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# A ROBOT HELPER FOR RS 10,000

Low-cost Indian-made robots may soon be protecting your house, cleaning it and even feeding your pets...

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**G**ridbots, an Ahmedabad-based start-up, plans to launch a robot for under Rs 10,000, which can keep an eye on your home and feed your pets, said the founder of the company.

"We are coming up with a small surveillance robot which can be controlled wirelessly, and can navigate your home when you are not there," said Pulkit Gaur, Founder and Chief Technical Officer of the company at the TED India conference at the Infosys campus in Mysore.

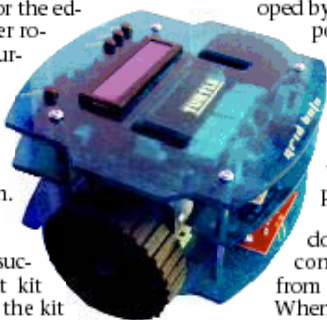
Established in 2006, Gridbots has been working on surveillance and robotics projects for the Ministry of Home Affairs and the National Institute of Design.

Gridbot's current portfolio of products include industrial gripper and manipulator type robots, build-it-yourself robot kits for the education sector, and consumer robots that provide real-time surveillance and telepresence.

The company also claims to have developed India's first indigenous home robot, and robot for underwater tank-cleaning and inspection.

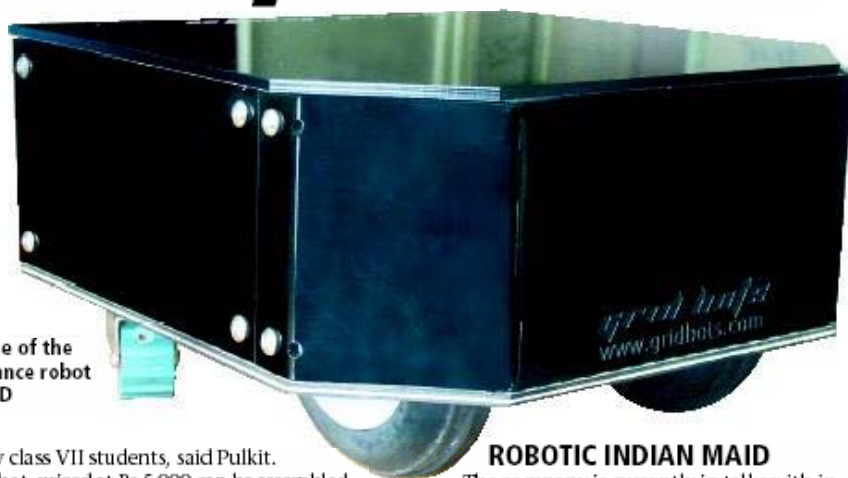
## DIY ROBOT

Gridbots is already selling a successful do-it-yourself robot kit called the Turtle. It has sold the kit to schools and universities, and has been used to create firefighting



An image of the Turtle DIY robot

An image of the surveillance robot SurvGRID



robots by class VII students, said Pulkit.

The robot, priced at Rs 5,000 can be assembled in 10-15 minutes, and can be controlled from a cellphone, remote control, or computer. It can find and follow light sources and detect obstacles.

## WATCHING YOU

The domestic surveillance robot, code-named SurvGRID does not have a name yet, said Pulkit, but will be available sometime by the end of this year. It uses an image recognition engine developed by Gridbots for their online portal pic-porta.com, and can recognise voices and sounds.

"It can be turned on by users going on a vacation, to keep an eye on anything that moves, be it pets, kids, or intruders. It's got a pet feeder, that will automatically dispense food for a pet," said Pulkit.

When idle, the robot automatically docks and charges itself, and can be controlled using a smartphone or PC from anywhere in the world.

When activated it, it provides telepresence facilities, navigating around the house beaming a live visual feed to the user from its camera.

## ROBOTIC INDIAN MAID

The company is currently in talks with investors for mass production of AutoGRID, a robot like the Roomba robotic vacuum cleaner, but a lot more feature rich that can clean the home and also provide surveillance facilities.

"When we conceptualised this bot, we wanted to cater to the Indian market, and provide unique capabilities not found in similar products" said Pulkit.

"The Roomba cannot scan the environment, and therefore makes multiple passes to clean a room. Our robot can map the room, and also comes with a mopping attachment." He added.

The company plans to make it available commercially for around Rs 15-20,000.

## WHAT IS TED?

TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) is an 18 minute talk on any or all of the three subjects the name represents. TED's online videos have been streamed over 100 million times, and India, country-wise, polls the second most number of viewers, says the event's co-founder, Chris Anderson