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iRobot's new Roomba knows where it's going

The i7+ features much-improved mapping and a self-emptying bin

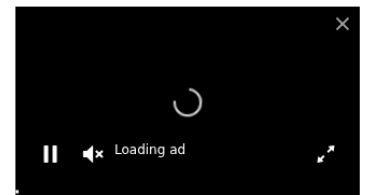
Brian Heater

9:01 PM PDT · September 5, 2018



The Roomba i7+ looks like, well, it looks like a Roomba. There are few factors distinguishing the product from the last several generations. The rollers are bright green, along with a large Automatic Dirt Disposal section just below. Beyond that, however, it's nearly identical to what you'll already find on store shelves.

For iRobot co-founder and CEO Colin Angle, however, the product represents the culmination of the company's nearly 30-year existence. "This is the thing," the executive explains. "This is the Roomba I've always wanted to make."



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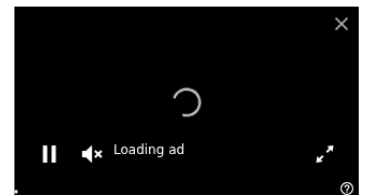
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robot, and you should expect the robot to be more of a software product. Your ability to interact with it and the sophistication of what it can do at launch versus a year from now is actually going to be pretty different. The next time it can be smarter about what it can do.”

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iRobot gave us a sneak peek of the product on a recent trip to its Bedford, Mass. headquarters. The iRobot HOME lab is a 4,000-square-foot fake home protected by a series of secure doors. It’s much nicer and much larger than my own New York City apartment, save for the notes that line different piece of furniture, warning visitors not to do things like lie on the bed.

The company showed off the tech by mapping roughly half the space for the new Roomba, code-named “Lewis,” as a tip of the cap to one half of the famed duo of 19th century American explorers. The combination of iAdapt 3.0 Navigation with vSLAM location mapping makes the robot able to navigate to a destination chosen by the user. The recent additions of Google Assistant and Amazon Alexa means users can command the robot with their voice.

There’s one more key hardware addition for the i7+, which addresses another longstanding complaint with the Roomba. The Clean Base is a large bin attached to the charging dock. Using the Automatic Dirt Disposal system, the Roomba is able to empty its own bin. You’ll still have to clean out the larger bin, of course, but only 1/30th of the time of the on-board system. When that bag is full, the user will get a notification from the app.

The i7+ is up for presale starting today, priced at \$699. The clean base runs another \$299. The robot will start shipping in September. You also can get a sneak peek of the system this week at TechCrunch [Disrupt](#).

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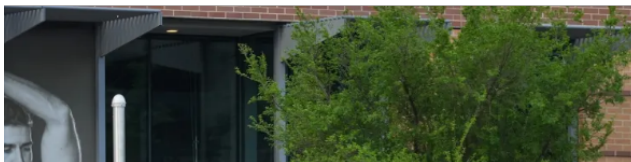
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Brian Heater was the Hardware Editor at TechCrunch until early 2025. He has worked for a number of leading tech publications, including Engadget, PCMag, Laptop, and Tech Times, where he served as the Managing Editor. His writing has appeared in Spin, Wired, Playboy, Entertainment Weekly, The Onion, Boing Boing, Publish...

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Transportation

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TechCrunch Mobility: Two roads diverged — for robotaxis

Kirsten Korosec 9:05 AM PDT · August 2, 2026

Welcome back to **TechCrunch Mobility**, your hub for the future of transportation and now, more than ever, the role AI is playing in it. To get this in your inbox, sign up here for free — just click [TechCrunch Mobility!](#)

TechCrunch covered a couple of stories this week that illustrate the countervailing forces at play within the autonomous vehicle industry. The federal government is hitting the accelerator while state and local officials are pumping the brakes on autonomous vehicles.

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The **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration** made a series of autonomous vehicle technology announcements designed to cut red tape and accelerate the development and deployment of this technology (my article describes many of its actions). The one that got the most attention was the agency's decision to give Zoox a **temporary exemption** from eight federal

