

Japan robot firm showcases thought-controlled suits

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An official of Kawasaki City demonstrates a new powered exoskeleton to assist movement of an arm developed by Japan's robot suit venture Cyberdyne during a press conference in Kawasaki, on June 18, 2014

A Japanese robot-maker on Wednesday showed off suits that the wearer can control just by thinking, as it said it was linking up with an industrial city promoting innovation.

Cyberdyne founder Yoshiyuki Sankai said he was allying with Kawasaki, a city south of Tokyo, to explore ways to expand real-life applications for his robo-suits, which are often used for [physical therapy](#).

"We want to make technology that actually helps people," Sankai, who is also a professor of engineering at the University of Tsukuba, northeast of Tokyo, said.

Cyberdyne, based in Tsukuba, makes power-assisted robotic suits, limbs and joints that can help the elderly and disabled to get around or can help industrial workers to lift heavy objects.

The machines detect weak electrical pulses that run through the skin when the wearer's brain sends the message to the limb to move.

The robot then moves exactly in concert with the natural limb, but provides much more power than it could exert on its own.

"We don't want people to see individuals wearing our products and think 'Gee, it must be so hard (to live with ailments)'," Sankai said.

"Rather, we want people to see the robot and say, 'Wow, that's fantastic'," he said.

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