

VIDEO 1: YOUR PHONE, A FRIENDLY ROBOT Durée : 3'15

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Right now is a really exciting time in robotics because there is so much stuff happening at the most advanced level in terms of quadcopters and autonomously navigating robots, and you know, robots that use access to the cloud to basically exponentially increase their computation power. So, there's a ton of progress being made in robotics, and that's really exciting. That technology is only available to 0.1% of the human population. You basically have to be working in a factory or an academic lab to have access to that technology. So, we think that that's a problem. It's not that, you know, the technology's not there yet or we have to make more advancements on the research level. It's really that there's so much design work to be done in terms of making those research robots suitable to actually live with normal human beings in their everyday lives. So, that's what I hope the future looks like. The great thing about Romo is that he's a robot that uses your smartphone as his brain, and so, he's the first robot ever where you don't have to learn any new interface or any new interaction paradigm to use him, and interact, and train him.

Robots can have as much personality as humans. Romo has more personality than some humans that I know. So, in the same way, I think that's a question that, when you play with Romo, it's instantly answered. Um, it's not, it's not complicated, it's just we know a personality when we see it, we know a creature when we see it, and Romo is, Romo has and is, you know, those things. We're wired as humans, I think, to have a special relationship with things that inhabit our three dimensional spaces. I think that that's the reason that if you were to just code up face on an Iphone that will talk to you and listen to you, it's not as compelling cause your Iphone is kind of a dead object, not a dead object, but it doesn't move or inhabit your three-dimensional space. The distinction between a robot and a human, it's surprisingly, especially in kids, sometimes it's like there's no distinction, like they don't see that much of a distinction between interacting with a human or with a robot. And so, I think that certainly, there's a lot of potential for Romo to help people feel less lonely.

But a really specific example is with autistic kids. There's been a lot of research in robotics in terms of helping autistic kids both express themselves emotionally and learn how to react emotionally to different events that happen in everyday life. And robots are really an excellent way of teaching and helping autistic kids to adapt to the world. And so, in our opinions, the kinds of robots that are gonna be disruptive, the kinds of robots that gonna be able to change what's been happening over the last 30 years and build something that people actually wanna have in their homes around their kids. Those robots are gonna have to be small and agile and friendly and cute, and most importantly, they have to be insanely easy to use.