# The evolution of collaborative robots and the future of automation



In a recent episode of The Robot Report Podcast, Chris Savoia, Head of Ecosystem Success at Universal Robots, engaged in a discussion highlighting the significant evolution of collaborative robots and the role of education and reskilling in the field of automation. Savoia's insights extend to recent advancements in robotics, including higher payload capabilities and the development of mobile manipulators. His conversation underscores the importance of the new Polyscope X platform, which offers enhanced functionalities for developers within robotic systems.

Savoia particularly elaborated on the value proposition of integrating connectivity in robotic systems, detailing enhancements brought by features like MotionPlus. He also stressed the critical aspect of cybersecurity in these connected systems. By introducing the OptiMove feature, which optimizes robot control, Universal Robots aims to further enhance operational efficiency, demonstrating a proactive approach to evolving industry needs.

In the realm of humanoid robotics, Figure AI has made notable strides with the recent shipment of its advanced humanoid robot, Figure 02, to a paying customer. While the customer’s identity remains undisclosed, previous collaborations with BMW Group, which involved trials at their South Carolina production plant, have showcased the robot’s capabilities in managing delicate components. This development marks a pivotal moment for Figure AI, indicating an increased commercial interest in their innovative solutions since they emerged from stealth mode in January 2023. The company has earned recognition, winning a 2024 RBR50 award for its rapid development pace within the competitive field of humanoid robotics.

Additionally, developments in automation technology are highlighted by Open Droids, which is focused on creating both single and dual-arm mobile manipulators. Although the company did not present a robot at RoboBusiness, it is poised to showcase the R1D1, a single-arm mobile manipulator, at this year’s CES in Las Vegas, signalling ongoing innovation in business applications.

In a marketplace reshaped by technological advancements, Zebra Technologies has announced plans to acquire the vision unit of Photoneo Brightpick Group. After the transaction, Photoneo Brightpick Group will be rebranded as Brightpick and will focus on the development of AI-powered robots specifically for warehouse automation. This acquisition represents a strategic expansion to Zebra’s existing robotics portfolio, which has previously seen significant investments, including the 2021 acquisition of Fetch Robotics for $290 million. While the financial details of this transaction remain undisclosed, the deal is scheduled to be completed in the first quarter of 2025, contingent on customary closing conditions.

These developments collectively illustrate the dynamic landscape of AI and robotics, capturing a range of emerging technologies and industry trends that are currently influencing business practices and anticipating future advancements in automation.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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