MEDIA RELEASE

The hi-tech future of automotive plastic repairs

Swinburne is partnering with the Innovative Manufacturing Cooperative Research Centre (IMCRC) and leading repair solutions company, Tradiebot Industries, to transform the automotive repair industry.

The collaborative project, 'Repair Bot', will make use of 3D printing technologies and robotics along with complex materials to enable an automated rapid repair service for plastic car parts.

Inspiration for the project stems from a need for technology-driven solutions to issues facing the automotive repair industry. These issues range from material wastage, complex and restrictive design elements and the limited availability of skilled labour.

Tradiebot Industries Founder Mario Dimovski believes the project's potential benefits go far beyond the automotive collision industry.

"The ability to repair previously non-repairable parts using world-first technology will reduce overall repair times and repair costs.

"It will also create real and significant export opportunities and has flow-on benefits for the environment by reducing land-fill," explains Mr Dimovski.

"Tradiebot will also deliver new future skills to the industry as more processes become automated."

Swinburne's involvement

Swinburne will play a major role in the development of the Repair Bot project.

"We will rely heavily on the Swinburne team to research, develop, document and problem-solve," explains Mr Dimovski.

"This will be vital as we invent various aspects of this world-first automated system that will revolutionise repairs of plastic components."

The future of industry 4.0

As well as improving procedures in the automotive repair industry, the project could have a lasting impact on future of Advanced Manufacturing and Industry 4.0.

Senior research fellow from the Swinburne Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology, Dr Mats Isaksson, believes the project is perfectly aligned with Industry 4.0 principals.

“Industry 4.0 is all about ways of using digital technologies and connectivity to integrate the value stream,” says Dr Isaksson.

“In the case of this project, knowledge can be captured regarding design information, supply and logistics, as well as distributed manufacturing capacity.”

A unique partnership

IMCRC CEO and Managing Director David Chuter is enthusiastic about the positive implications of the Tradiebot Repair Bot project for other Australian manufacturers.

“We (IMCRC) are excited about the collaboration between Tradiebot, Swinburne University and IMCRC,” he says.

“This is a unique partnership that explores and invests in advanced manufacturing technologies. It is a great example of how research-led innovation ensures that the Australian automotive repairs industry can meet the challenges and opportunities of the global economy.”

The Tradiebot Repair Bot has accumulated over $1.2 million in funding, and research will take place throughout 2018 and 2019.

To learn more about the project, visit the Tradiebot Industries current projects webpage

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About the Innovation Manufacturing CRC

The IMCRC is a not-for-profit, independent cooperative research centre that helps Australian manufacturing companies increase their relevance through collaborative, market-driven research in business models, products, processes, and services. In collaboration with manufacturing businesses, research organisations, industry associations, and government, the IMCRC co-funds broad, multidisciplinary and industry-led research projects that deliver commercial outcomes, and advances the wider cause of manufacturing transformation through industry education and public advocacy.

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