

Boston Dynamics joins forces with firm behind 'Avatar,' 'Jurassic World' animatronics

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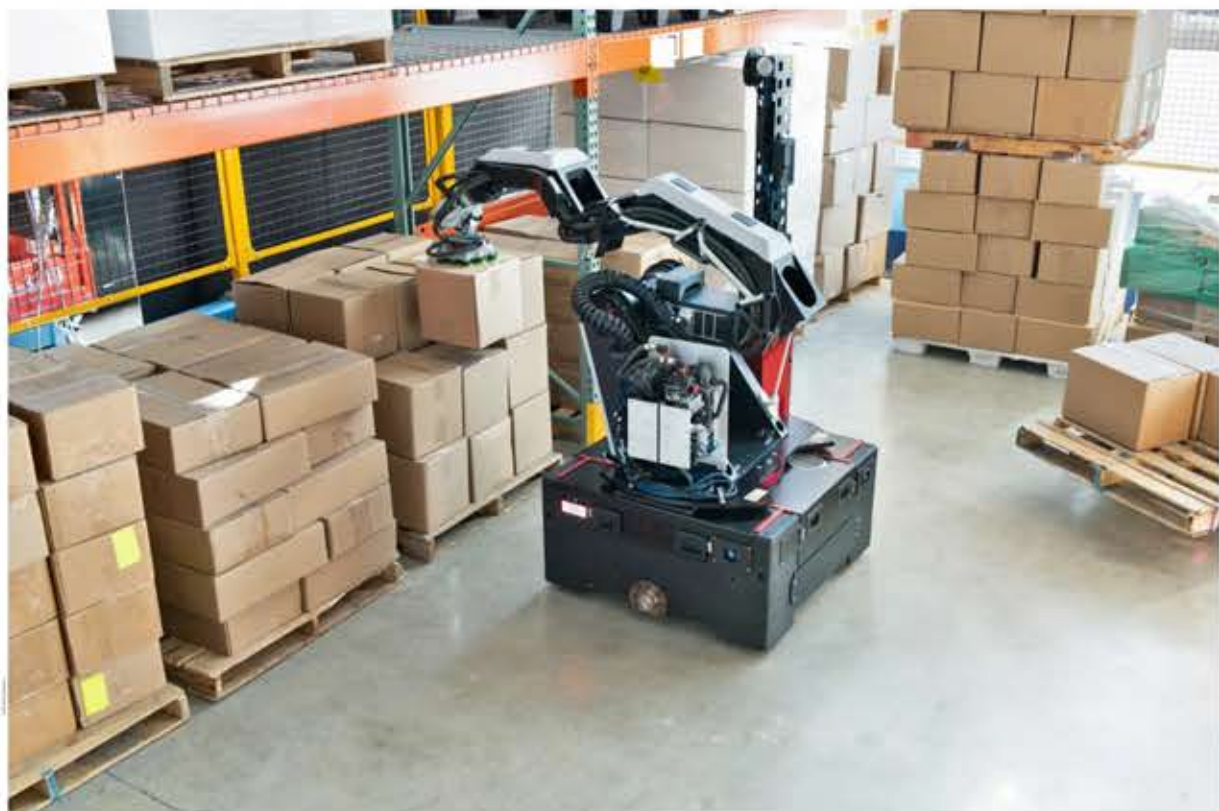


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Since the company's earliest days as an MIT spinoff, Boston Dynamics' systems have always provided entertainment value. It's something the Hyundai-owned firm has long embraced by releasing dozens of wildly viral videos over the decades.

With a few exceptions, however, entertainment was more of side benefit than the ultimate goal. That, however, will be changing in the near future, as the firm **just announced a deal** with Singapore-based entertainment brand, Neon.

Notably (for our purposes, at least), Neon is the parent company of Animax Designs. The Nashville-based firm has created theme park and exhibition animatronics for some of Hollywood's biggest franchises, including Avatar, Jurassic Park, Marvel and Harry Potter.

No real specifics have been disclosed, beyond the fact that the deal "is set to culminate with a reveal at the end of 2024 that will engage, inspire, and dazzle audiences." Whether than means theme park robots or something else entirely is unclear for now.

A huge benefit for Neon/Animax is Boston Dynamics' ability to produce robust and untethered autonomous systems at scale. The world of theme park robots has transformed in recent years, with experiences like Disneyland's Star Wars Galaxy's Edge exhibiting robots that intermingle with park goers.

"We are thrilled about the collaboration with Neon and Animax for the development of fully untethered entertainment robots," Boston Dynamics Chief Strategy Officer Marc Theermann notes in a release. "These exceptionally interactive creatures are poised to captivate consumers through novel and exciting engagements. By joining forces with Neon, a frontrunner in immersive storytelling, we're blending our cutting-edge technology with their enchanting storytelling expertise."

The deal marks another step in Boston Dynamics' commercialization roadmap, which began with the Spot quadruped and the truck unloading robot, Stretch. The company's entertainment roots stretch back even further, however. Marc Raibert and team **also produced robots** for the set of 1993's Sean Connery/Wesley Snipes/Michael Crichton film, "Rising Sun."