

## Grandma Reacts to GeckoSystems' Elder Care Robot Trials

CONYERS, Ga., Nov. 25, 2009 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) -- GeckoSystems Intl. Corp. (PINKSHEETS: GCKO | <http://www.geckosystems.com/>) announced today that during their first week of real world evaluation trials, for their fully autonomous personal companion home care robot, the CareBot(tm), they have learned some surprising and some, not surprising, insights. GeckoSystems is a dynamic leader in the emerging Mobile Service Robot (MSR) industry revolutionizing their development and usage with "Mobile Robot Solutions for Safety, Security and Service(tm)."

"Practical, cost effective mobile robot solutions are our primary goal. We were very pleased to have begun last week our first in home trials of this new assistive care home appliance, a customizable personal companion robot with telepresence capabilities. During this first week we have learned some important, but seemingly simple insights, such as the appropriate voice synthesis characteristics needed by the elderly with hearing loss, for example. This has been an important insight as we integrate our CareBot into the home environment. We have been using the end user interface to customize the voice reproduction (synthesis) in our verbal interaction software, GeckoChat(tm), such that the care receiver can readily understand timely (using GeckoScheduler(tm)) verbal reminders for their medications, upcoming TV shows, family visits, etc. Now we begin proving our long held belief that personal companion mobile robots, like the CareBot, can help tens of thousands of families take better care of their loved ones while saving significant monies," remarked Martin Spencer, President/CEO, GeckoSystems.

"My widower mother will be ninety-four next April. She had detached retina surgery some years ago and as an unfortunate side effect her short-term memory was reduced to only two to three minutes. So while she has many of the Alzheimer victim issues, her short-term memory has not continued to degrade as is common with most Alzheimer sufferers. However, due to this type of memory loss she has lived with my husband and me for over eight years because of her consequent frequent disorientation.

"The family is really enjoying customizing the CareBot's persona for Mama. Mama is well known within the family for her daily ritual of at least one bowl of ice cream. So we thought to tease Mama a bit when we had the CareBot ask her, 'Would you like a bowl of ice cream?' When Mama heard the robot speak, she broke into a big smile and said an emphatic, 'Yes!' While her joyful response was not unexpected had a live person asked her, her reaction to the CareBot's inquiry, was very heart warming. I am looking forward to further exploration of family to robot to care receiver social interaction in the coming weeks and months of these in home assistive care robot trials," remarked the baby boomer caregiver.

"We have worked for some years to develop the ability for our CareBot MSR's to intelligently listen and respond to spoken commands of the caregiver and/or care receiver as we have learned in our extensive market research (focus group) work. GeckoChat can be readily customized for words, phrases and sentences to be recognized by the care receiver and appropriate, desirable responses by the family," observed Spencer.

"We developed the CareBot primarily for family care. Hence a simple and intuitive user interface is extremely important. This pushed us into developing verbal interaction functionality using artificial intelligence (AI) technologies several years ago," stated Mark Peele, Vice President, R&D, GeckoSystems.

While personal robots cannot reliably sense and respond to human emotions, due to the many different means available to the end user, CareBot persona can be easily customized as to voice tonality, cadence, pitch, breathiness, volume, choice of words, etc. Further, the words and/or phrases chosen in response to anticipated questions to the CareBot can be colloquial in the word choice and approximate the native dialect using various user settings in the software and/or hardware. With the foregoing capabilities there is

now a new type of surrogate companion, not only for the elderly, but also other family members such as children and/or the chronically ill.

"GeckoChat continues the suite of our fundamental GeckoSavants(tm) with the disparate, functional benefits needed to cost effectively provide utility to families for remote care taking of their members and other loved ones by making them more personal and uniquely adapted and addressed to the particular person to be assisted. Not only does this capability enable new forms of social interaction and community for families --even when dispersed geographically--, it will also increase ROI for our investors," remarked Spencer.

Like an automobile, mobile robots are made from steel, aluminum, plastic, and electronics, but with ten to twenty times the amount of software running. The CareBot has an aluminum frame, plastic shroud, two independently driven wheels, multiple sensor systems, microprocessors and several onboard computers connected in a local area network (LAN). The microprocessors directly interact with the sensor systems and transmit data to the onboard computers. The onboard computers each run independent, highly specialized cooperative/subsumptive artificial intelligence (AI) software programs, GeckoSavants, which interact to complete tasks in a timely, intelligent and common sense manner. GeckoNav(tm), GeckoChat(tm) and GeckoTrak(tm) are primary GeckoSavants. GeckoNav is responsible for all fully autonomous maneuvering, such as avoiding dynamic and/or static obstacles, running errands and patrolling. GeckoChat is responsible for interaction with the care-receiver such as answering questions, assisting with daily routines and reminders, and responding to other verbal commands. GeckoTrak, which is mostly transparent to the user, enables the CareBot to maintain proximity to the care-receiver using sensor fusion. The CareBot is an internet appliance that is accessible for remote video/audio monitoring and telepresence.

"With these in home trials continue to progress nicely with no unforeseen 'gotcha's,' we have already learned a great deal as to the reality of beneficial social interaction between human and robot in domestic settings and its very important potential positive impact on the internal dynamics of the extended family using a CareBot to communicate their desire to cherish, honor and watch over their neediest family members," concluded Spencer.

#### **About GeckoSystems International Corporation:**

Since 1997, GeckoSystems has developed a comprehensive, coherent, and sufficient suite of hardware and software inventions to enable a new type of home appliance (a personal robot) the CareBot(tm), to be created for the mass consumer marketplace. The suite of primary inventions includes: GeckoNav(tm), GeckoChat(tm) and GeckoTrak(tm).

The primary market for this product is the family for use in eldercare, care for the chronically ill, and childcare. The primary distribution channel for this new home appliance is the thousands of independent personal computer retailers in the U.S. The manufacturing infrastructure for this new product category of mobile service robots is essentially the same as the personal computer industry. Several outside contract manufacturers have been identified and qualified their ability to produce up to 1,000 CareBots per month within four to six months.

The Company is market driven. At the time of founding, nearly 12 years ago, the Company did extensive primary market research to determine the demographic profile of the early adopters of the then proposed product line. Subsequent to, and based on that original market research, they have assembled numerous focus groups to evaluate the fit of the CareBot personal robot into the participant's lives and their expected usage. The Company has also frequently employed the Delphi market research methodology by contacting and interviewing senior executives, practitioners, and researchers knowledgeable in the area of

elder care. Using this factual basis of internally performed primary and secondary market research, and third party research is the statistical substance for the Company's sales forecasts.

Not surprisingly the scientific statistical analyses applied revealed that elderly over sixty-five living alone in metropolitan areas with broadband Internet available and sufficient household incomes to support the increased costs were identified as those most likely to adopt initially. Due to the high cost of assisted living, nursing homes, etc. the payback for a CareBot(tm) is expected to be only six to eight months while keeping elderly care receivers independent, in their own long time homes, and living longer due to the comfort and safety of more frequent attention from their loved ones.

Using U.S. Census Bureau data and various predictive statistical analyses, the Company projects the available consumer market size in dollars for cost effective, utilitarian, multitasking eldercare personal robots in 2010 to be \$74.0B, in 2011 to be \$77B, in 2012 to be \$80B, in 2013 to be \$83.3B, and in 2014 to be \$86.6B. With market penetrations of 0.03% in 2010, 0.06% in 2011, 0.22% in 2012, 0.53% in 2013, and 0.81% in 2014, we will anticipate CareBot sales, from this consumer market segment, only, of \$22.0M, \$44.0M, \$176M, \$440.2M, and \$704.3M, respectively. The Company expects these sales despite --and perhaps because of-- the present recession due to pent up demand for significant cost reduction in eldercare expenses.

The foregoing forecasts do not include sales in non-metropolitan areas; elderly couples over 65 (only elderly living alone are in these forecasts); those chronically ill --regardless of age-- or elderly living with their adult children.

The Company's "mobile robot solutions for safety, security and service(tm)" are appropriate not only for the consumer, but also professional healthcare, commercial security and defense markets. Professional healthcare require cost effective, timely errand running, portable telemedicine, etc. Homeland Security requires cost effective mobile robots to patrol and monitor public venues for weapons and WMD detection. Military users desire the elimination of the "man in the loop" to enable unmanned ground and air vehicles to not require constant human control and/or intervention.

The Company's business model is very much like that of an automobile manufacturer. Due to the final assembly, test, and shipping being done based on geographic and logistic realities; strategic business-to-business relationships can range from private labeling to joint manufacturing and distribution to licensing only.

Several dozen patent opportunities exist for the Company due to the many innovative and cost effective breakthroughs embodied not only in GeckoNav, GeckoChat, and GeckoTrak, but also in additional, secondary systems that include: GeckoOrient(tm), GeckoMotorController(tm), the GeckoTactileShroud(tm), the CompoundedSensorArray(tm), and the GeckoSPIO(tm).

The present senior management at GeckoSystems has over thirty-five years experience in consumer electronics sales and marketing and product development. Senior managers have been identified for the areas of manufacturing, marketing, sales, and finance.

While GeckoSystems has been in the Development Stage, the Company has accumulated losses to date in excess of six million dollars. In contrast, the Japanese government has spent one hundred million dollars in grants (to Sanyo, Toshiba, Hitachi, Fujitsu, NEC, etc.) over the same time period to develop personal robots for their eldercare crisis, yet no viable solutions have been developed.

GeckoSystems is the first mobile robot developer in the world to begin actual in-home eldercare evaluation trials.

## **What Does a CareBot Do for the Care Giver?**

The short answer is that it decreases the difficulty and stress for the caregiver that needs to watch over Grandma, Mom, or other family members most, if not much, of the time day in and day out due to concerns about their well being, safety, and security.

But, first let's look at some other labor saving, *automatic* home appliances most of us use routinely. For example, needing to do two or more necessary chores and/or activities at the same time, like laundering clothes and preparing supper.

The *automatic* washing machine needs no human intervention after the dirty clothes are placed in the washer, the laundry powder poured in, and the desired wash cycle set. Then, this labor saving appliance runs *automatically* until the washed clothes are ready to be placed in another labor saving home appliance, the *automatic* clothes dryer. While the clothes are being washed and/or dried, the caregiver prepares supper using several time saving home appliances like the microwave oven, "crock" pot, blender, and conventional stove, with possible convection oven capabilities.

After supper, the dirty pots, pans, and dishes are placed in the *automatic* dishwasher to be washed and dried while the family retires to the den to watch TV, and/or the kids to do homework. Later, perhaps after the kids have gone to bed, the caregiver may then have the time to fold, sort, and put up the now freshly laundered clothes.

So what does a CareBot do for the caregiver? It is a new type of labor saving, time management *automatic* home appliance.

For example, the care giver frequently feels time stress when they need to go shopping for 2 or 3 hours, and are uncomfortable when they have to be away for more than an hour or so. Time stress is much worse for the caregiver with a frail elderly parent that must be reminded to take medications at certain times of the day. How can the caregiver be away for 3-4 hours when Grandma must take her prescribed medication every 2 or 3 hours? If the caregiver is trapped in traffic for an hour or two beyond the 2 or 3 they expected to be gone, this "time stress" can be very difficult for the caregiver to moderate. Not infrequently, the primary caregiver has a 24 hour, 7 days a week responsibility. After weeks and weeks of this sometimes tedious, if not onerous routine, how does the caregiver get a "day off?" To bring in an outsider is expensive (easily \$75-125 per day for just 8 hours) and there is the concern that medication will be missed or the care receiver have an accident requiring immediate assistance by the caregiver, or someone they must designate. And the care receiver may be very resistant to a "stranger" coming in to her home and "running things."

So what is it worth for a care receiver to have an *automatic* system to help take care of Grandma? Just 3 or 4 days a month "off" on a daylong shopping trip, a visit with friends, or just take in a movie would cost \$225-500 per month. And that scenario assumes that Grandma is willing to be taken care of by a "stranger" during those needed and appropriate days off.

So perhaps, an *automatic* caregiver, a CareBot, might be pretty handy, and potentially very cost effective from the primary caregiver's perspective.

## **What Does a CareBot Do for the Care Receiver?**

It's a new kind of companion that always stays close to them enabling family and friends to care for them from afar. It tells them jokes, retells family anecdotes, reminds them to take medication, reminds them that family is coming over soon (or not at all), recites Bible verses, plays favorite songs and/or other

music. It alerts them when unexpected visitors, or intruders are present. It notifies designated caregivers when a potentially harmful event has occurred, such as a fall, fire in the home, or simply been not found by the CareBot for too long. It responds to calls for help and notifies those that the caregiver determined should be immediately notified when any predetermined adverse event occurs.

The family can customize the personality of the CareBot. The voice's cadence can be fast or slow. The intonation can be breathy, or abrupt. The voice's volume can range from very loud to very soft. The response phrases from the CareBot for recognized words and phrases can be colloquial and/or unique to the family's own heritage. The personality can range from brassy to timid depending on how the caregiver, and others appropriate, chooses it to be.

Generally, the care receiver is pleased at the prospect of family being able to drop in for a "virtual visit" using the onboard webcam and video monitor for at home "video conferencing." The care receiver may feel much more needed and appreciated when their far flung family and friends can "look in" on them anywhere in the world where they can get broadband internet access and simply chat for a bit.

Why is Grandma really interested in a CareBot? She wants to stay in her home, or her family's home, as long as she possibly can. What's that worth? Priceless. Or, an average nursing home is \$5,000 per month for an environment that is too often the beginning of a spiral downward in the care receiver's health. That's probably \$2-3K more per month for them to be placed where they really don't want to be. Financial payback on a CareBot? *Less than a year-* Emotional payback for the family to have this new *automatic* care giver? *Nearly instantaneous-*

**Safe Harbor:**

Statements regarding financial matters in this press release other than historical facts are "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, and as that term is defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. The Company intends that such statements about the Company's future expectations, including future revenues and earnings, technology efficacy and all other forward-looking statements be subject to the Safe Harbors created thereby. The Company is a development stage firm that continues to be dependent upon outside capital to sustain its existence. Since these statements (future operational results and sales) involve risks and uncertainties and are subject to change at any time, the Company's actual results may differ materially from expected results.

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