

JIBO robot could become part of the family

July 17 2014, by Nancy Owano



JIBO, measuring at about 11 inches tall and weighing approximately 6 pounds, is a robotic device designed for people to use as a companion and helper at home. , The team behind JIBO aims to bring it to market in time for the 2015 holiday season. The JIBO does not make sandwiches, or popcorn, or clean the carpet or open jar lids. JIBO sits and, in the

context of those trying to put a human face on technology, JIBO can emotionally connect. JIBO, in interacting with a younger child, can be a responsive storyteller and playmate. JIBO can take a family picture. JIBO can remind the busy cook in the kitchen that an appointment is fast approaching. Does JIBO ever get off the counter or desk to walk or move about on wheels? The answer is No. According to the creators, it is best to place "him" in a room where most of your household activities are happening or where JIBO's assistance is most needed. Did we say "his?" The video refers to JIBO as "he." JIBO is "gendered male," according to the team.

The robot has a youthful male voice and speaks American English. The JIBO concept involves recognizing and tracking faces, understanding speech, and adjusting its behavior based on individual family members. JIBO was developed by roboticist Dr. Cynthia Breazeal, founder and CEO of JIBO. A report about her effort in IEEE Spectrum noted that she has assembled an impressive team, with backgrounds in speech recognition, natural language, user interaction, gaming and animation.

In a promotional video of JIBO, the narration says "he" is the world's best cameraman; by intelligently tracking the action around it. The robot in addition to tracking faces and snapping pictures also offers to order takeout and relays messages.

JIBO, at this stage, is a prototype, not finished product. At the time of this writing the Indiegogo campaign for JIBO, which started on Wednesday, passed their \$100,000 goal, having raised \$310,318, with 30 days left to go.

The robot home edition is going for \$499, to ship December 2015. The developer edition is \$599 with SDK, and its estimated delivery date is September 2015, The developer edition is one of the benefits anticipated from the crowdfunded campaign. The goal is for developers to work on

JIBO too, to expand its functions. Developers will be able to create apps in JavaScript and access JIBO's functions through the SDK. "The purpose of doing the crowdfunding campaign right now is we want to build a community," she said in IEEE Spectrum "We want to engage people who want to have JIBO in their home and those who want to develop for it. We're [early](#) enough in our development cycle that we can take that input and we can be responsive to it."

A "next wave" of computing will be around emotion. She said she found people wanted to treat JIBO as someone, not something. She said people told her the difference between a tablet and JIBO is, according to her, that JIBO fits in like part of the family. "JIBO's warm, JIBO's friendly," she said.

The robot is powered by an ARM processor and runs Linux, reported IEEE Spectrum, "It has two cameras, which allow it to detect and track people, a microphone array for sound localization, and touch sensors on the body." IEEE Spectrum also said it uses WiFi for connectivity and will be typically plugged in for power, but with a battery, not included, it will be able to operate for around 30 minutes.

More information: www.myjibo.com/

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