

NEWS RELEASE

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KURT KONOLIGE JOINS WILLOW GARAGE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Researcher, Lecturer and Author to Direct Projects involving Perception and Mapping

MENLO PARK, CA – May 15, 2008 – Continuing its investment in Open Source robotics platforms and expanding its senior management team, Willow Garage Inc. today announced the appointment of Kurt Konolige as Senior Researcher. Konolige, previously a Senior Computer Scientist at SRI International's Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, and currently a Consulting Professor at Stanford University's Computer Sciences Department, is known for his contributions to robotic perception and mapping. Konolige's most recent project includes the Learning Applied to Ground Robotics (LAGR) project for Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), involving the development of autonomous off-road navigation systems using real-time vision and learning. The program featured competitions between teams from Stanford/MIT, Applied Perception, Georgia Tech, JPL, Net-Scale, NIST, Penn, and SRI, and focused on developing a new generation of algorithms for autonomous ground vehicles.

As a Senior Computer Scientist at SRI International's Artificial Intelligence Center, Konolige's research into Simultaneous Localization and Mapping (SLAM) in indoor environments leveraged his background and experience in artificial intelligence, computer science and mobile robotics. Other recent projects include visual mapping for the Army Combined Technology Alliance robotics effort; navigation and perception for the NASA Personal Satellite Assistant project; mapping, environment reconstruction, and navigation for the DARPA software for distributed robotics and MARS2020 (autonomous robotics.)

Konolige has also authored more than 100 scientific publications, been granted two patents and has two patents pending, co-developed the Pioneer and AmigoBot robots, the Saphira robot control architecture as well as the Small Vision System software for stereo analysis.

"Kurt Konolige has a rare combination of skills: he can advance mathematical theory in robotics, reduce the theory to practice and demonstrate the results on a real robot.," stated Steve Cousins, President and CEO of Willow Garage. "Kurt's extensive experience building working robot systems, over the course of twenty years, will be a great asset for Willow Garage," he observed.

"Building a solid group of researchers and engineers who are focused on the challenge of autonomous robotics presents an exciting opportunity," remarked Konolige. "Having the resources and commitment to then bring projects to reality is exceptional. In addition, being able to work with leading universities, contribute to open source and provide tools, technology and hardware to a community where the need is real is huge. I'm delighted to have joined the Willow Garage management team," he concluded.

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About Willow Garage

Willow Garage is a research and development lab focused on delivering autonomous technology. The company is committed to collaboratively building open source platforms that enable other researchers to more easily replicate and build on results. Willow Garage is providing the tools and infrastructure that will facilitate the growth of a robotics business ecosystem. As a privately-funded company, Willow Garage research is not influenced by military contracts, allowing us to focus solely on helping people and the environment. For more information about our ground-breaking Personal Robotics Program, please visit us at www.willowgarage.com.