

TECH TIMES

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AI Issues

Exploring how effective robotics are in the workplace

+
PLUS

Humans vs
Artificial
Intelligence



AI CONTINUES MAKING WAREHOUSES "SMARTER".

Alexandra Vasquez

AI has been transforming the logistics networks for many global retailers, but whether AI powered robots will be able to completely take over remains an open question.

AI robots can pick, pack and transport at higher speeds and at the fraction of the cost to their human counterparts. They do not lobby for higher wages and do not need to take a lunch break. However, whilst more powerful than humans, these robots are still blind. They are programmed to do specific tasks with high precision and speed, but have very limited ability to adapt to changes in the environment. Even something as minor as an object moving a few inches could prevent the robot from performing a task.

INDIGO, a household name in online shopping, recently saw their high-tech robots crashing into shelving, an error that is estimated to effect as many as 150,000 customer orders worldwide as well as costing INDIGO £5.5m in stock and system repairs.

Having that said, innovation in AI is catching up quickly. The next game changer is likely to be "learning warehouses". These are self learning AI system that could not only recognise patterns and regularities, but also gather experience independently from human input, anticipating situations at increasing accuracy as they learn.

OPINION PIECE: WILL AI TAKE OUR JOBS?

Artificial Intelligence allows us to manipulate and analyse vast and complex sets of data – far more than any human can, creating opportunities for efficiencies across industries. What has set humans apart so far has been feelings, intuitions, instinct. However, with AI, becoming more intelligent, how long can we keep up?

The general wisdom has been that AI will augment and automate some tasks, but not replace them, at least not yet.

Now imagine equipping warehouse personnel with sensor gloves, monitoring hand movements and feeding into the expertise of your picking robots. Soon enough, nearly everything these workers do could be transferable to machines as new knowledge. Where does that leave us? Are organisations that have not harnessed the power of AI doomed to extinction?



Balancing act: We are constantly balancing the needs of humans with the innovation of AI.