

press release

3rd Generation Of Sony's Entertainment Robot Evolves With More Skills, Functions And Connectivity

New AIBO ERS-7 Is Your Companion With The Right Connections



Paris, 4 September 2003 – Sony's lovable companion, AIBO, is entering a new phase in its evolution with the birth of the ERS-7. A quantum leap in technology has taken AIBO's companionship abilities to new heights. Becoming more entertaining than ever, AIBO also boasts enhanced communication skills and new levels of functionality. For the first time, the onboard memory enables the new AIBO to retain the personality that it will develop over its lifecycle. A cool new design has refined its cute looks and a richer LED display on its face, known as 'Illume-Face', lets the new AIBO express a wider variety of emotions. It is also the most connected AIBO yet, presenting built-in Wireless LAN connectivity and a larger 32MB Memory Stick. Thanks to this, the owner can interact with the AIBO at a distance using a PC or a mobile device.

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“AIBO is evolving from a source of fascination and entertainment into a more functional, endearing companion,” says Nicolas Babin, Director of Sony Entertainment Robot Europe. “The ERS-7 is a fantastic step forward for the AIBO concept, aiming to facilitate interaction between humans and robots. It opens up a world of possibilities for AIBO enthusiasts and it is a notable step in the development of artificial intelligence as well as domestic robots.

The clever AIBO ERS-7 will present a very new dimension of companionship to its owner. The connectivity possibilities with mobile devices and PCs mean that AIBO will be able to perform ever more helpful actions in the day-to-day life of its owner.

Owing to the significant progress of the hardware, Sony has developed a new software named ‘AIBO Mind’ that integrates all of AIBO’s applications onto one 32MB Memory Stick. This software Memory Stick is supplied in English version with the main unit as an all in one package. Today this all-inclusive software enables AIBO to behave autonomously as well as benefit from PC-based applications.

In the autonomous mode, fun pet-like behaviour accompanies AIBO’s ability to recognise its owner’s face and voice as well as locate its energy station to charge itself. For the first time, this software also features ‘Visual Pattern Recognition’ enabling AIBO to distinguish shapes and patterns. For example, the pattern on the Energy Station pole helps AIBO to localise and position itself quickly. In addition, the all-new AIBO Cards feature a variety of patterns offering an alternative way of communicating visually with AIBO. These cards allow AIBO to be given several instructions including ‘Alarm clock set-up’ or ‘Take a picture’.

One of the key applications of the ‘AIBO Mind’ software utilising the Wireless LAN technology, allows AIBO to remotely connect to an Internet enabled PC or mobile device. For example, the owner can send an email instruction to AIBO asking it to take an unsuspecting picture of the owner’s children and send it back to the mobile telephone. This extraordinary feature demonstrates the potential for AIBO to have a more useful role in everyday life. The owner can also benefit from the onboard Wireless LAN by transferring the pictures taken independently by AIBO to be viewed on a PC.

Over time new contents and applications will be made available to personalise an AIBO and will need to be added to the single ‘AIBO Mind’ Memory Stick.

AIBO’s on-board memory has been doubled and its new 64-bit RISC processor has a clock speed that is 150% faster than its predecessors. Several ‘touch’ sensors on AIBO’s body are

now electro-static sensors meaning that a gentle stroke on AIBO's head or back will trigger a response without needing to push or click. The ERS-7's eyesight is three times better than previous models. Finally, AIBO's clever new behaviour has been rewarded with a new toy, the 'AIBOne'. In the form of a pink bone, AIBO can, for the first time ever, pick it up in its mouth.

Eager AIBO enthusiasts need only wait until Sony Dream World in Paris on 6th and 7th September 2003 to get a first glimpse of the new AIBO. From the beginning of November, AIBO will be available throughout Europe, either through selected retail outlets or online at www.eu.aibo.com.

Main specifications of AIBO ERS-7

<i>Dimension</i>		180 (W) x 278 (H) x 319 (D) mm
<i>Weight</i>		Approx. 1.65kg (including battery & memory stick)
<i>CPU</i>	64bit RISC Processor	MIPS R7000
<i>CPU Clock Speed</i>		576MHz
<i>Memory</i>	SDRAM	256Mbit x 2
	Flash memory	32Mbit x 1
<i>Program Storage Media</i>	Memory Stick	1 slot, FAT 16
<i>Components</i>		not removable
<i>Movable Parts</i>		Mouth - 1 degree of freedom
		Head - 3 degrees of freedom
		Leg - 3 degrees of freedom x 4 legs
		Ear - 1 degree of freedom x 2
		Tail - 2 degrees of freedom
<i>Input/Output</i>	Camera	CMOS Image Sensor 350,000 pixels
	PC Card Slot	N/A
	Wireless LAN Card	IEEE 802.11b (Integrated)
	Media	Memory Stick slot In/Out
	Audio Input	Miniature Microphones
	Audio Output	Miniature Speaker, 20.8mm, 500mW
	MIDI	Yes
	Volume Switch	Yes
<i>Built-in Sensors</i>		Temperature Sensor
		Infrared Distance Sensor (head, body)
		Acceleration Sensor
		Electric Static Sensor (head, back)
		Pressure Sensor (chin, paws (4))
		Vibration Sensor
<i>Power Consumption</i>		Approx. 7W (Standard operation in autonomous mode)

<i>Operating Time</i>		Approx. 1.5 Hours (Standard operation in autonomous mode)
<i>Charging Time</i>		Approx. 2.5 Hours
<i>Operating Temperature</i>		5°C to 35°C
<i>Operating Humidity</i>		10% to 80%
<i>Supplied Accessories</i>		AIBO MIND (software), Energy station, Energy station pole, AC adapter, Lithium Ion Battery pack, Pink ball, AIBOne, AIBO Cards, Documentation
<i>LED</i>		Illume Face : 24 LED (white 12, red 4, blue 4, green 4)
		Ear : 2 (left & right)
		Head sensor : 2 (white and amber)
		Head (wireless LAN on/off) : 1 (blue)
		Back sensor : 16 (white 8, red 3, blue 3, orange 2)

About Sony:

Sony manufactures audio, video, communications and information technology products for the global consumer and professional markets. With its music, pictures, game and online businesses, Sony is uniquely positioned to become a leading personal broadband entertainment company in the 21st century. In Europe, Sony recorded consolidated annual sales of EUR 13.88 billion (yen 1,666 billion) for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2003, based on an average market exchange rate for the same period of yen 120 to the EUR. Sony Europe, headquartered at the Sony Center am Potsdamer Platz in Berlin, is responsible for the company's European electronics business and registered consolidated sales of EUR 8.62 billion for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2003.

For more information on Sony Europe, please visit <http://www.sony-europe.com>