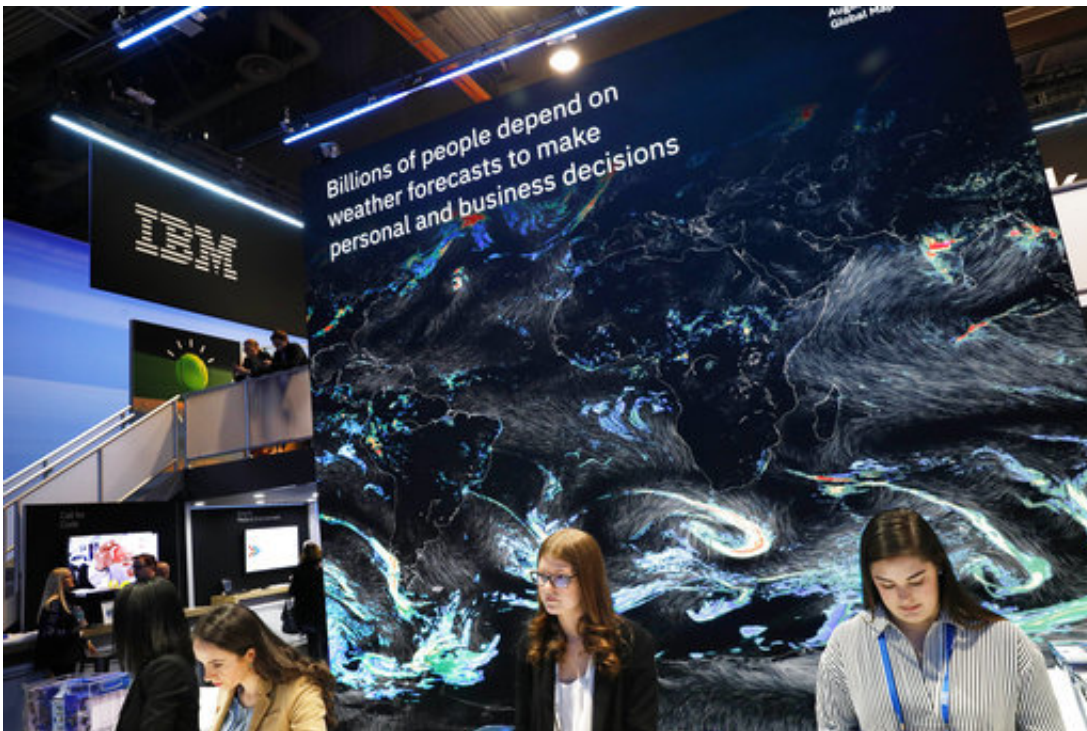


CES 2019: Local weather for the rest of the world

January 8 2019, by Matt O'brien And Joseph Pisani



A monitor advertises a new global forecasting system at the IBM booth at CES International, Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/John Locher)

The CES 2019 gadget show opened its doors Tuesday, with tech companies from giants to tiny startups showing off their latest products and services.

In recent years, CES's influence has declined as Apple, Google and other

major companies throw their own events to launch new wares. Still, more than 180,000 people from about 150 countries are expected to attend. The sprawling event spans 11 official venues, plus scores of unofficial ones throughout Las Vegas. The four-day show in Las Vegas opened after two days of media previews.

Here are the latest findings and observations from Associated Press reporters on the ground.

BRING THAT UMBRELLA

IBM is expanding its side job as the world's meteorologist.

IBM CEO Ginni Rometty used a keynote address Tuesday to unveil a new global forecasting system that promises more accurate local weather reports in places that never had them before.

The computing giant owns The Weather Company, which runs popular weather services including weather.com and the Weather Channel and Weather Underground apps (though not the Weather Channel television network). Those apps provide precise and constantly updating forecasts in places like the U.S. and parts of Europe and Japan, but not in most of the world.



Sony President and CEO Kenichiro Yoshida, left, musician Pharrell Williams, middle, and Sony Music Entertainment CEO Rob Stringer, right, pose for a photograph at the Sony news conference at CES International, Monday, Jan. 7, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

IBM says its new forecasting model relies in part on "crowd-sourced" data—barometric pressure readings from millions of smartphones and sensor readings from passing airplanes.

Weather Company CEO Cameron Clayton says the new system is intended to aid IBM's business providing critical weather data to airlines, energy firms and other industries. But he says it will also have societal benefits, such as helping small farmers in India or parts of Africa yield better crops.

IBM may have trouble persuading some users to agree to transmit

atmospheric data to IBM after the city of Los Angeles sued last week to stop the Weather Channel's data-collection practices. The lawsuit alleges that the company uses location information not just to personalize weather but also to track users' every step and profit off that information. The company has denied any impropriety with sharing location data collected from users, saying it does disclose what it does.

CUTTING THROUGH THE BABEL

Google has transformed CES into a Disney-like theme park—complete with singing animatronic macarons—to showcase new features of its voice-enabled digital assistant.



Kenichiro Yoshida, president and CEO of Sony, talks about a variety of Sony products at the Sony news conference at CES International Monday, Jan. 7, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

This includes an "interpreter mode" that enables some of Google's smart home devices to work as a translator. It's being piloted at a hotel concierge desk near the Las Vegas tech conference and rolls out to consumer devices in several weeks.

Voice assistants are getting pretty good at translating our speech into text, but it's a thornier challenge in artificial intelligence to enable real-time translation across different languages. Google's new feature expands upon real-time translation services it's rolled out to Android phones and headphones over the past year.

This is the second year that Google Assistant had made a huge splash at CES in an effort to outbid Amazon's Alexa as the voice assistant of choice.

Google this year has an amusement park ride that resembles Disney's "It's a Small World," though on a roller-coaster-like train at slow speeds. Talking and singing characters showcase Google's various voice-assistant features as visitors ride along.

Google isn't the only CES exhibitor promising the next generation of instant translation. Chinese AI firm iFlytek has been showing of its translation apps and devices that are already popular among Chinese travelers. And at least two startups, New York-based Waverly Labs and China-based TimeKettle, are promoting their earbuds that work as in-ear translation devices.



Tom Rothman, chairman of Sony Pictures Entertainment, talks about the new Spider-Man movie and other releases at the Sony news conference at CES International, Monday, Jan. 7, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

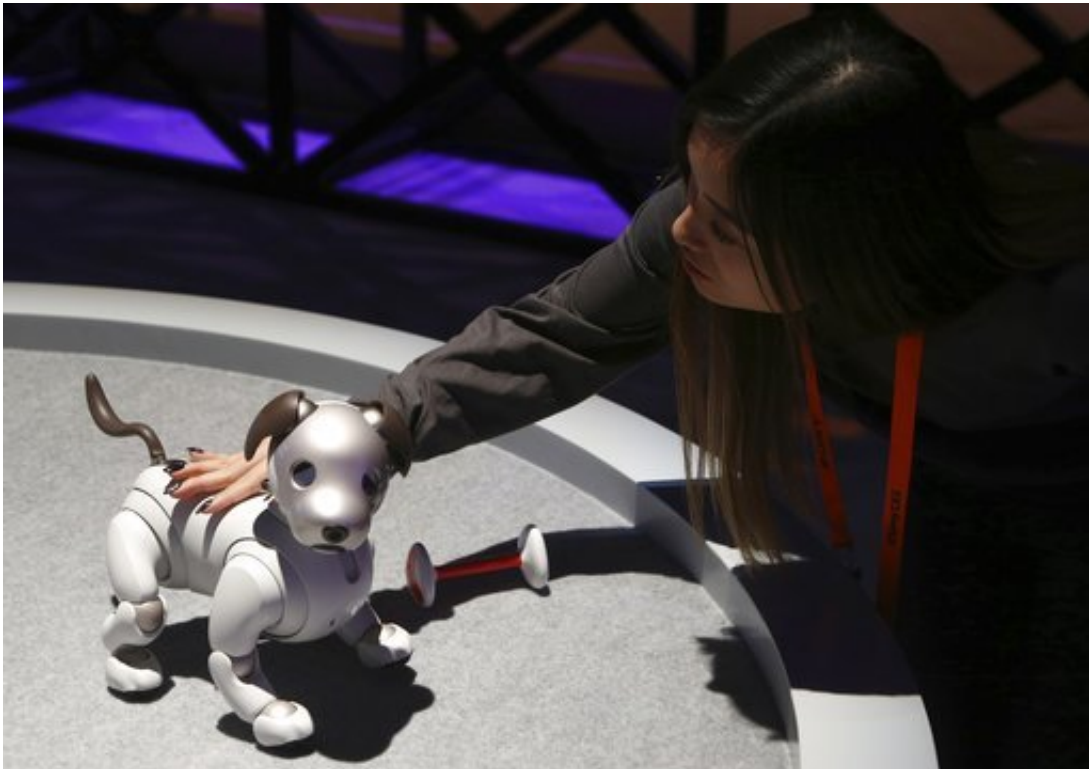
SAMSUNG WANTS TO BRING ROBOTS HOME

Up next for Samsung: A robot that can keep its eye on grandma and grandpa.

The rolling robot, which talks and has two digital eyes on a black screen, can track medicines they take, measure blood pressure and call 911 if it detects a fall.

The company didn't not say when Samsung Bot Care would be available, but brought the robot out on stage Monday at a presentation at CES. Samsung also said it is working on a robot for stores and another for testing and purifying the air in homes.

Samsung also unveiled TVs, appliances and other high-tech gizmos—but not a foldable phone it hinted at in November. But a startup called Royole did. The Royole FlexPai smartphone was first shown in November but the California-based company has more details. The phone will have a 7.8-inch display that can be folded like a wallet, priced at more than \$1,300.



The new edition Sony Aibo robot dog incorporates a series of sensors, cameras, and actuators to activate the pup and keep it interactive, as seen inside the Sony display area at CES International, Monday, Jan. 7, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

STAR DELIGHT

Sony brought some star power to CES with a visit from musician

Pharrell Williams, straight from trip to Anguilla.

The star of hit songs such as "Happy" came to talk about a mostly secret project that he and Sony are supposedly undertaking. But in the end, it was clearly an attempt by Sony to sprinkle some stardust on launches for TVs and other products.

"I was a little bit worried that he was still on holiday, but he is here," Sony Music head Rob Stringer told the crowd.



Yoon Lee, senior vice president, Samsung Electronics America, demonstrates the Bot Care robot during a Samsung news conference at CES International, Monday, Jan. 7, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/John Locher)



People walk by a booth during setup before CES International, Monday, Jan. 7, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/John Locher)



A 13-story Apple iPhone advertisement drapes a local hotel to coincide with the CES International, Monday, Jan. 7, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)



Attendees wait for the start of CES International, Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/John Locher)



Gary Lee, senior vice president and head of the AI Center at Samsung Electronics, unveils the Bot Care robot during a Samsung news conference at CES International, Monday, Jan. 7, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/John Locher)



People stand in front of the Google tent during preparations for CES International, Saturday, Jan. 5, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/John Locher)



Rob Stringer, right, CEO of Sony Music Entertainment, surprises the audience as musician Pharrell Williams, left, walks on stage at the Sony news conference at CES International, Monday, Jan. 7, 2019, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

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