

Alibaba to launch new service robot for hotels

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Alibaba A.I. Labs said this week it will introduce a robot designed specifically for the hospitality sector. The announcement came during the Alibaba Cloud Computing Conference 2018. A.I. Labs leads development of Alibaba Group's artificial intelligence consumer products.

"We are excited by this tremendous development that is helping us bridge the gap between guest needs and the response time that they expect. Alibaba A.I. Labs' robot is the next step in the evolution towards smart hotels," said Chen Lijuan, general manager of Alibaba A.I. Labs. "The robot will be the ultimate assistant for hotel guests who want everything quickly and conveniently at their fingertips."

From its deployment in October, the new robot will be able to deliver food or laundry to guests, offering a glimpse of what the future of hotel service will be. Guests can talk to the robot, using voice commands, touch and hand gestures. Its answers are powered by AliGenie, the software behind the Tmall Genie smart speaker made by Alibaba A.I. Labs.

The robot, slightly under one meter in height,

moves at a speed of up to one meter per second. It's cased in aluminum and features multi-sense data functionality, along with parallel computing, for fast responses. Onboard are a semantic map, autonomous navigation system to identify and dodge obstacles, a communications system to control elevators and facial-recognition technology for ID verification.

After trialling the service robot at hotels, A.I. Labs will determine whether it's suitable for use in hospitals, restaurants and offices.

The global market for service robots is on the rise, says the International Federation of Robotics. It's seen growing between 20% and 25% from 2018 and 2020, with sales during that period totaling around \$27 billion for the professional service segment.

Source: [Alizila](#)