

The Rise of the Robots at CeBIT 2014

Written by Marco Attard
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The more paranoid of visitors would have all reason to believe CeBIT 2014 is all about science-fiction as robots appear able to take care of anything from driving to even opening ceremony duties.



After all, the show was opened by a so-called "RoboThespian," an Engineered Arts creation designed for use as an educational guide. The robot was arguably the more amusing on-stage presence (in the least it was less mechanical than the "Digital Native") but alas it was too quickly carted off to make way for more human speakers.

Other robots occupying CeBIT include... pole dancers. No, really. Germany's Tobit Software decided to put the talents of British artist Gile Walker to good (?) use with a booth decked out as a nightmare club of the future compete with two robot dancers and a robot DJ with a megaphone for a head. The robot dancers are actually upgraded versions, having made a first CeBIT appearance back in 2012.

According to the BBC show visitors can even buy one of the robots for all of €30000.

Meanwhile the Karlsruhe Institue shows off the family-friendlier Armar, a domestic robot able to carry out chores such as pick up groceries from the fridge or empty out a dishwasher. Handy for the elderly and, of course, the lazy (such as, shamefully, this writer).

Automated vehicle technologies also show up at CeBIT-- the German Robotics Innovation Centre features the EO Smart Connecting Car, a futuristic vehicle able to shrink into tight parking spots, the Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Systems and Device Technology shows off a system connecting cars with traffic lights (forcing cars to slow down when lights are about to change to red) and the Volkswagen automated car prototype closed the show's opening

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ceremony.

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