



Using Natural Language Processing and Machine Learning to Assist First-Level Customer Support for Contract Management

Master thesis – Final presentation

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Introduction



- Scalability issues of email customer supports.
- Acceleration by automation and assistance features.



Hurdle: Free text.

Machine Learning and Natural Language Processing.



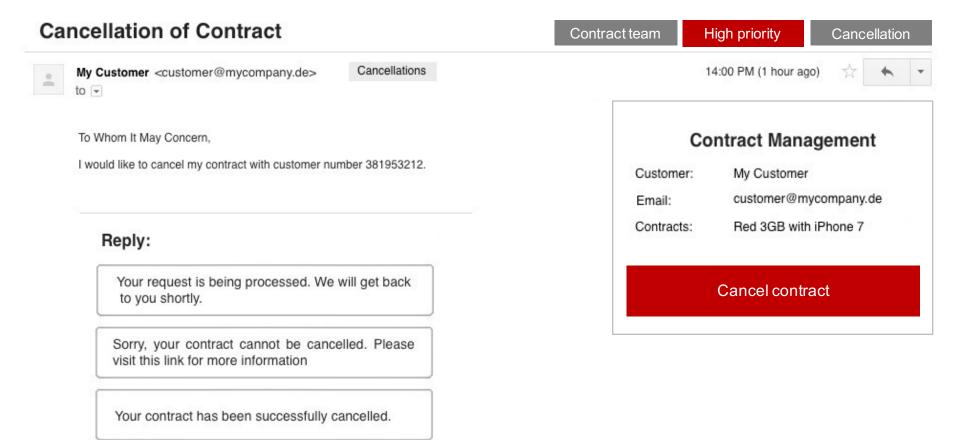




API: Classification, Information Extraction



Automation, Assistance



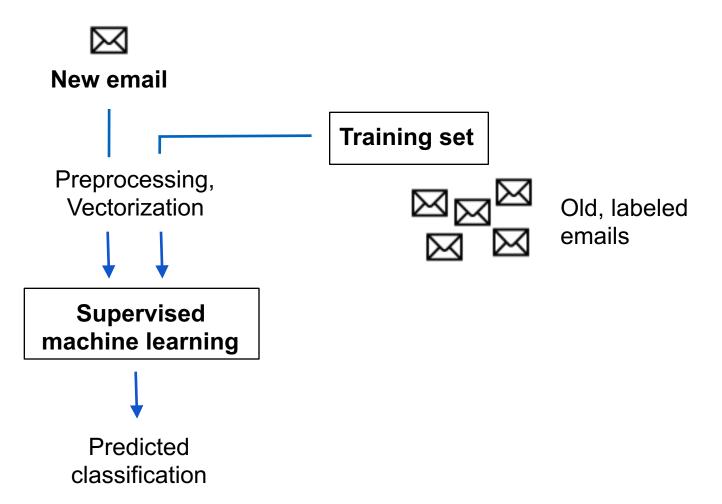


Demo



Classification: Machine Learning





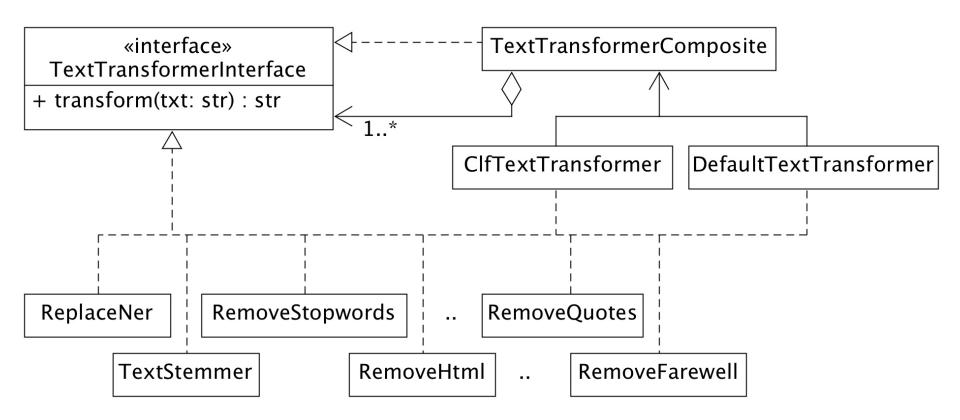
Training set creation



- Dataset:
 - 18 Mio. unlabeled Emails.
 - Filtering
 - Retrievable by an API.
 - Caching
- Command Line Tool: Demo.

Preprocessing, Vectorization





Vectorization: Tf-idf

Classification: Evaluation



• Final configuration:

- Stochastic gradient descent
- Tf-idf thresholds: max. 0.4, min. 0.001

Classifier	Avg. Prec./Rec./F1-Score
k-nearest neighbors	0.68
Logistic Regression	0.65
Multinomial Naive Bayes	0.57
Passive Aggressive Classifier	0.83
Perceptron	0.73
Stochastic Gradient Descent	0.84

Information extraction

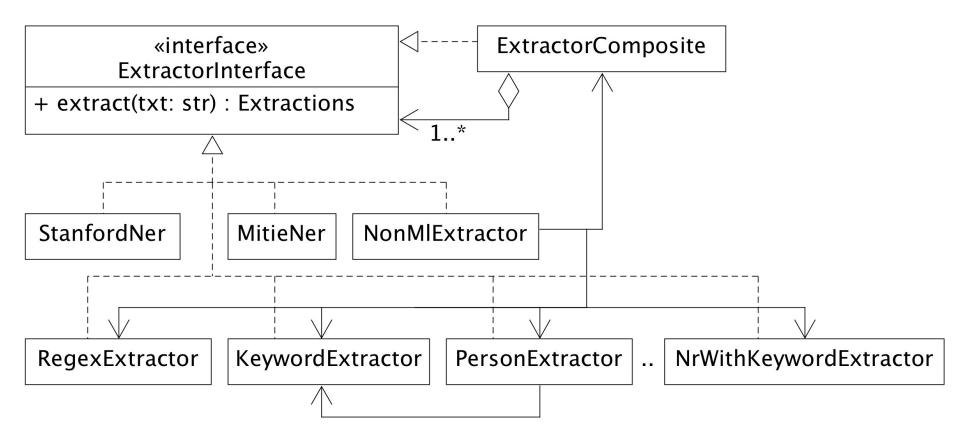


Implemented types:

- Person
- Date
- Time
- Postcode, City
- Money
- Vendor
- Order-, account- and contractnumber

Information extraction





➤ **Non-ML:** Regex, keyword lists and rule-based.

Information extraction – Machine Learning



Not much support.

- Learns from the sentence context.
 - Unknown or misspelled words are recognized by their context.

Training set:

- Needs massive input. Public data is not modifiable.
- Creation supported by Command Line Tool and special file format.

Evaluation



- Used training set: Created by non-ml approach.
 - 1000 emails, 3361 entities.
- Test set: Manually created.

Stanford NER:

Non-ML:

	precision	recall	f1-score	support		precision	recall	f1-score	support
BILL_NR	N/A	0.00	N/A	1	BILL_NR	1.00	1.00	1.00	1
CITY	1.00	0.76	0.86	21	CITY	1.00	0.90	0.95	21
CONTRACT_NR	0.00	0.00	N/A	2	CONTRACT_NR	0.33	0.50	0.40	2
DATE	0.57	0.10	0.17	39	DATE	0.91	0.77	0.83	39
METER_NR	1.00	0.56	0.71	9	METER_NR	1.00	0.56	0.71	9
MONEY	1.00	0.65	0.79	23	MONEY	1.00	0.65	0.79	23
ORDER_NR	1.00	0.50	0.67	4	ORDER_NR	1.00	1.00	1.00	4
PERSON	0.94	0.82	0.88	102	PERSON	0.94	0.87	0.90	102
POSTCODE	1.00	0.92	0.96	12	POSTCODE	1.00	0.92	0.96	12
TIME	1.00	0.50	0.67	4	TIME	1.00	0.50	0.67	4
VENDOR	0.94	0.81	0.87	37	VENDOR	0.97	0.85	0.91	37
avg / total	0.93	0.67	0.78	254	avg / total	0.95	0.82	0.88	254

Future work



- Transparent training.
- Topic segmentation.
- Better understanding of coherences.
- Automation and assistance features.

Conclusion



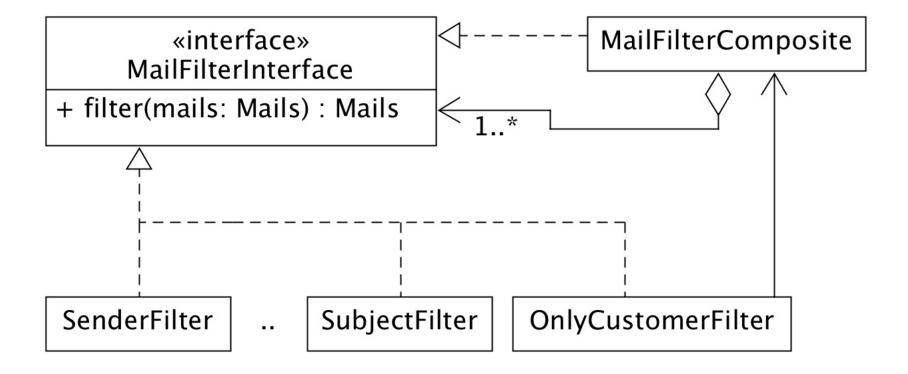
- Email customer support benefits from automation and assistance:
 - Time, thus cost saving.
 - Increased employee and customer satisfaction.
- Free text accessibility by ML and NLP.
- Selection of algorithms, parameters and preprocessors depends on data set and concrete application:
 - Interchangeable toolset approach.
 - Evaluation-based selection.



Thank you









Cache
+ get(key: str, expiration_in_sec: int = None)
+ store(key: str. value)

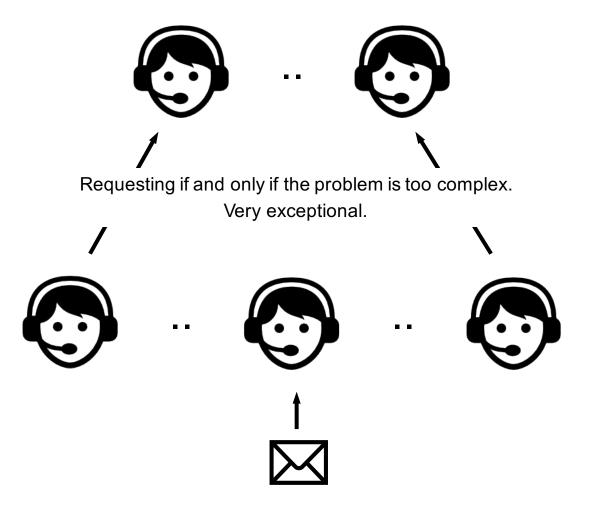
MailStoreApi



Current customer support team organization



at check24's gas and electricity department



Second-level support Long-time employees.

First-level support

Trying to solve all kinds of problems.

Incoming email gas@check24.de or strom@check24.de

Current email preprocessing

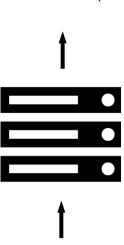






MySQL Server

Long-time storing of all incoming and outgoing emails with the determined folder and customer mappings.



Customer detection

PHP-Server

Mapping mails to customers and simple folders like gas/electricity (unseen) inbox/spam.



Spam detection

Microsoft exchange server



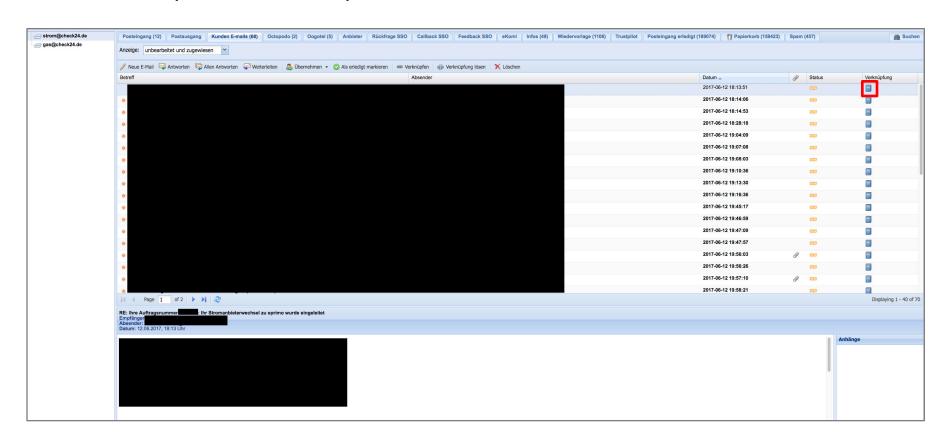
Incoming email

gas@check24.de or strom@check24.de

Software used by the customer support



Webmail: Superficial mail inspection.

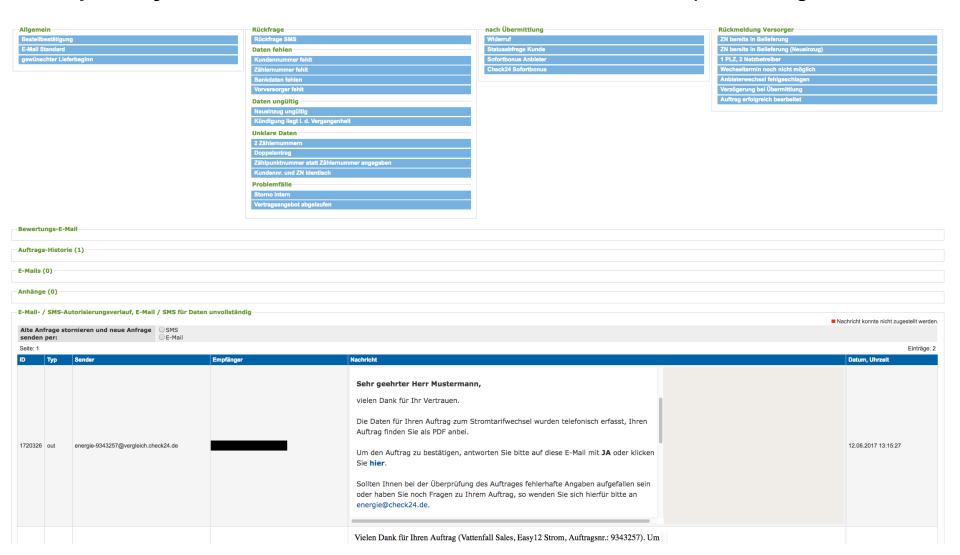


Button (e.g. in the red box) leads to a more sophisticated solution.

Software used by the customer support



Proprietary software: View mail with further information and processing features.



Contribution



- **Toolset:** Classification, Information Extraction
- Command Line Tool:
 - Training set creation
 - Inspection
 - Optimization
 - Evaluation
- API: Enables integration