

June 26, 2019

For General Release

Information Services International-Dentsu, Ltd.

ISID Conducts Pilot Test of Humanoid AI Assistant in Chofu, Tokyo

— Realizing Realistic Human Communications,
Verifying Potential for Next-Generation UI —

Information Services International-Dentsu, Ltd. (Head Office: Minato-ku, Tokyo; President, CEO & COO: Ryoichi Nawa; hereinafter, “ISID”), announces that its OPEN INNOVATION LAB (hereinafter “INNOLAB”) will collaborate with Couger Inc. (Head Office: Shibuya-ku, Tokyo; CEO: Atsushi Ishii), on the pilot test of a humanoid AI assistant at the Trie Keio Chofu (Chofu-shi, Tokyo) shopping center located near Chofu Station on the Keio Line on Saturday, June 29, and Sunday, June 30.

This pilot test involves the projection of a life-size humanoid AI assistant on digital signage or other screens installed in outdoor plazas that will inform passersby of the attractions and events in the area through interactive dialogue, including changing facial expressions and gestures. Using the Virtual Human Agent (VHA) technology developed by Couger to realize communication similar to natural human interactions, this pilot test is an attempt to explore the potential for VHA as a next-generation user interface (UI) able to encourage changes in human behavior.



The Keio Corporation (Head Office: Tama-shi, Tokyo; President and Representative Director: Yasushi Komura), which operates Trie Keio Chofu, will also cooperate in this pilot test.

■ Background and Objectives

Advances in IoT and AI, which are driving the digitization of every kind of information online, coupled with advances in smartphones and other UI, are substantially influencing people’s lifestyles and consumption behavior. Amid the rapid rise of UI enabling access to information through simple operations such as tapping/swiping or verbal commands, VHA is attracting attention as a new kind of UI. Its most distinctive feature is its ability to facilitate communication that is very close to real human dialogue by displaying realistic facial expressions and movements that create opportunities for autonomous conversation and responses using active speech.

INNOLAB has been promoting research and development on next-generation media for cities of the future for some time now. We launched joint research with Couger, which owns this innovative VHA technology, with the aim of enabling a starting point for regional communication by providing media equipped with a UI

that facilitates this kind of active dialogue. This pilot test is a first step toward that goal, intended to verify the social acceptance of VHA. For this pilot test, INNOLAB is responsible for communication flow design based on the establishment of dialogue scenarios and conditions from the test scheme using ethnographic methods.

In light of the results of this pilot test, INNOLAB has future plans to promote next-generation UI research further optimized for individual user circumstances and characteristics.

■ Pilot Test Overview and Main Points

Pilot Test Overview

Date: Saturday, June 29, and Sunday, June 30 2019 between 10:00–18:00
Location: Torie Keio Chofu, Building C (2-61-1 Kojimacho, Chofu-shi, Tokyo)
<https://trie-keiochofu.jp/shop/ex/en/access.jsp>
Participation method: No preregistration necessary, anyone can participate (only Japanese language is supported)

Pilot Test Procedures and Main Points

- The VHA humanoid appearing on the digital signage is a “big sister knowledgeable about Chofu who loves to chat.”
- During standby mode, AI will attract people’s attention through movements and expressions.
- When humans notice the AI, it will initiate conversation by waving or a verbal greeting.
- The AI will engage participants in dialogue while using active speech such as a self-introduction.
- The AI will quiz participants on places to go and events in Chofu, leading the conversation while promoting attractions and activities in the area.
- The AI will ask participants questions in order to change their behavior.

Pilot Test Checklist Items

- (1) Weigh potential for creation of communications using VHA
- (2) Analysis of communication content
- (3) Assess degree to which communication influenced participant behavior
- (4) Assess social acceptance, convenience and impression of VHA

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