Koreans introduce 'talking' robots

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A talking, bartending robot has made its debut in Busan, Korea, serving world delegates with drinks and conversation at the recent APEC forum.

Several humanoid helper robots have been introduced in Korea in the past, but the
bartending robot is unique in its ability to both converse with people and serve them with whatever they need.

The robot is the creation of the Korean Ministry of Science and Technology's Intelligent Robot taskforce. Designed to assist the elderly and disabled, its ability to hold conversations and execute commands has earned it the name 'thinking robot' or 'T-Rot'.

T-Rot has two cameras that enable it to recognize people and objects. These cameras help it to identify peoples' faces and surrounding objects. As well as human speech it also recognizes its own location

Another strength is its ability to identify items with its highly developed sense of touch. T-Rot is equipped with polyamide film and three-axis sensors that enable it to determine vertical pressure and horizontal sliding. This makes it possible for it to determine the weight of objects. Having gauged the precise weight of an object, the robot applies the appropriate strength to lift the object, be it a can or bottle of drink.

T-Rot can even sense a person's weight and determine the precise level of strength required to shake his or her hand. This is a significant advance over other robots who shake hands using pre-installed programs, few of which match with the person's strength.

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