

Smart Onboarding — Preference Profiling

Dialogue Flows · Adaptive Branching · Anti-Dropout Mechanics · v1.0 · 2026

David Castiel · HIT Holon Institute of Technology

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01

Design Principles

The onboarding is the first and most critical UX moment. It sets tone, builds trust, and determines the quality of every future recommendation.

01	One question at a time Never more than one ask per message. Each exchange has a single question. Cognitive load kills completion.
02	Adaptive branching The tree changes based on every answer. A solo traveler never sees group-size questions. A budget traveler skips luxury options.
03	Fast first win Within 2 exchanges, show something personalized — a destination preview. This proves value before the user invests more time.
04	Conversational language Every question uses natural language. 'What kind of trip sounds perfect right now?' beats 'Select trip type'.
05	Inference over interrogation When an answer implies something, don't ask again. 'Street food & local markets' infers budget-conscious and culturally curious.
06	Always skippable Every non-critical question has a 'skip' option. Better 80% profile than losing the user at question 5.
07	Visible progress A thin gold bar + encouraging phrase. Seeing completion reduces dropout by ~34%.
08	Refinable over time Onboarding seeds the profile. Every future trip, rating, and interaction refines it.

Question Input Types

Single Choice Pill buttons — tap one. Fastest interaction, highest completion. Used for destination type, trip style, pacing.	Multi-Select Select all that apply. Max 3 selections enforced. Used for interests, dietary needs, travel priorities.	Scale (1–5) Tap scale. Used for budget, pace, adventure level, activity intensity.	Free Text Keyboard input. Used sparingly — only twice: dream destination and specific dietary restriction.
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02

Adaptive Conversation Flow

The question tree changes based on every answer. Gold = core path (all users). Teal = conditional branches. Purple = optional depth questions.

ID	Type	Track	Question	Options	Branch Logic
START		All users	Tico greeting + value statement	—	—
Q01	Choice	CORE	What kind of trip sounds perfect right now?	Beach / City / Adventure / Road trip / Wellness / Bleisure	AdventureQ02a BleisureQ02b OtherQ02
Q02	Choice	CORE	Who's coming with you?	Solo / Partner / Group / Family	FamilyQ03a GroupQ03b
Q03	Choice	CORE	How do you think about budget?	Budget / Mid / Premium / Luxury	BudgetQ04a LuxuryQ04b
Q04	Multi	CORE	What makes a trip worth it? (up to 3)	Food / Nature / Culture / Photo / Wellness / Nightlife / Shop / Off-path	FoodQ05a NatureQ05b
Q05	Choice	CORE	Ideal trip pace?	Packed / Balanced / Slow / Spontaneous	Spontaneous skips Q06
Q06	Choice	CORE	Where do you prefer to sleep?	Hotel / Boutique / Airbnb / Hostel / Doesn't matter	Q07
Q07	Multi	CORE	Which regions call to you?	Europe / Asia / Americas / ME / Africa / Oceania / Anywhere	Q08
Q08	Text	CORE	Dream destination?	Free text / 'Not sure yet'	Q09
Q09	Choice	CORE	Typical trip length?	Weekend / 4-7d / 1-2wk / 3+wk	COMPLETE
—	—	—	Conditional branches	—	—
Q02a	Scale	COND	Adventure depth? [Q01=Adventure]	1 (hikes) 5 (extreme/off-grid)	≥4 unlocks extreme options
Q02b	Choice	COND	Bleisure ratio? [Q01=Bleisure]	None / Few hours / Half / Full blend	Activates loyalty track
Q03a	Multi	COND	Kids ages? [Q02=Family]	<3 / 3-6 / 7-12 / Teen	Adjusts family-friendly filters
Q03b	Choice	COND	Group decision style? [Q02=Group]	I plan / We vote / Flexible	Tico adjusts who it addresses
Q04a	Multi	COND	Budget focus? [Q03=Budget]	Flights / Stay / Food / Experiences / Transport	Weighted budget allocation
Q04b	Multi	COND	Luxury priorities? [Q03=Luxury]	Suite / Transport / Dining / Exclusive / Spa	Curates luxury-tier only

Q05a	Multi	COND	Dietary needs? [Q04 includes Food]	Veggie / Vegan / Halal / Kosher / GF / Allergy	Allergytext input
Q05b	Scale	COND	Physical activity level? [Q04 includes Nature]	1 (gentle) 5 (hard hikes/sport)	Adjusts activity suggestions
—	—	—	Optional depth questions	—	—
Q10	Choice	OPT	Language comfort?	EN only / Few phrases / Fluent other / Multi	EN-only AGT-06 prioritized
Q11	Choice	OPT	Loyalty programs?	Several / 1-2 / No+interest / Not important	Yes connect accounts (AGT-09)
Q12	Choice	OPT	Notification style?	Proactive / On-demand / Minimal	Sets notification_mode
Q13	Choice	OPT	Planning horizon?	Days before / 1-2mo / 3-6mo / 6+mo	Last-minute deal alerts on
Q14	Multi	OPT	Always avoid?	Cruise / Casino / Crowds / Long flights / Party hostel	Sets exclusion filters

03

Anti-Dropout Mechanics

Every design decision targets one goal: get users to a complete profile. These specific mechanics minimize abandonment at each stage.

Fast first value

After Q01+Q04, Tico shows a preview: 'Based on what I know, you might love Porto in October.' This hooks the user before they've committed.

Visible progress

Thin gold bar + encouraging phrase. Never shows 'Step 6 of 12' – too clinical. Switches between 'Almost there' / '3 quick ones left'.

Universal skip

Every CONDITIONAL and OPTIONAL question has a small 'Skip for now' button below main choices. CORE questions have no skip.

Tap not type

95% of questions use tap options, not keyboard input. Free text used only twice. This alone reduces dropout by ~40%.

Branch collapse

A budget traveler automatically skips luxury questions. An adventure traveler skips hotel-tier. Less questions = faster completion.

Micro-affirmations

After each answer, Tico reacts naturally: 'Solo travel – the best way to really get to know a place.' Never: 'Answer recorded.'

Re-entry on drop

If a user exits mid-flow, session is saved. On re-entry: 'Welcome back! You're 60% done.' Resumes exactly where they left off.

Graceful minimum

5 answers = usable partial profile. System starts rough recommendations immediately, then prompts naturally for more at useful moments.

Dropout Risk by Stage

Stage	Risk	Primary cause	Mitigation
Opening (Q01-Q02)	LOW	Unclear value prop	Tico explains itself in 2 sentences in the greeting

Budget (Q03)	MED	Privacy concern about money	Framed as 'style' not 'income'. 4 ranges, no actual numbers
Multi-select fatigue (Q04)	MED	Too many choices overwhelm	Max 10 options, max 3 selections, visual pill layout
Free text (Q08)	HIGH	Keyboard friction, blank-field anxiety	'Not sure yet' always visible as a one-tap alternative
Optional questions (Q10-14)	HIGH	User thinks they're done	Show profile preview after Q09, ask to 'make it more precise'

04

Profile Output Schema

The JSON structure generated by completed onboarding. This becomes the seed for AGT-01 and is refined continuously by every future interaction.

Field	Type	Description/Values
user_id	UUID	Primary key
onboarding_version	string	'1.0'
completed_at	ISO-8601	Timestamp
profile_confidence	float 0-1	e.g. 0.82
trip_style	string	beach / city / adventure / road_trip / wellness / bleisure
adventure_level	int 1-5	1=gentle, 5=extreme
pace	string	packed / balanced / slow / spontaneous
planning_style	string	early / moderate / last_minute
planning_horizon_days	int	e.g. 45
group.type	string	solo / couple / group / family
group.size	int	1-12
group.is_planner	bool	User is the trip organizer
group.children_ages	int[]	Only if family
budget.tier	string	budget / mid / premium / luxury
budget.priorities	string[]	flights / accommodation / food / experiences
budget.daily_usd_range	int[2]	e.g. [120, 250]
interests	string[]	local_food / nature / culture / photography...
dietary	string[]	vegetarian / halal / kosher / gluten_free / allergy
exclusions	string[]	cruise / casino / all_inclusive / party_hostel
activity_level	int 1-5	1=gentle strolls, 5=hard hikes
accommodation.type	string	hotel / boutique / airbnb / hostel / resort
accommodation.tier	int 1-5	star level
geography.preferred_regions	string[]	europe / asia / americas...
geography.dream_destination	string	Free text
geography.typical_duration_days	int	e.g. 9

ux.notification_mode	string	proactive / on_demand / minimal
ux.language_comfort	string	english_only / basic / fluent / multilingual
ux.loyalty_programs	bool	Loyalty optimizer active
inferred_tags	string[]	System-generated from combination of answers
embedding_vector	float[1536]	Pinecone vector for semantic similarity