

Automation and AI will help society



Discussion questions

1. Do you believe it's just a matter of time before fast-food workers are replaced by robots?
2. What do you think would happen to the world's economy if robots began replacing people in the workforce?
3. Did you ever have a favourite Sci-fi films hero who was a robot?
4. Would you ever trust a robot to watch your children or walk your dog?
5. Is it possible for people to all move out of agriculture and manufacturing and into knowledge industries, like creative arts, design, software programming, and etc?
6. If the trend of automation continues, what would life be like in the year 2050?
7. If most difficult, physically demanding, monotonous, and dangerous jobs are done by machines, what will people do?

Statistics—True or false? (answers on the next page)

1. Modern technology could automate 45% of activities people are paid to perform.
2. Since 2011, most large businesses have been automating their marketing services for at least four years.
3. Automation is predicted to produce no additional jobs in the economy by the year 2025 in the US.
4. The origin of the word 'automaton' is a new word created in 2001, by Russian scientists.

Reading - Consumer Automation: Smart Homes for Smarter Living



Automation is coming to the home and there is nothing stopping the pace of change. From security, cooking aids, appliances, climate control, and more, all being aided by the introduction of the Internet of Things (IoT). This transformation is promising customer satisfaction and groundbreaking systems that will make home life smarter.

Home technology has evolved to now connect directly to your smart phone, so that with a touch of a button the entire house is at your command. The promise of the totally connected home has been repeated said at trade shows like Consumer Electric Show (CES). The promise is slowly becoming reality.

Cameras for pets. As people work longer and are away from home for extended periods, taking care of Rover is now on everyone's mind. Cameras with Wi-Fi can soothe pets as owners can speak to their pets from anywhere in the world.

Connected kitchen. Manufacturers are keen to have your oven, microwave, and fridge always online and transmitting your daily habits. Using big data techniques, your eating and cooking preferences will be stored and then anticipate your actions. For instance, if it's close to your partner's birthday, your fridge can send you an email that it has ordered a cake using records from the past 12 months. The same can be done with your washing machine which orders new detergent when needed.

Wellness technology. Companies are also focussing on sleep monitoring devices, fitness tracking devices, and smart beds. In combination they can provide a complete breakdown of your physical health and improve well-being.

With many more products set to launch the future of smart homes is becoming increasingly accessible.

Answers

1. True (McKinsey, Nov 2015)
2. True (HubSpot, 2018)
3. False, 13.6 millions are expected to be created (ComputerWeekly, Jan 2016)
4. False, it means "acting of one's own will" and come from ancient Greek, and was used by Homer.