



# Robotics – from R2-D2 to artificial intelligence

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*Thinking back to the late 1970s when George Lucas created R2-D2 in Star Wars... who imagined that one day we would see this as reality?*

**D**id anyone ever think that R2-D2's head would turn in the same direction numerous times and still operate? More recently, Wall-E (Waste Allocation Load Lifter Earth-Class) came along, designed to clean up the abandoned earth's waste allocation lifter – earth class which had operated for many years and needed many parts to continue. What if he had used Lapp Group solutions – what would have been in the container? From the robot that searched the World Trade Centre for survivors – to the flying drones that will be delivering parcels to our homes in the future, robots will soon be as

integral a part of our everyday lives as they are in major industrial sectors. It is no wonder that scientists and journalists alike are dubbing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as 'the age of artificial intelligence'.

## **Robotics rapidly advancing**

Forecasts suggest that in 2015, annual sales of industrial robots will exceed 200 000 units. This boom will come about because robotics has developed in giant steps. Today's intelligent helpers are much