

Alphabet-subsubsidiary Everyday Robots powers down amid zealous budget cuts

Article

The news: Alphabet has shut down its Everyday Robots subsidiary, consolidating some of the technologies and team members into Google Research, per [The Verge](#).

- The number of jobs affected by the closure hasn't been announced.
- Last August, Everyday Robots was working on using [Google's PaLM-SayCan](#) research and large language models (LLMs) like **OpenAI's GPT-3** to help robots better understand the intentions behind human requests.
- Meanwhile, **Microsoft** announced this week that it's researching how to use [ChatGPT](#) to give robots instructions and help them interact more easily with people, per [Gizmodo](#).

Cuts in context: The Everyday Robots closure is part of broader budget cuts at Google, including company-wide layoffs and its industrial robotics arm, [Intrinsic, downsizing by 20%](#).

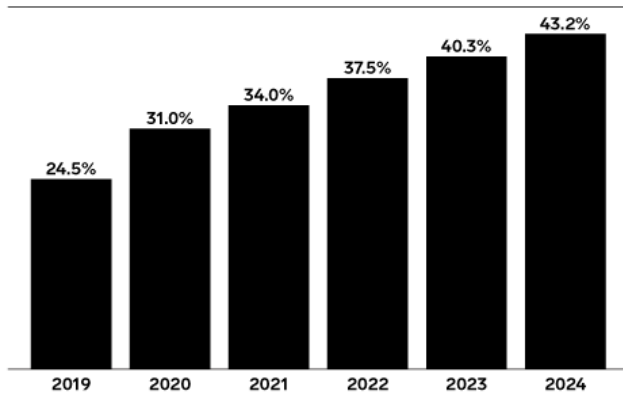
- **Google Cloud** recently [asked staff to share desks](#) to control costs—a surprising move from a company that had long been a bastion of workplace luxury and that would presumably have adequate desk space after cutting **12,000** employees.
- The tech giant has become [timid about moonshot projects](#) in favor of endeavors with more certain revenue potential.
- The cuts are a sign of a lack of confidence in successfully bringing innovative ideas to market that could undermine Google's dominant status.
- Google deprioritizing robotics research through overzealous belt tightening could indicate it's too focused on [pleasing investors' calls for cuts](#) at the expense of a long-term strategy.

The AI + robotics potential: Microsoft investment in AI robotics research could give it an advantage over Google in capturing future demand for consumer robotics.

- **AI will enable robots to perform about 39% of household chores** within a decade, according to a Plos One survey of AI experts, per [The Guardian](#).
- Even for companies that don't produce physical robots, leading patents on the technology could be lucrative.
- AI is one of the critical ingredients to making robots better at performing domestic and commercial tasks, and we'll likely see growing demand for the applications.

US In-Store Retail Robots, 2019-2024

% of total retailers



Note: autonomous units within a retail location operated by a retailer with more than \$10 million in annual revenues

Source: eMarketer, Aug 2022

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