

Artificial intelligence designed to train astronauts could help solve crimes!

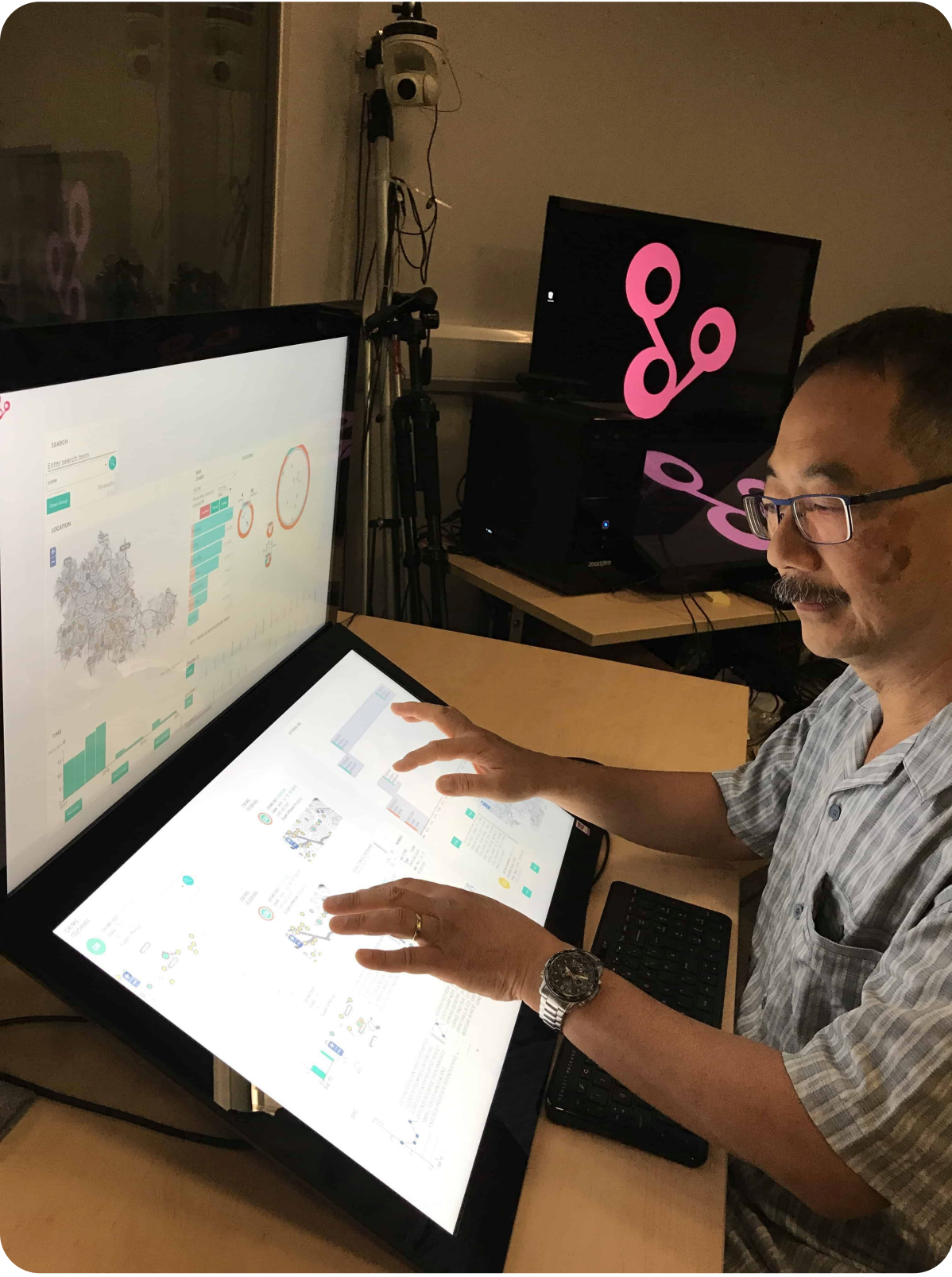


ESA astronaut Paolo Nespoli has tested the usefulness of AI machines
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26 March 2018

Artificial intelligence, or AI for short, used to be an idea just for science-fiction stories. Now machines and computer programs that can think and learn, rather than just following simple instructions from humans, are being used more and more. Modern mobile phones, home gadgets, and even high-tech cars have types of AI!

The beginning of ESA's work with AI can be traced back around 15 years, when it was developed to help trainee astronauts before missions to the Columbus laboratory, which is part of the International Space Station. A company called Space Applications Services made software that could cleverly answer questions like "what is this?" and "where is this?" That is quite simple by today's standards, but AI had to start somewhere.



Working with an artificial intelligence system could help the police to track down criminals!
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Space Applications Services continued to develop their AI skills into other areas. They made a tool that could be asked questions and then display the answers. It could even search through thousands of hours of video footage to quickly find useful data. Another version was used to train people working in airports to help them make fast decisions and deal with problems.

The latest AI tools can scan through huge amounts of data from written records, video footage, social media, and much more – within seconds! This has caught the attention of the Belgian police, who are considering using it to help them uncover leads and solve crimes.

Meanwhile, AI is expected to become even more important in future space missions, making them cheaper and safer. The next ESA astronaut in space, Alexander Gerst, will take it to the next level this year, testing an intelligent mobile crew assistant called CIMON – the Crew Interactive MOBILE companion.



See CIMON in action! Copyright: Airbus.

Would you like to have an intelligent robotic buddy?

Cool fact: CIMON is about the size of a football, and will help astronauts to solve problems.