

Dr. Erwin Prassler

Locomotec GmbH

Germany



Title:

Reference Platforms for Robotic Application Development in the Back Pack

Abstract:

Fueled by some big acquisitions of robotics start-ups in the past months the interest in robotics especially in service robotics seems to be going through the roof. Some of the expectations that float around certainly belong more into the realm of science fiction rather than in science and engineering. Still the interest of the public as well as of the decision makers in industry and politics is triggered and they expect the robotics community to deliver. One can expect that the seemingly unlimited financial resources of the super powers currently acting on or behind the stage will enable them not only to fuel but also meet the expectations of the public in one way or the other.

The question is: Is that the end of the game in robotics as we have known it for some decades? Certainly not! Fundamental scientific and technical problems will not be solved overnight. But it will change the game and there is a good chance that it will change it to the better. While many robot applications in the past were bound to fail, because there was no market, the big players have the power to create the markets. And this markets will also provide opportunities for smaller players.

What is badly needed, however, for the smaller players to survive is a consolidation in the way in which they currently develop new robotic applications. From scratch developments and proprietary "we-too" solutions may no longer help to survive.

In my talk I will draw some parallels between the game changes in IT industry and the telecommunication industry and what we can learn from it for the game change in robotics. I will reflect on good and bad lessons learned in the development of robot applications and I will highlight the importance of the availability of hardware and software reference platforms and reusable off the shelf solutions for the development of new robot applications.

Biography:

Prof. Dr. Erwin Prassler received a master's degree in Computer Science from the Technical University of Munich in 1985 and a Ph.D. in Computer Science from the University of Ulm in March 1996. Between 1986 and 1989, he held positions as a member of the scientific staff at the Technical University of Munich and as a guest researcher in the Computer Science Department at the University of Toronto. In fall 1989, he joined the Research Institute for Applied Knowledge Processing (FAW) in Ulm, where he headed a research group working in the field of mobile robots and service robotics between 1994 and 2003. In 2004, Dr. Prassler accepted a position as Associate Professor at B-IT Bonn-Aachen Int. Center for Information Technology. Dr. Prassler has published numerous papers in the field of service and assistiverobotics and human-robot interaction. He has 15 years of experience in the scientific coordination and administration of large national and European research projects. He coordinated the German Leitprojekt MORPHA on Human Robot Interaction and the German Service Robotics Initiative DESIRE. Jointly with Dr. Rainer Bischoff from KUKA Laboratories he lead the EU project BRICS – Best Practice in Robotics. In addition he was principal investigator in a variety of other national and European research projects.

Besides his academic career Dr. Prassler acted as a serial entrepreneur. Over the past 12 years he cofounded three service robotics companies. The last one – run fun GmbH - is just several months old and is developing a robotic running coach to mobilize people in all ages and help them to improve their fitness and health.