

Double 2 is your show stand-in when you can't be there

January 7 2016, by Nancy Owano



Call it what you will. An iPad on a stick. A two-wheeled body double that rolls your face on a screen around studios, conference halls and into meeting rooms when you cannot be there. Work from anywhere, conference-in from anywhere. In 2012, we told you about Mountain View, California, Double Robotics and their product, Double.

The company, which started up in 2011, had placed its product on pre-order. Double involved a [mobile](#) base with mounting bracket for the iPad, a robot imbued with technology that allows you to ask and say and learn what you want while being inhabited in the Double.

"The fifteen-pound device is functional out of the box once plugged in and Double's self-balancing [sensors](#) keep itself upright. Once you log into the iPad it lets you travel throughout the room, decide which height, and talk to people. Setting up Double app involves downloading the app. The same app is used for the driver's iPad and the robot's iPad."

The pre-order price was at the time \$1,999, excluding the iPad.

Now there is a new take on that Double, aptly called Double 2.

Stephen Shankland, CNET, was one of the media crew reporting on the new Double 2 on Wednesday at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

In what ways is the telepresence item new and where are the improvements? The company's Chief Executive David Cann was quoted in CNET: "Compared with its predecessor, the Double 2 can better navigate bumps like cords and rug edges without tipping sideways. It also drives fast enough to keep up with people walking at full speed and gets a wider-angle camera option so the pilot can see groups of six people, not just two," Cann said.

IEEE Spectrum summed up the three key points about the newcomer: better stability, new camera and turbo button. Evan Ackerman clarified what he meant by turbo button, which is "actually your Shift key. And it's not called 'TURBO MODE,' but rather 'Power Drive.'"

Power Drive enables the robot to go up to 80 percent faster than normal

driving speed, when the [driver](#) needs to go a long distance. Simply hold down the Shift key on your keyboard while driving with the arrow keys, said the company.

(Ackerman's comment: "Pushing Shift while driving your Double 2 will boost its top speed from 0.9 mph to a mind-blowing 1.6 mph, which is enough to mildly annoy anyone you run into. This is especially true if you reverse and then run into them again several times in a row, which is something that I have of course never done because then your Double gets shut into a closet that it can't get out of and you have to apologize before it gets let out.")



The Camera Kit from Double Robotics includes a 150 degree wide-angle lens that increases the field of view by 70 percent on left and right sides. This is a 5 megapixel camera, and much higher resolution photos can be taken to see the [details](#).

"Camera Kit enables the Always-on Floor View for increased spatial awareness and no need to take time switching between camera views. Adaptive HD is a new technique that we've developed to favor smooth video when moving and higher resolution (up to HD!) when you're still."

Also, the Camera Kit is backwards compatible. The first generation Charging Dock and Audio Kit accessories are compatible with Double 2, said its makers.

The Double 2 is \$3,000 including the accessories. That involves the Double 2, Charging Dock, Audio Kit, and Camera Kit.

Is there a ready market for something like Double 2? Shankland said, "The boundaries between [work](#) and home have been blurring for years with telephones, pagers and e-mail enabling bosses to reach subordinates at all hours and allowing employees to work from home and hotels. Smartphones accelerated the trend with a constant network connection. Now telepresence robots could make remote working even more like the real thing by giving you a virtual body and face."

More information: www.doublerobotics.com/

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