

AUTONOMOUS ROBOTS TRIAL TO PROVIDE ON-DEMAND PARCEL AND GROCERY DELIVERY TO PUNGGOL RESIDENTS

Robot “courier” trial to explore deliveries in live environment, giving consumers more flexibility and greater convenience

SINGAPORE – 11 March 2021: A new public-private trial to test the use of autonomous robots in providing on-demand deliveries is underway in Punggol. The trial will pave the way for wider use of autonomous robot “couriers” in making on-demand deliveries to consumers.

Consumers will enjoy more convenience and faster deliveries, as they can choose when they want their items delivered, instead of adhering to a fixed delivery schedule. For instance, after buying groceries such as rice or diapers at a supermarket, a consumer can drop off the purchases at a concierge counter to continue shopping or dining and have them delivered to their HDB block at a time the consumer chooses. Other items that could be delivered through these robot couriers include perishables such as food or flowers, and even controlled items such as medicine.

The one-year trial is led by the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA), in partnership with Housing & Development Board (HDB), Land Transport Authority (LTA), Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), logistics service provider CM Logistics, supermarket chain NTUC FairPrice and technology provider OTSAW. The trial will see two OTSAW robots delivering parcels and groceries to the lift lobbies of seven Waterway Woodcress HDB blocks, to assess:

- Technologies such as AI for autonomous navigation, obstacle detection and avoidance;
- Infrastructure such as communications systems and road networks (including connectivity and slopes); and
- Business models for commercial viability.

Public safety is paramount. To ensure public safety, both autonomous robots have passed the LTA’s safety assessment for the supervised use of autonomous vehicles on public paths. The speed for each robot, which weighs 80 kg (unloaded), is further capped at walking speeds (about 5 kmh). Each robot is also accompanied by a safety officer during the trial period.

Through a mobile app, consumers will be notified when the robot is en route to its destination and will receive a confirmation notification that the robot has arrived. The robot will also provide

a QR code for recipients to scan at the collection point via their mobile phones, thus ensuring that only the authorised person will be able to access to the assigned compartment and its contents.

“With the growth of e-commerce, consumers have grown accustomed to expecting food, products and groceries to be delivered to their home in increasingly shorter periods of time. Autonomous delivery robots can play an important role in augmenting existing delivery infrastructure to enhance the consumer experience and drive productivity gains. We look forward to working closely with our partners in this trial to test the technology, safety, business model and user experience,” said Mr Kiren Kumar, Deputy Chief Executive, IMDA.

“We continually seek new opportunities to better serve our residents and shoppers, including leveraging innovative technologies such as the last-mile delivery by autonomous robots. By supporting this initiative at our first new-generation Neighbourhood Centre, Oasis Terraces, we hope this will provide for greater convenience and enhance the retail experience for about 700 residential households at Waterway Woodcress.” – Ms Kee Lay Cheng, Group Director for Properties and Land, HDB.

“Autonomous delivery technology has the potential to increase business efficiency and improve customer convenience. As paths are also used by other users, it is also important to ensure the delivery is carried out in a safe manner. We have worked closely with our partners to put in place safeguards to ensure public safety during this trial and the insights gathered will help improve future similar projects,” said Mr Lam Wee Shann, Chief Innovation and Transport Technology Officer, LTA.

“Urban logistics keep the city going by delivering goods to people and businesses efficiently. Employing technology to explore alternate and innovative modes of delivery is one way Singapore builds a world-class urban logistics system that also enhances land and labour productivity. This enables our city to become more liveable, sustainable and connected,” said Mr Chiu Wen Tung, Group Director (Research & Development), URA.

Consumers and businesses interested in participating in the trial can visit: www.otsaw.com or email sales@otsaw.com.

Other resources

Annex A: Infographic on parcel and grocery deliveries

Annex B: Autonomous robot visual

Annex C: Quotes from industry partners

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About Info-communications Media Development Authority (IMDA)

The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) leads Singapore's digital transformation with infocomm media. To do this, IMDA will develop a dynamic digital economy and a cohesive digital society, driven by an exceptional infocomm media (ICM) ecosystem – by developing talent, strengthening business capabilities, and enhancing Singapore's ICM infrastructure. IMDA also regulates the telecommunications and media sectors to safeguard consumer interests while fostering a pro-business environment, and enhances Singapore's data protection regime through the Personal Data Protection Commission. For more news and information, visit www.imda.gov.sg or follow IMDA on Facebook IMDAsg and Twitter @IMDAsg.

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