

True romance in the air at Tokyo virtual reality show

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It is Saturday night and you want to have a date with someone special, but you're too tired to get off the sofa.

Japanese firm FutureLeap claims it has just the thing for in-the-mood

couch potatoes with a [virtual reality](#) system so realistic you'd swear that cyber date just whispered sweet nothings in your ear.

The company showed off its high-tech romance gear at the three-day Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality exhibition in Tokyo.

At FutureLeap's booth, a young model kneels on a fluffy carpet as she tosses balloons in the air, blows bubbles and flirts with a man wearing VR headgear who is sitting some two metres (6.5 feet) away.

He reaches out to touch her shoulder and gets nothing but air. When she whispers into the device though, he can feel the sensation of her breath on his ear.

Most virtual reality romance games feature an animated companion rather than a real person, said company employee Tomoyuki Takahashi.

But in this case, "you feel the real sensation as if you were together alone with a woman who is just your type," he said.

"This type of realistic sensation will become the main trend in [virtual reality technology](#)."



A model demonstrates the "KiLA" real-time animation system, making it possible to create computer graphics animation immediately on the spot using motion capture technology

Other companies have even moved away from offerings that require a VR headset.

LiveCartoon CEO Shohei Tsuji, covered head to toe in motion sensors, demonstrated the company's newest product by showing off his best dance moves while a pretty female anime character mimicked his steps on screen.

The system, Tsuji said, could be used by retailers who want to interact with customers by having the cutesy character engage passersby while the person who controls the character remains out of sight.

"With this system you can have animated characters talking directly to

customers," he said.

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