

RoboCup 2009

GRAZ

June 29 - July 5 2009
Stadthalle Graz
www.robocup2009.org



Service robots conquer daily life: RoboCup 2009 as arena for electronic butlers

Autonomous daily helpers show what they can do in the RoboCup@Home event at the Graz Trade Fair

Robots mow the lawn, do the shopping, serve guests and put out the rubbish. They vacuum the apartment, watch over the house and clean the pool – they are autonomous servants with unlimited applications. The immediate advantages of robotics for humankind stands centre stage in the RoboCup, the robot world championships hosted by Graz University of Technology. In the “RoboCup@Home” event, service robots measure up against each other carrying out applications for use in daily life. They have to pass various tests in which special attention is given to human-machine interaction, and they have to present abilities in the “Open Challenge” which the teams choose for themselves. The model of an apartment is used for the setting, and for the first time ever, the intelligent service robots will be sent out shopping in a specially built supermarket area at the RoboCup 2009 in Graz.



Robotics as a butler (© TU Graz/Lunghammer)

Vacuum cleaning robots hardly make headline news any more, and even robots which mow the lawn are slightly old hat. That the scope of application for service robots, robots which perform services for humans, is absolutely unlimited, is demonstrated by the “RoboCup@Home” event in this year's robotics world championships in Graz. The idea behind this event is to stimulate the development of robots for use in daily life. The machines should take over monotonous chores and give a “hand” to their owners wherever they can.

Model apartment as setting for the test

Robots introduce themselves, attentively open the door, recognise persons and lead them through the Stadthalle as guides. In the tests which the service robots have to complete in the RoboCup@Home

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competition, the focus is on human-machine interaction. Since this event was first held in the framework of the RoboCup in 2006, tasks have been continually changed in order to constantly raise the bar for these versatile butlers. Nevertheless, there is some criteria for robotic benchmarking. The tasks the autonomous service robots have to perform have to be socially relevant, scientifically challenging, application-oriented and, finally, exciting for the spectators. As usual, the real world serves as the setting. A realistic, non-standard model of an apartment with basic fixtures and fittings for sitting room, bedroom, kitchen and bathroom will turn Hall A of the Graz Trade Fair into an arena for robots. For the first time in the history of RoboCup@Home, this year a supermarket stage set will be used where the electronic helpers can go "shopping" by themselves. Following the tests, teams can present particular abilities which they have chosen for their robots to perform in the apartment set in the Open Challenge. Five of the altogether 22 RoboCup@Home teams will go into the final. A jury of experts will then select the winning team.

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