Changing perceptions on robots

Robots tend to be perceived as threatening, replacing human jobs and wanting to take over the world.

In 2018 Honda revealed four robots designed to assist humans in a broad range of activities. All of these robots - currently in the experiment phase - are the result of Honda's 3E Robotics Concept – standing for “Empower. Experience. Empathy.” This concept is that robotic devices expand people’s potential by achieving a mutual empathy and grow with people.

Honda strongly believes in a future society where robots assist and empower humans based on their belief that “the purpose of technology is to help people.”, in fact, that the future of robotics is rooted in human-robot interaction. Honda views robotics not as something in conflict with people, but as an opportunity to expand their potential.

In general, people in Japan consider robots as friendly and helpful companions, while companies and the government see robots and advanced technologies as solutions to address Japan’s challenges, from ageing populations to environmental disasters. As such, robots are viewed as key to creating a better, more sustainable society and nation. Against this background, Honda is trying to change people’s perceptions about robots in other countries. They do so by designing the robots with less threatening traits, and through public demonstrations.

“The 3E-A18 is a concept model of a robot that we can touch and communicate with. (click image to watch video)

“We have entered an era when robotics will become increasingly visible and essential in our everyday lives and have the ability to unlock human potential.”
Yoshiyuki Matsumoto, president & CEO of Honda R&D Co., Ltd.