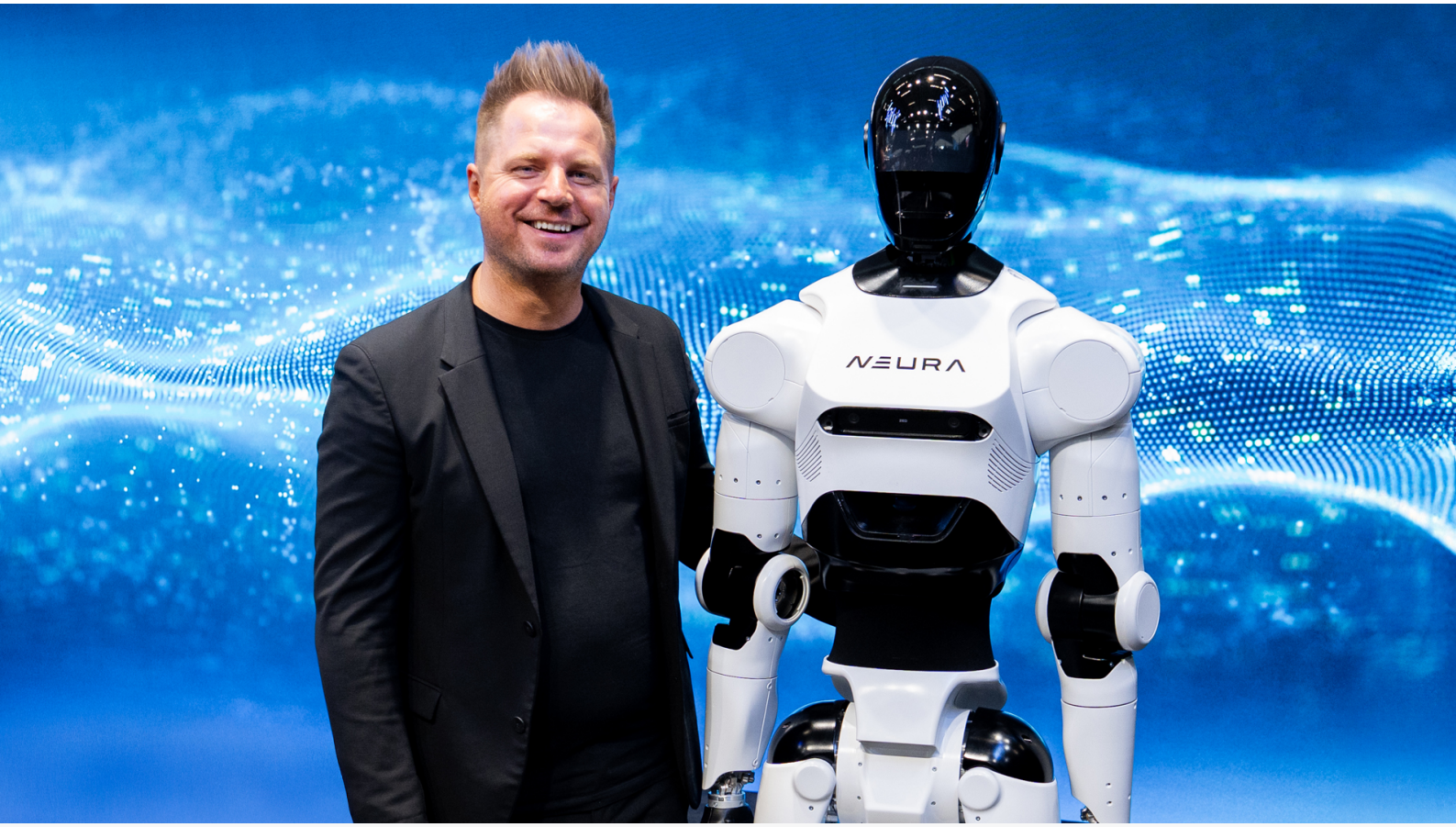


His latest masterpiece: Neura founder David Reger with his sophisticated robot, 4NE1. The abbreviation stands for the universal purpose: “For Anyone”. Neura is referring to complex industrial work processes as well as support in the home or care sector. © Neura

The “Real” Colleague

12/11/2025 Out of the safety cage: A young entrepreneur builds highly sensitive robots that work closely with humans on equal terms. The order book is full. Major investors are convinced: It will be a success!

If you ask start-up entrepreneur David Reger what a “real colleague” is for him, the lightning-fast answer is astonishing: “A cognitive robot!” says the man from the small town of Metzingen in south-west Germany. And Reger immediately follows up: “Robots are not stuck in the metaverse. They can take on very real tasks in everyday life and make our lives and work much easier.”

Of course, machines that appear to be human-like in their movements, that independently carry out recurring mechanical tasks in industry when assembling technical devices or replace specialist personnel even for complicated tasks in unmanned painting lines, have long been known and are considered standard. But robots that can “hear”, “see”, and even “think” – that is still largely a thing of the future. However, this will change quickly, very quickly, Reger predicts. Super-smart robots that are

able to make decisions will become established as an indispensable part of global value chains in the foreseeable future.

The young entrepreneur Reger, born in 1988, a frontrunner, sees himself as both a pioneer and an implementer. As the oldest of eleven siblings, he has been used to leading the way and taking on responsibility from an early age. As a young adult, he wanted to get out and see the world and spent some time in San Francisco. Not to work in Silicon Valley, however, but to become involved as a social worker in a responsible role for society. He says, "I was driven early on by the idea of making the world a better place. Back in Europe, Reger's career began in Switzerland as the founder and head of high-tech companies in the automation and robotics sector.

From research directly into reality

Reger originally entered the industry as a career change. Today, he is CEO of Neura Robotics GmbH, a company he founded in 2019. According to the company, it now employs more than 1,100 people. The company's own standards are extremely high and may seem provocative: "Our goal is to become the next internationally successful multi-billion corporation after SAP to come from Germany," explained Reger in an interview with the German business medium Handelsblatt. It could still take a while to reach that goal. But Neura obviously doesn't take small steps. Speed is the key.

Reger's mission: He wants to "expand human potential through cognitive robotics" as quickly as possible. His desired result is to "make work more meaningful and life more humane". Examples of this include the use of cognitive robots in industrial production as well as in business processes in administration or even in everyday tasks in private households. Neura Robotics promises its customers: "Our technology adapts to the way you work and live." The concept behind it: The company's own artificial intelligence "Aura" is intended to bring humanoid intelligence from research directly into reality.

Senses and sensor skin as basic equipment

Neura's cognitive robot with the extraterrestrial-sounding name 4NE1 ("For Anyone") took to the stage at the Automatica 2025 trade fair in the southern German city of Munich for a look at reality. Designed in black and white, with an athletic build. Its basic equipment already includes almost "human senses", including seven 3D cameras and the patented omnisensor technology. This technology makes it possible to accurately distinguish persons from objects and recognize them. It allows the robot to adapt dynamically to its environment and enables collaborative work with people without the usual safety cage. 4NE1 is almost as approachable as a "real colleague".

The adaptive hands perform fine motor tasks and predestine 4NE1 for complex industrial activities as well as for the service sector. Thanks to its powerful joints, it effortlessly lifts loads weighing up to 100 kilograms, according to the manufacturer. If you look at the fingertips of colleague 4NE1, you can see

artificial skin. The artificial skin recognizes touch shortly before physical contact with the sensor skin. According to Neura, this makes interactions with people safer and more precise. And the intelligent dual battery drive ensures uninterrupted operation around the clock. 4NE1 is designed to be versatile – for example, in pharmaceutical production as well as in goods logistics or as an assistant in geriatric care. The investment in humanoid robots could quickly pay off for employers, as entry-level prices now start at 60,000 euros per robot.

5 million robots by 2030

“As Neura, we are not only a pioneer on the hardware side, but also develop the underlying software and artificial intelligence. Here, in the heart of Europe, we are building the next evolutionary stage of robotics. Not as science fiction, but for the everyday lives of millions of people,” says David Reger, who emphasizes: “We have set ourselves the goal of delivering five million robots by 2030 – for industry, services, and the home. With this, we well be doing for robotics what the iPhone did for the smartphone.”

Apple and SAP – these are the benchmarks on which Reger's vision is based. In addition to good ideas and fast implementation, the founder also needs a lot of money. In January 2025, he raised 120 million euros from investors. He convinced investors with a look at the books: According to Neura, the order backlog at that time was worth more than one billion euros. “In Germany, we have to quickly realize that you have to invest a lot if you want to build something in a few years that took a century to build in the old world,” says Reger.

In September 2025, Neura received the coveted German Founders Award (Deutscher Gründerpreis) in the “Rising Star” category. The prize is awarded by Porsche, the Sparkasse banks, the ZDF public broadcasting company, and the German newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. “I always wanted to make a difference and I am convinced that the next step in robotics can actually change the world,” said Reger at the award ceremony in Berlin. The award was presented to him by a man who has been professionally involved in industrial automation for decades: Albrecht Reimold, Board Member for Production and Logistics at sports car manufacturer Porsche AG. He praised, “We have dedicated people and bright minds who develop new business ideas and start companies with courage, commitment, and passion in order to move Germany forward.” David Reger is a fitting example of this. Only recently, he announced that he would be relocating his robot production, which was initially carried out in China, completely to Germany. As the winner of the German Founders Award, he receives support from an advisory team of Porsche Consulting using their Innovation Lab in Berlin together with Neura.

The German Founders Award – Innovations rewarded

Info

Text first published in Porsche Consulting Magazine.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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Image Sublines

Path: The "Real" Colleague/Images/img_1.jpg
Title: David Reger, CEO Neura Robotics GmbH, 2025, Porsche Consulting GmbH
Subline: His vision: David Reger wants to compete with the large robotics manufacturers from the U.S. and China. He says, "The economic potential of cognitive robotics is greater than that of the smartphone." © Neura

Path: The "Real" Colleague/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Neura technicians with 4NE1 robots, 2025, Porsche Consulting GmbH
Subline: At the start: Technicians assemble the human-like robot 4NE1. For now, it's still small-scale production, but Neura anticipates a market worth millions. In the future, production will take place entirely in Germany instead of China. © Neura

Path: The "Real" Colleague/Images/img_3.jpg
Title: 4NE1 robot, 2025, Porsche Consulting GmbH
Subline: The new form of automation: According to Neura, the 4NE1 can smoothly handle even dangerous tasks such as working on an angle grinder. It can "perceive its surroundings with precision and work seamlessly with people". © Neura

Path: The "Real" Colleague/Images/img_4.jpg
Title: David Reger, CEO Neura Robotics GmbH; Albrecht Reimold, Porsche Board Member for Production and Logistics (l-r); 2025, Porsche Consulting GmbH
Subline: Presenter Albrecht Reimold (right), Porsche Board Member for Production and Logistics, praised David Reger at the German Founders Award 2025 in Berlin: "We have bright minds who are developing new business ideas to move Germany forward." © Franziska Krug

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