

Boston Dynamics unveils latest robot quadruped 'Spot' (w/ Video)

February 11 2015, by Bob Yirka



Well-known robot maker Boston Dynamics has done it again—they have released a YouTube video showing off their latest, smaller, waist-high, quadruped robot, this one named Spot. The company has made a name for itself by building and showing off increasingly sophisticated and capable four-legged robots, such as the infamous mule-looking Big Dog. Now owned by Google, the company has been a little more secretive about its robots—for Spot, there was no official announcement, just the video, which does a good job of showing off just how far the company has come with robotics technology.

In the video, Spot can be seen wandering somewhat quietly (with its electric motor) around the office, like the camel in the Geico commercials, though thankfully, it does not talk. Instead, it gets kicked as it passes by someone, and recovers with remarkable agility. Spot has a different leg design than Big Dog and other robots made by the company, with knees that bend backwards like mountain goats, which is what the robot resembles (rather than a dog which the name implies) allowing for a remarkably lifelike and natural gait. Spot can also be seen wandering around outside, climbing up and down hills, stairs and even jogging at one point. The advance in technology is highlighted towards the end of the video as Spot is shown walking alongside the much bigger and less agile Big Dog.

Also in a tag for the video, the company reveals that Spot is able to navigate its environment courtesy of a "sensor head" which hints at technology such as LIDAR, which Google of course, uses in its self-driving cars. Not mentioned in the video is the purpose of Spot. Big Dog was made to carry a lot of stuff. Spot is much smaller, weighing in at just 160 pounds, he could not carry nearly as much, which begs the question—what was he made to do? In watching the video, it appears the aim might be to build a robot capable of scouting, looking for people in disasters or perhaps, for no better reason than to showcase just how far robotics has come in the past few years. In any case, it is not difficult to imagine a herd of Spots, roaming around, either looking for something or serving as very scary four-legged soldiers (what with Boston Dynamics' ties to the military) in a whole new kind of army.

© 2015 Tech Xplore

Citation: Boston Dynamics unveils latest robot quadruped 'Spot' (w/ Video) (2015, February 11) retrieved 27 April 2024 from

<https://techxplore.com/news/2015-02-boston-dynamics-unveils-latest-robot.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.