

Japan's new robot brings visitors home by video-phone

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Japanese researchers Sunday unveiled a robot that can mimic speech and gestures sent to it by video-phone, replicating a distant caller's presence.

Dubbed the Telenoid R1, the robot will allow "people to feel as if an acquaintance in the distance is next to you," according to its developers, Osaka University and the Advanced Telecommunications Research Institute.

A sensor will transmit the caller's sounds and movements of the head, face and arms to a robot near the recipient, the developers said.

In one demonstration, the robot relayed the voice and movements of a grandchild speaking to a grandfather, saying "I'd like to visit your place... but now my private tutor is here to teach me."

In another demonstration, the same robot, transferring a doctor's presence, asked the same old man: "How are you feeling lately?"

The developers expect the robot to be used in real-life situations, for example in homes to provide company to elderly people living alone.

The robot has been made to look similar to a human but without hair, to appear "as both male and female, as both old and young," the developers said.

The [robot](#) is expect to sell for about three million yen (34,000 dollars)

for research purposes and 700,000 yen for general purposes.

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