



Robotics is the science and technology of robots, their design, manufacture, and application. Robotics requires a working knowledge of electronics, mechanics and software, and is usually accompanied by a large working knowledge of many subjects. Robotics is based on the word "robot" coined by science fiction author Karel Capek in his 1920 theater play R.U.R. The word robot comes from the word robota meaning "self labor", and, figuratively, "drudgery" or "hard work" in Czech.



TECHSUMMIT

SAP Summit '08

A ray of light for SMEs

IMRUL KAYES CHOWDHURY, back from Mumbai, India

THE commercial and entertainment centre of India, Mumbai, became more vibrant as the 5th summit of SAP India kicked off on June 4. Headquartered in Germany, SAP (Systems Applications and Products) is one of the world's largest software providers for independent businesses.

The three-day long seminar, which mainly emphasized SMEs (Small and Medium Entrepreneurs), was attended by over 3,500 participants consisting of corporate policymakers, analysts, SAP professionals, businessmen, technologists, SAP partners, IT journalists and potential clients.

During the opening press briefing, it was informed that the revenue earned by SAP India has doubled within the last year and that it is now leading in providing business solutions to various organisations. Moreover, there are more than 65,000 job opportunities for SAP professionals worldwide and the demand is growing day by day. Keeping this in mind, SAP has opened 50 e-learning centres in India alone.

To run businesses smoothly and to take them to profitable levels, there is no alternative to well-designed automated infrastructure. SAP with its software solutions helps its customers to automate their organisational infrastructure in every aspect to enable the company to run hiccup free.

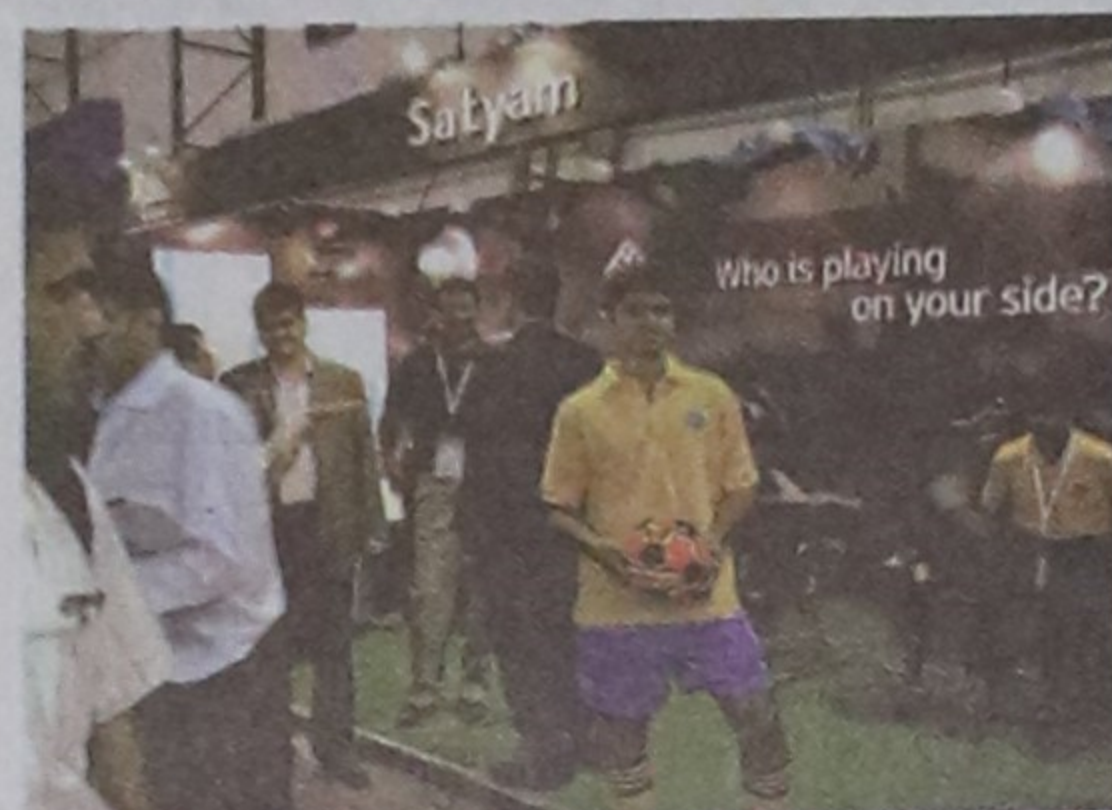
Ranjan Das, president and CEO of SAP for Indian Subcontinent, informed that the demand for SAP solutions is growing day by day in corporate enterprises and SMEs in Bangladesh. In fact, some business organisations in Bangladesh are already using SAP solutions.

Deb Deep Sengupta, vice president, SME, SAP India, added that the firm has already signed contracts with around 15 business organisations in Bangladesh. SAP India professionals will be providing these organisations with SAP solutions. It was also revealed that SAP is considering the opening of training and education centres in Bangladesh.

Currently, SAP is offering SMEs with three packages - SAP Business One, SAP Business ByDesign and SAP All-in-One. Following are brief outlines of each:

SAP Business One
Designed exclusively for small businesses, the SAP Business One application manages the entire business from financials and sales to customer relationship management and operations.

SAP Business One eliminates redundant data entries and errors by seamlessly integrating the entire business through a



SAP partners Siemens, IBM, top, and Satyam, bottom-left, explaining various SAP services at their stalls at the summit. Ranjan Das, president and CEO, SAP Indian Subcontinent (L) and Bill McDermott, president and CEO, SAP Americas and Asia Pacific Japan at a press briefing.

single application.

With Microsoft Excel-based drill-down reports, employees can navigate through a complete set of business data to get the information they need instantly, whether working in the office or remotely over the web.

With built-in customer relationship management functionality, companies can expand online sales and provide better customer service using web-based e-commerce and customer self-service.

SAP Business One helps employees proactively focus on the right priorities. Workflow-based alerts enable employees to respond to the most important business events as they occur, freeing them up from constantly reacting to day-to-day issues.

The innovative, model-driven approach and more than 350 solutions from independent software vendors allow users to easily configure, customise, and extend the system to meet specific business and industry needs.

SAP Business One is ideally suited to service, wholesale,

retail, or light manufacturing companies with 10 to 100 employees and fewer than 30 professional users.

SAP Business ByDesign

Designed specifically for midsize companies like the professional services firm, the SAP Business ByDesign solution is a complete, adaptable, on-demand business solution with broad support for cross-industry processes. Because business users can configure SAP Business ByDesign without relying on expensive IT resources, the application supports rapid changes and growth while providing a predictable cost of ownership.

The software centralises business data across all departments and business processes, providing managers with insight into real-time data via dashboards delivered to a work centre tailored to the individual's job responsibilities.

Companies can automate core business processes and adapt or extend them across their entire ecosystem on the fly using everyday business lan-

guage. With the ability to manipulate, analyse, and visualise business data through Microsoft Excel, along with direct access to reports, managers get the real-time information they need to stay on track.

Leveraging SAP ERP and the SAP NetWeaver platform, roles and processes can be configured to align with changing organisational needs.

SAP Business All-in-One solutions are easily extensible through microvertical applications built by SAP partners, and through integration with third-party applications.

SAP Business All-in-One offers a simplified work environment with a user-friendly interface and role-based navigation that provides employees with easy access to the information they need. Through integration with Microsoft Excel, SAP Business All-in-One solutions offer an intuitive approach to analytics that improves the use of data for ad hoc reporting and visualisation, thereby helping employees make better-informed business decisions and execute activities quickly.

With industry best practices and deployment tools to guide implementation from SAP, along with sales, services, and qualified solutions from SAP's authorised partners, midsize companies achieve time to value faster typically implementing the solution in anywhere from two to four months.

SAP Business All-in-One is especially suited to companies with high transaction volume, demanding financial reporting structures, distributed operations, and the need to meet stringent regulatory requirements.

Author of bestseller book *Blue-Print to a Billion*, David Thomson, who was present at the summit, told reporters how some companies turned into billion-dollar business organisations with the use of technology. He said that it can't be said specifically how much time it could take a certain company to become a billion-dollar business, but if a company goes on the right path with appropriate technological support, it will certainly end up as a billion-dollar business at some time. For example, it took 19 months for Google to become a billion-dollar business but for Cisco Networks it took 7 whole years.

At the concluding note SAP officials said that they are now focusing on developing countries and encouraging small and medium entrepreneurs to work with them. With SAP services, SMEs and corporate organisations in Bangladesh could lower costs, increase overall productivity, maintain and protect their competitive edge and position themselves well into the race for money.

For the businessmen in Bangladesh, this sure means good news.

TECHNEWS

City IT 2008 - a technological extravaganza

EDWARD APURBA SINGHA

ANY IT fair opens vast portals to new technologies and good business and City IT 2008 strived to achieve no less than that. It is a grand occasion to exhibit and sell computer accessories not just for the technology savvy.

Organised on the massive space of BCS Computer City, it provides a great platform for vendors to showcase their tech-related products with attractive discount offers. This year, the exhibition was held between May 24 and May 30.

The big chunk of the visitors was teenagers who came with a passion to explore new technologies. Their common interests included portable devices such as MP3 players, flash drives, webcams, headsets, etc. Others looked for newer alternatives to upgrade their PC experience.

Corporate users came to this fair mostly to discover advanced technological solutions to increase productivity and reduce operational costs. They are the prime punters of high-end printers, scanners, photocopiers and LCD monitors. Educational software for children were also available.

Mustafa Zabbar, president of Bangladesh Computer Society (BCS), told StarTech, "Until recently the total market for hardware products was about Tk 700 crore and that of software products and services amounted to about Tk 200 crore. Compared to our population this market is not inspiring."

"In other countries, the government is the largest consumer of IT products, but the picture is totally different in Bangladesh. If our government starts digitising its ministry related work, it will definitely create a huge surge in demand for IT products," he said.

"It has been observed that every IT fair has some positive impact on IT products sales. But special initiative is essential to organise this kind of fair outside the city. Moreover, organisers can arrange this kind of fair at a specific period of the year. Apart from product selling, it should also be a

platform for displaying high-end technology to our curious IT lovers", Zabbar added.

Imran, a computer-science student of American International University, Bangladesh (AIUB), said, "I've seen that many people come to this fair with great enthusiasm; however, compared to people's interest, companies have not been able to exhibit newer exciting technologies. Time is a crucial factor in this regard. I hope next time I'll find more innovative solutions."

Rafiq, an IT entrepreneur, told StarTech, "No doubt, this is a good initiative. However, there is a lack of international companies, with whom, as a businessman, I would love to work. City IT's organising committee may take initiative

generally love to explore digital cameras. It offered special prices for cameras. In addition, it also exhibited different printers with discount prices."

United Computer Centre displayed Transcend memory modules with a capacity of up to 4GB. They also exhibited Transcend portable hard drives with memory capacities of 250 GB and 160 GB at Tk 12,500 and Tk 9,500 respectively.

Daffodil Computers brought HP colour laser printer, photo scanner etc. In addition, the company also offered special package for its own brand PC with discount of up to Tk 2,000, one-year free home service, versatile player etc.



on this front".

A number of companies used the fair as an opportunity to introduce their new products. Speed Technology displayed a 32 GB PQI flash drive at Tk 12,500. They also offered the Altech Lansing mobile speaker at Tk 1,500. This lightweight gadget incorporates features such as surround sound, Nokia ExpressMusic compatibility, long battery life, shock resistance etc.

Index IT Limited unveiled three types of PCs - professional PC at Tk 18,900, gaming PC at Tk 24,900, performance PC at Tk 30, 900 and business PC at Tk 36, 900.

JAN Associates displayed various printers and digital cameras. The firm said people

The City IT organising committee staged different events such as quizzes, game shows and fashion shows in which visitors gladly participated and won attractive prizes. Cultural programmes featuring celebrities and tech professionals were also held at the central stage.

Apart from the exhibition and entertainment programmes, several sessions were organised to discuss contemporary issues such as call centre, e-commerce, national fibre optic communication etc.

Overall, City IT attracted quite a huge turnover of visitors.

IIUC IT fest starts

STARTECH DESK

A ten-day IT festival began in the city on June 10 aiming at converting individual knowledge into a combined power by exchanging views and ideas to cope with the modern technology.

The computer club of the International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC), Dhaka campus organised the festival on information and technology at the campus premises.

IIUC Vice-chancellor Prof M Mahub Ullah inaugurated the festival as chief guest, while former secretary Shah Abdul

Hannan and Prof Md Haider Ali, chairman of computer science and engineering department at Dhaka University, were present as special guests.

IIUC Associate Prof Mohammed Shamsul Alam, also convener of the festival, presented the welcome speech at the inaugural ceremony.

He hoped that IT festivals as such will help boost the capacity of the university students to compete with the modern technology.

Referring to the emergence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) society, Prof Md Haider Ali asked

the authorities to arrange more seminars and workshops across the country to acquire more efficiency in this sector.

IIUC, Dhaka campus arranges IT festival every year starting in 2004 and this is the fifth consecutive programme, which is expected to finish with gaining some new ideas and inspirations.

The festival consisting of contests on math, puzzle, quiz, software development, hardware design and intra-university programming contest will end on June 21. A seminar on broadband communications will also be held tomorrow.

TECHREVIEW

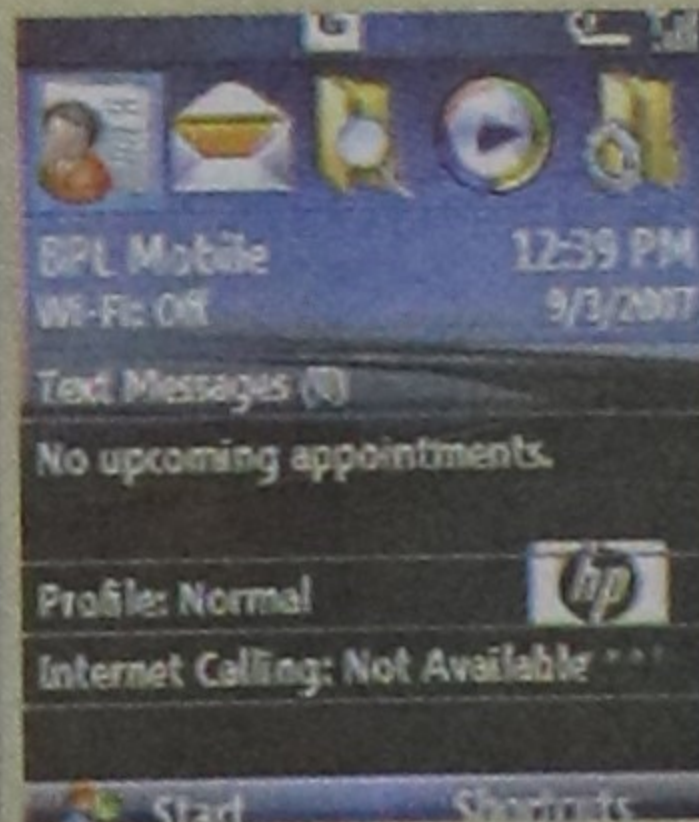
Meet the HP iPaq voice messenger

STARTECH DESK

THE HP iPaq 512 Voice Messenger was put into test by StarTech. It features advanced voice-command functions and the new Windows Mobile 6 operating system with enhanced e-mail functions and Office Mobile tools. The smart phone also has a compact design, Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, a 1.3-megapixel camera, and VoIP capabilities.

After the test the verdict is that HP iPaq 512 Voice Messenger offers outstanding voice-command features as well as the enhanced productivity tools of Windows Mobile 6. Specs: OS provided: Microsoft Windows Mobile 6.0; Installed RAM: 64 MB; Processor: Texas Instruments 200 MHz OMAP850; Price range: Taka 14,000.

HP iPaq 512 Voice Messenger Get to know the first Windows Mobile 6 smart phone, and it comes from none other than HP. It's a very good choice for mobile professionals who want



to keep on top of their e-mail and occasionally work on documents while on the road. It has a 200MHz processor which manages to handle the phone operations along with running software side-by-side.

The phone has 64 MB RAM, out of which 20 MB is taken away by the OS; that leaves roughly a little over 40 MB for the other programs to utilize. There is 128 MB of internal memory as well out of which just about 65 MB is available to install programs and store data. The phone comes bundled

with the following software - Mobile Office, Word Mobile, Excel Mobile, and PowerPoint Mobile. For internet surfing there is IE provided. You can use Windows Live login to access all the Windows Live features. MSN Messenger, Internet sharing, e-Certificates, Tasks, Calendar, Calculator are the other applications also available.

The phone has Java MIDP 2.0, so you can install software of your choice. MultiMedia The iPaq 512 has Windows Media Player with all of its

settings ousted and the sound is as good as any other Nokia handset has to offer. Videos are also played through WMP and have quick options to make it full screen, which turns the video to landscape mode.

Camera
The HP iPaq 512 has a 1.3 MP camera. Its quality is really poor and feels like it's there just for namesake.

The camera takes decent pictures in bright light conditions. The camera has a maximum resolution of 1280 x 1240 pixels, and offers 4x digital zoom.

Connectivity
The iPaq 512 has a good list of connectivity options. The phone offers simple GPRS connectivity, and even Wi-Fi, EDGE as well as GPRS being Class 10, and Wi-Fi is an 802.11b/g.

As far as device connectivity goes, the iPaq 512 has a Bluetooth v1.2 module. There is no Infra-red port and the miniUSB port is a 1.1 as well. The phone uses Windows ActiveSync to communicate with the PC.

PHOTO TECH

THE SOLAR LEAF

A woman displays a prototype leaf-shaped green coloured flexible organic solar cell modules, jointly developed by Japan's Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), Tokki Corporation and Mitsubishi Corporation, at the Environment Fair in Kobe, western Japan on May 25 during the G8 Environment Ministers Meeting. Japan urged rich countries on Sunday to take the lead in the fight against global warming by setting bold national targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions by well over 50 percent by 2050.

PHOTO: AFP

