

Editorial: New developments and applications in smart fabrics for the haptic Internet

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Abstracts

New applications for smart fabrics are being developed to facilitate the transmission of a physical sense of touch between connected devices via what is being called the haptic Internet. The haptic Internet has hugely exciting potential, and it could be used to make augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) experiences more immersive and realistic. It could also be used to help remotely operated machines and robots to become more accurate, and could rapidly open up new avenues in health care and education. Several companies and other organisations have recognised the potential of the haptic Internet, and have developed smart clothing products which can be used in conjunction with VR systems. However, the concept of the haptic Internet is not without its challenges, and it is estimated that a truly tactile Internet would be dependent on extremely fast data speeds which exceed even the capacity of 5G. In this report, Robin Anson discusses the latest developments in smart clothing products which can be used in conjunction with the haptic Internet, with particular reference to innovations by BeBop Sensors, CuteCircuit, HaptX, Wandelbots and Xenoma. Also, he discusses the results of a collaborative project between Disney, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Carnegie Mellon University, and the latest research being undertaken by the Centre for Tactile Internet with Human-in-the-Loop (CeTI) at Technische Universität Dresden (Technical University of Dresden) in meeting its ambitious goals relating to the haptic Internet.

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