This human-size robot now has ‘eyes’ that show people where it’s going

Agility Robotics has taken the wraps off its next-gen bipedal bot, which comes with some noticeable upgrades — namely, a cylindrical head and two animated LED “eyes.” In a press release, the company says it made the changes to its warehouse-friendly bot, called Digit, to improve “human robot interaction.”

Agility Robotics first introduced the once-headless Digit in 2020, marketing the machine as useful in a wide range of industries, such as logistics, industrial inspection, and telepresence. The bot’s also been made to work in the same area and take up the same amount of space as humans, which is why it measures five feet, nine inches tall and walks on two legs.

Digit’s latest upgrades aren’t merely cosmetic. A company spokesperson tells *TechCrunch* that its sensor-equipped head should make it easier for humans to understand Digit’s actions, as its eyes “will help convey useful information like changing direction and other actions while at work.” It also comes with some redesigned end effectors, or hands, that should make it easier to pick up the plastic totes used inside warehouses.

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For now, though, Digit’s abilities remain fairly limited. While it can walk, step up on curbs, crouch, and perform other simple actions, its main function is to pick up and put down various types of objects weighing up to 35 pounds. You can see the bot in action in the demos the company posted to Twitter and YouTube, which show how Digit walks over to a shelf, removes a bin, and then shuffles it over to the conveyer belt.

It’s not clear how much it will cost the companies looking to get access to the bot, but Agility Robotics is opening up its Agility Partner Program, which will “provide partners with an exclusive opportunity to shape the development of Digit’s skills and abilities, and will initially be the only way to purchase the latest generation Digit.”

https://www.theverge.com/2023/3/20/23648343/agility-robotics-digit-next-gen-bipedal-bot