

Web: [Business Messages Developer Site](#)

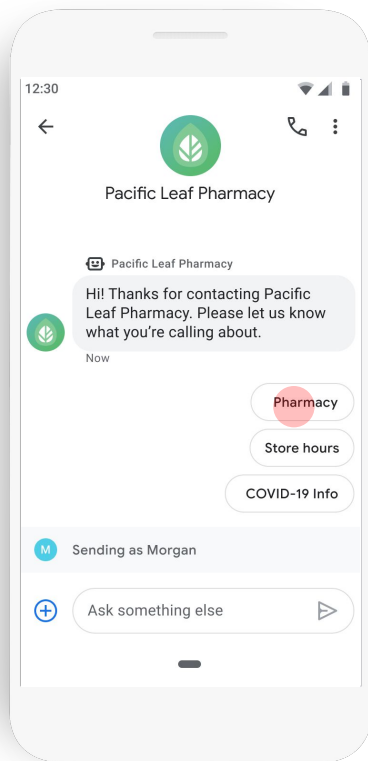
# Appendix



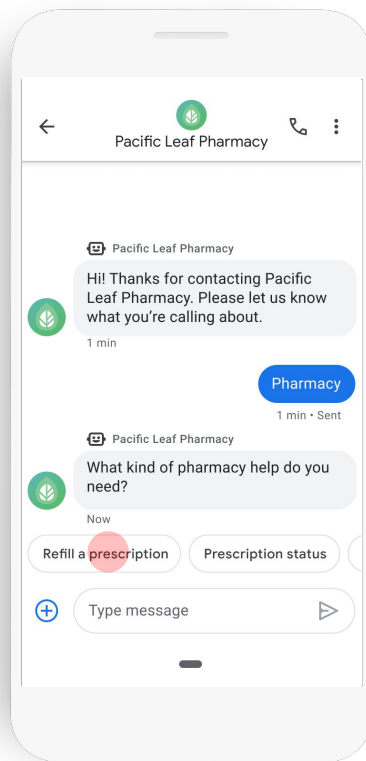
# Calling fallback if live chat agents aren't available



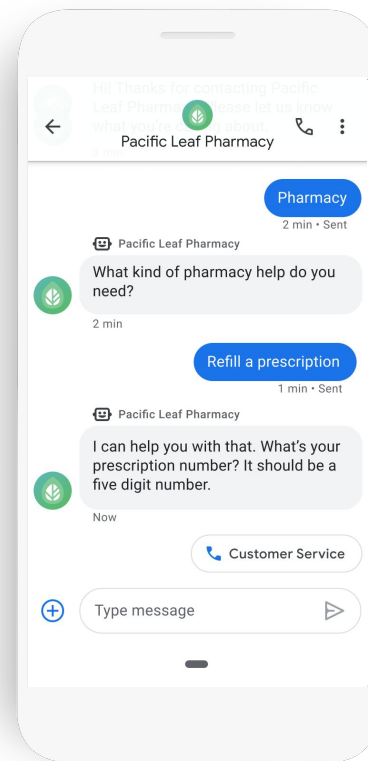
User taps to call



Phone IVR options shown as chips within messaging



User navigates IVR options via chips



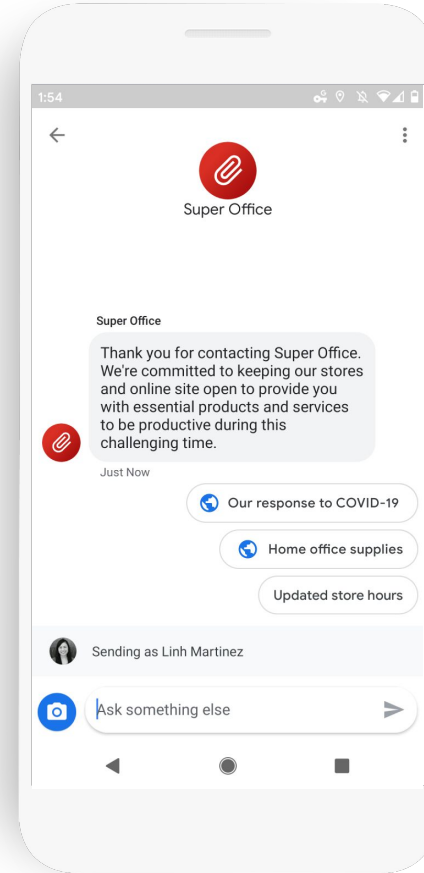
Bot guides user through workflow



**SLIDEYARD**

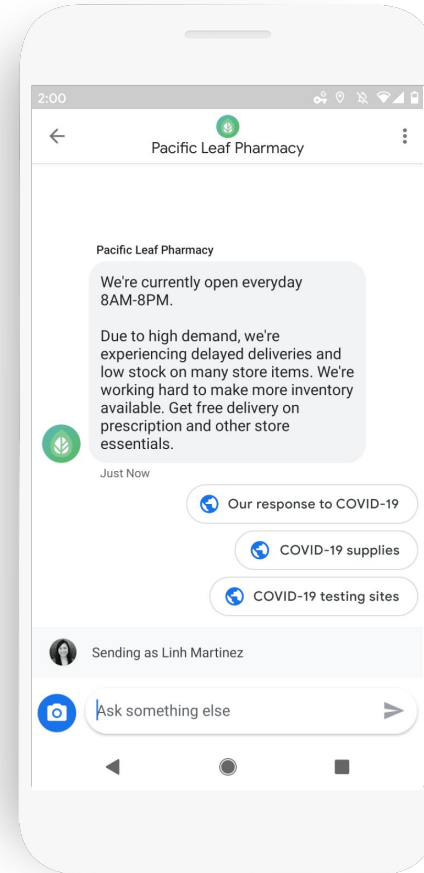
## Big Box Retail/Suppliers

1. Have a chip linking to COVID19 response page
2. Another chip linking to relevant opportunities, like Home Office supplies
3. List opening hours clearly in Welcome message or with a chip



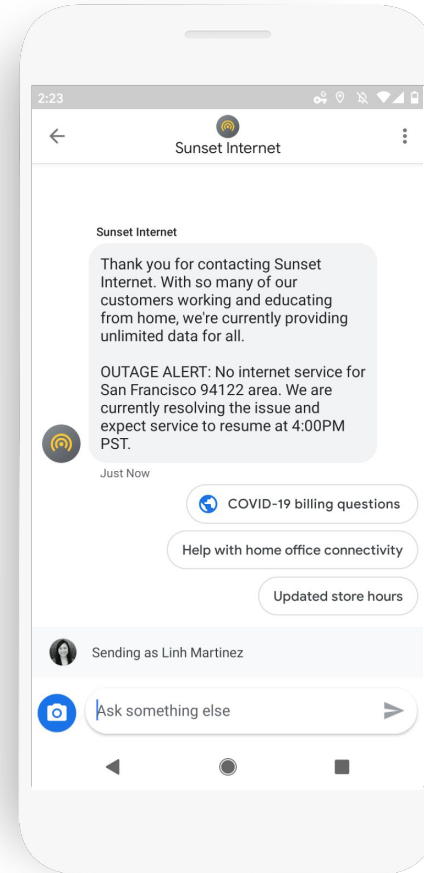
## Pharmacies & Grocery

1. Have a chip linking to COVID-19 response page
2. Another chip linking to supplies related to COVID-19
3. List opening hours clearly in Welcome message or with a chip
4. Link to testing sites or CDC guidelines



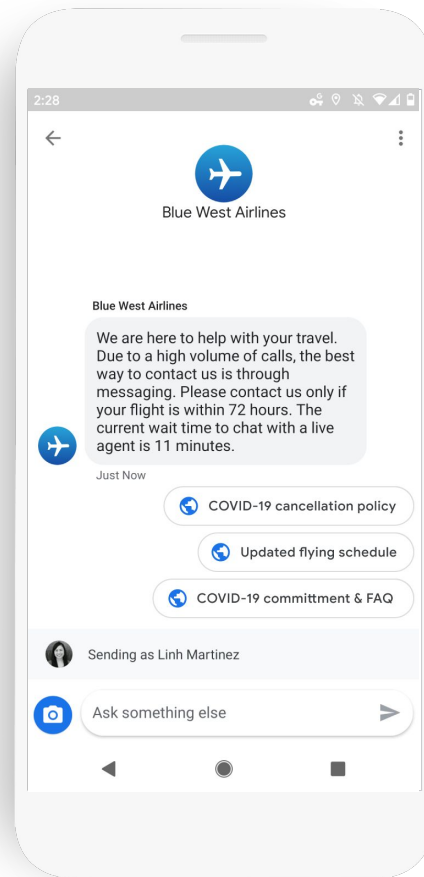
## Telco

1. Update the welcomes message to inform users about any critical status/outages
2. Provide chips directly linking to billing questions
3. Provide a chip to connect user to answers about home office connectivity questions
4. Provide updated storefront hours where applicable



## Airlines

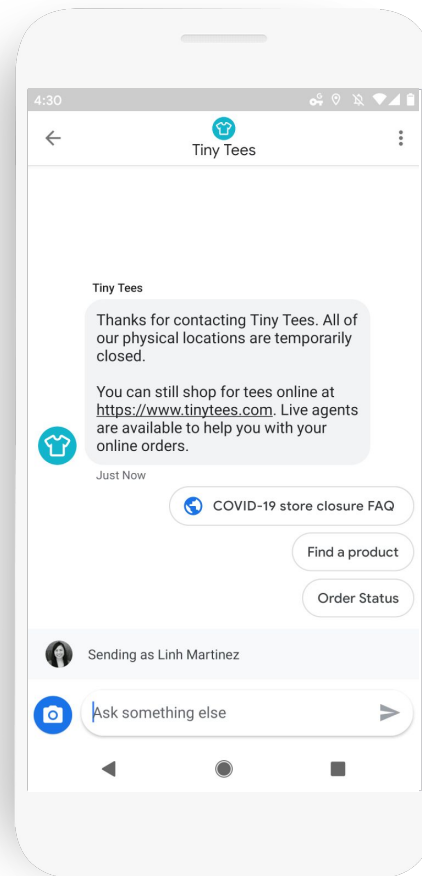
1. Provide updates on status, wait times, and new policies.
2. Provide chip to link direct to COVID-19/Cancellation policies
3. Provide clear pathway to the most efficient channel to talk to a live agent / provide wait times





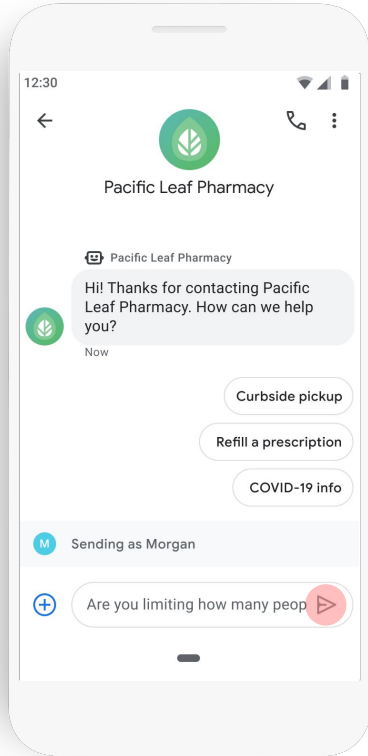
## Closed retail or other stores

1. Clearly state if the stores are closed and if live agents are available.
2. Provide chips that link directly to COVID-19 related info

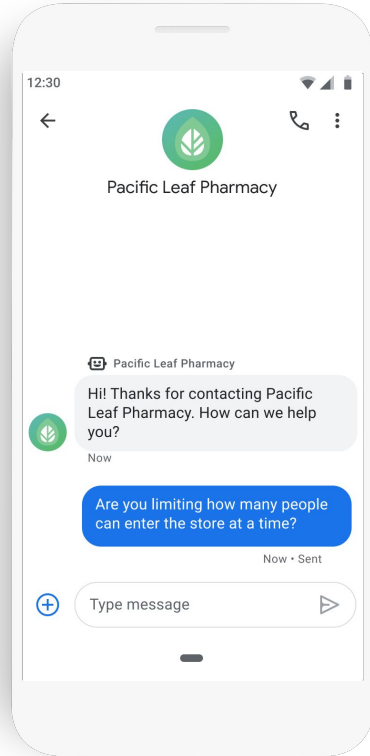


# Gracefully fallback to human support when required

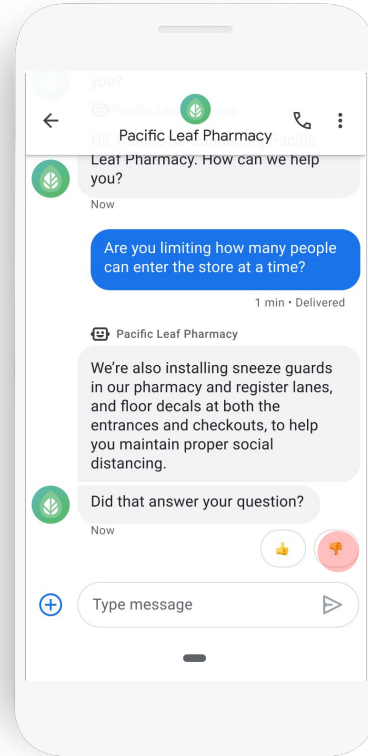
(after 2nd fallback)



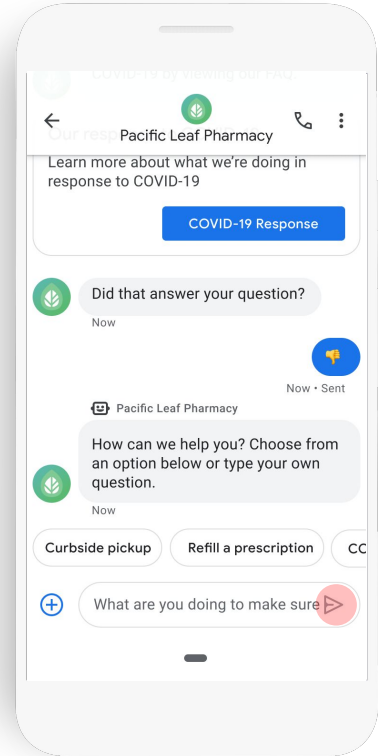
User types in own question



User's message is sent



Automated bot response with feedback question

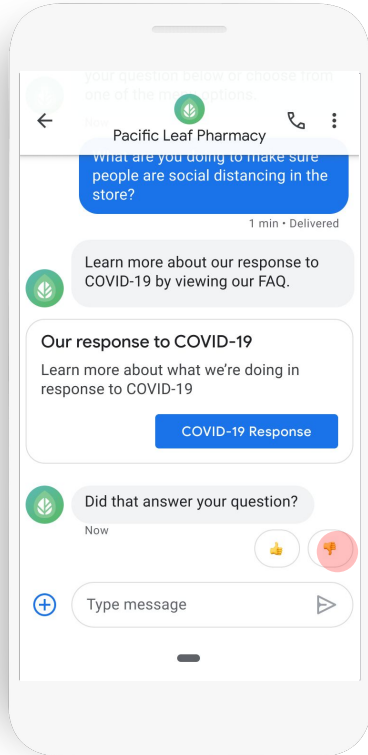


1st failure indicated by thumbs down; Show automated fallback response with welcome chips

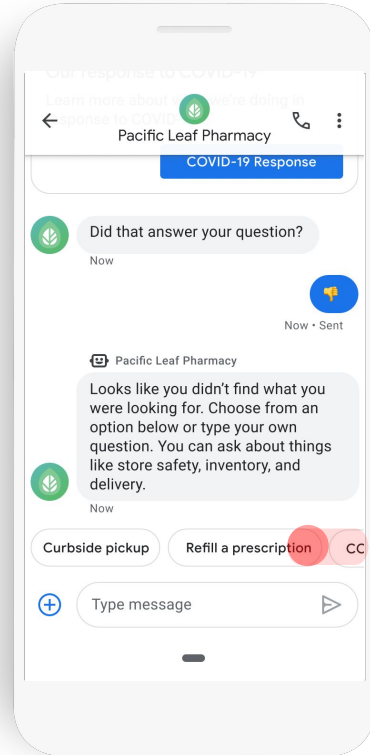


# Graceful fallback (Con't)

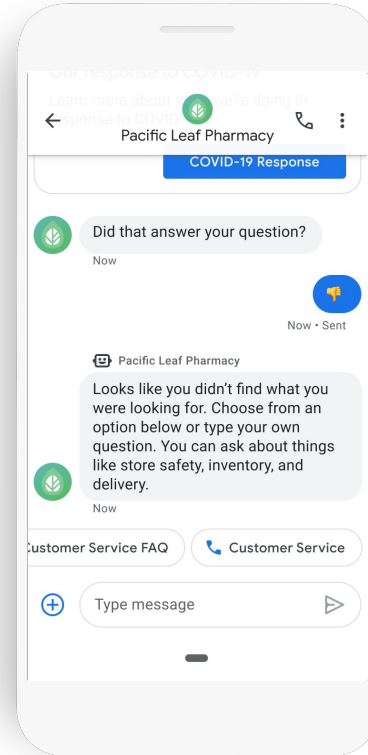
(after 2nd fallback)



Automated bot response with feedback question



2nd failure indicated by thumbs down;  
Show automated fallback response with welcome chips + Call chip

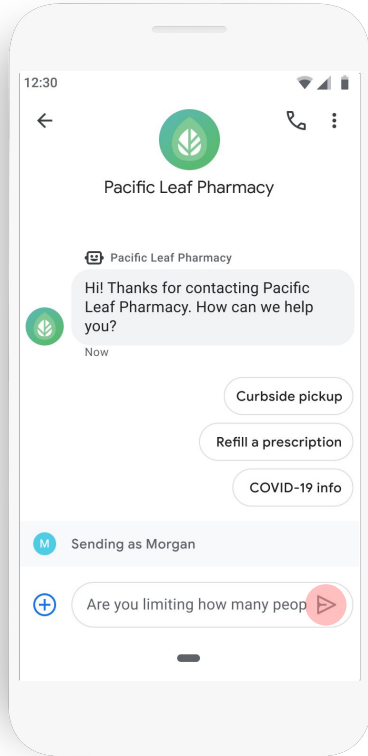


User swipes to see Call chip listed

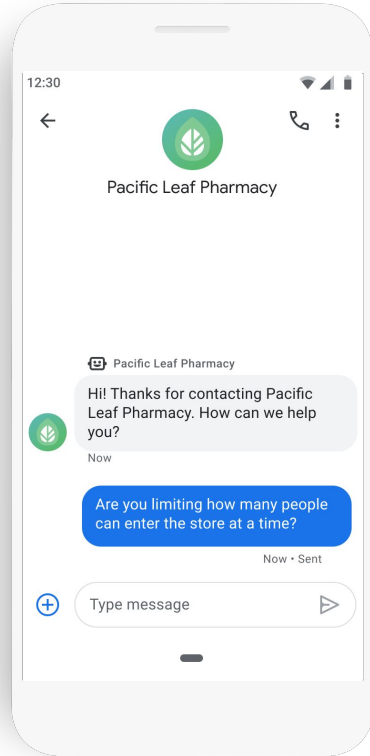


# Gracefully fallback to human support when required

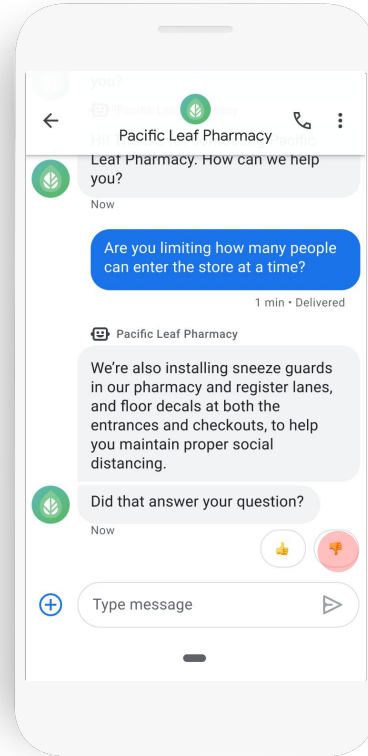
(after 1st fallback)



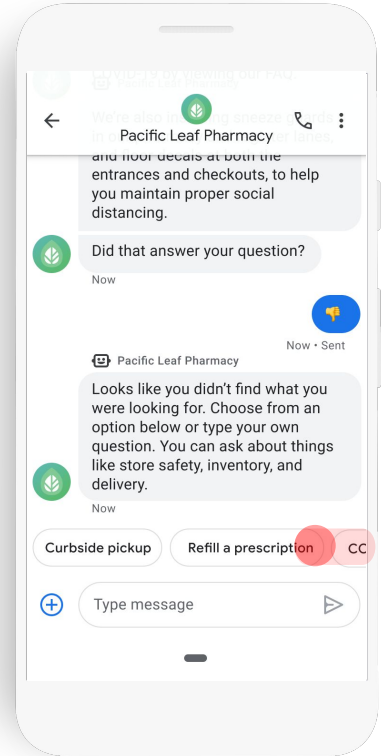
User types in own question



User's message is sent



Automated bot response with feedback question

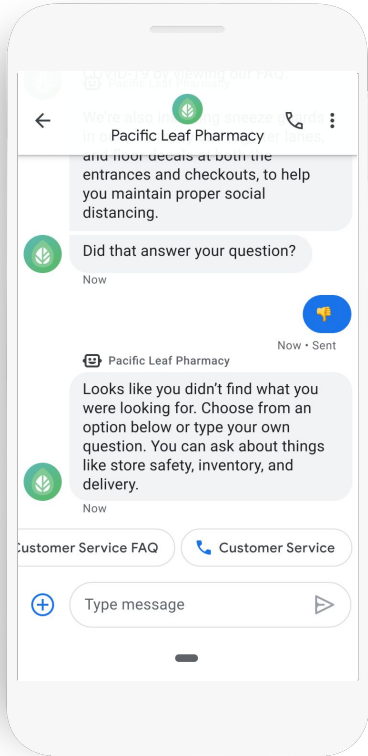


Failure indicated by thumbs down; Show automated fallback response with welcome chips + Call chip



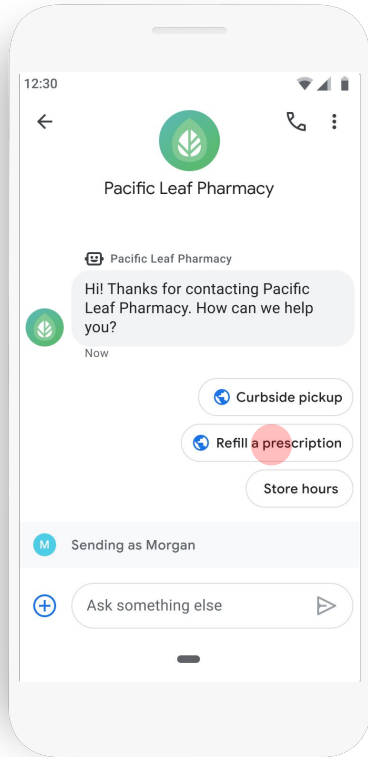
# Graceful fallback (Con't)

(after 1st fallback)

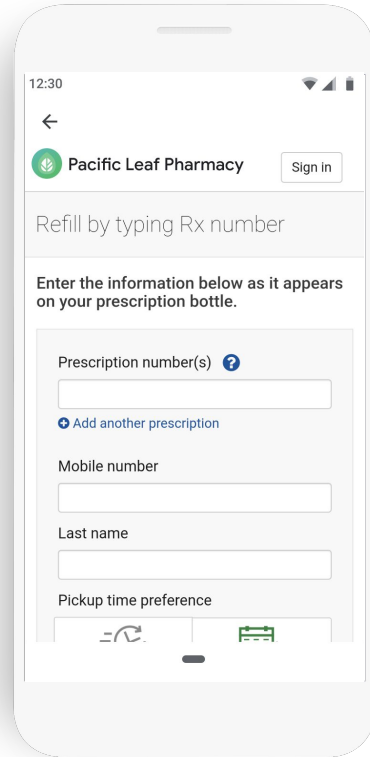


# Gracefully fallback to human support when required

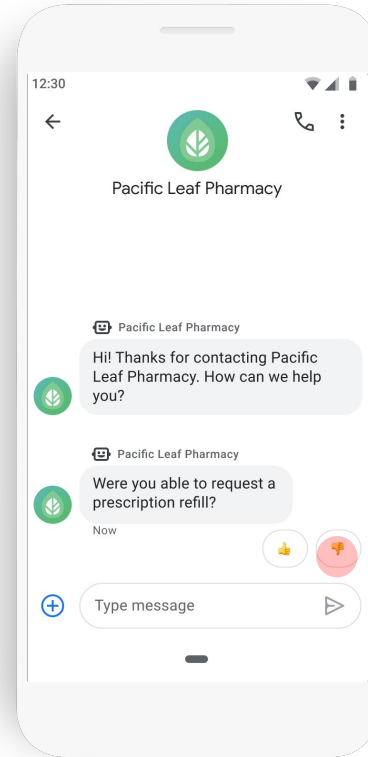
(after workflow failure)



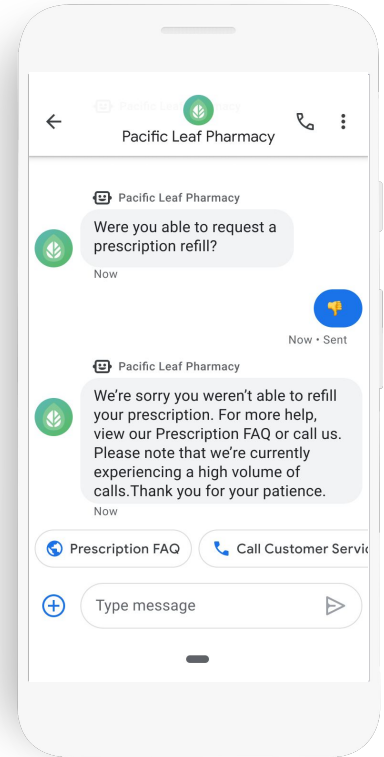
User initiates prescription refill workflow via chip



User completes workflow on web



User returns to conversation with bot follow up on workflow



User is unsuccessful with workflow; Show automated fallback response with Call chip

