

PARO: The Artificial Pet With Heart

WHAT IS OUR NEW TECHNOLOGY?

Over the years, advanced robotics technologies have been applied to automation in industrial manufacturing with the primary purpose of optimizing practical systems in terms of such objective measures as accuracy, speed and cost. However, such products are mostly kept away from human beings because people can be injured during their everyday functioning.

PARO is an advanced interactive robot developed by Japan's National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), a leading Japanese industrial automation pioneer. It allows the documented benefits of animal therapy to be administered to patients in environments such as hospitals and extended care facilities where live animals present treatment or logistical difficulties.

Unlike industrial robots, PARO is designed as a service robot, which is developed with the purpose to stay within people's daily lives. Rather than using objective measures for industrial robots, service robots trigger more subjective evaluations, evoking psychological impressions such as "cuteness" and comfort, and also provide social effect.



WHAT SETS US APART?

PARO is the eighth generation of a design that has been in use in Japan and throughout Europe since 2003, and it was awarded as the "World's Most Therapeutic Robot" by Guinness World Records. It is the first service robot that is designed to live within people's daily lives, not only used as substitute for animal therapy, but also as an alternative pet companion.



PARO was designed to look like an adorable baby harp seal, covered in pure white synthetic fur, but its built-in intelligence provides psychological, physiological, and social effects through physical interaction with human beings. PARO not only imitates animal behavior, it also responds to light, sound, temperature, touch and posture, and over time develops its own character.

As a result, it becomes a "living" cherished pet that provides relaxation, entertainment, and companionship to the owner. It is perfect for those who cannot take care of real animals and those who live in places where live animals are prohibited, including hospitals, elder care centers and nursing homes.

WILL IT SELL?

More than 1,000 PARO robots are being used worldwide with clinically documented results proving PARO's ability to benefit those users including the residents and caregivers.

PARO was recently introduced to U.S. market and will be distributed by PARO Robots U.S. Inc., located in Itasca, Ill. The company is responsible for sales and maintenance service of PARO throughout United States.

Twenty PAROs were loaned out in the U.S. in several assisted living facilities, nursing homes, hospitals and schools for special needs children since early 2008, and they received fabulous feedback from those residents and caregivers. PARO will be available for purchase in August 2009 for individuals as well as institutions.



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