

Grassroots Research® Market Monitor

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AI Robotics—US

Grassroots® interviewed sources with expertise in AI robotics to assess how AI-enabled humanoid robots are being adopted across industries and how they are impacting operations, costs, and labor. Over the next 5–10 years, sources expect humanoid robots to expand beyond industrial and logistics roles into public-facing environments, driven by advancements in manipulation and mobility. As one source explained, “Today, our robots are designed to work in industries with large logistic and warehouse operations, such as 3PLs, automotive manufacturers, and e-commerce providers. In the future, we see them moving from industrial spaces such as manufacturing and logistics to light industrial spaces, then eventually into public spaces. Light industrial spaces are areas like the back of a grocery store, hotel or hospital.” Sources noted that specific roles will vary, and adoption will be gradual.

One source added, “I see a world where manufacturing workers are already getting comfortable with mechanical arms, so that is first step to adoption of robots doing more and then humanoid robots.” Sources cited the biggest challenges to deploying or scaling AI robotics as technological (e.g., higher-level cognitive processing), economic (delivering clear value and ROI), and cultural. As one source said, “There can be cultural pushback when people see the devices coming in and

they ask if this will lead to a staff reduction. We position the robot as a force multiplier, not a head count reduction.” Several also highlighted the need for standards and safety frameworks. A source commented, “One of the biggest challenges today is the lack of standards and how humanoids and AI fit into the existing safety framework. There is a lot of clarity around machine safety and robot safety, but not for dynamic robots like humanoids.”

According to sources, Figure, Persona AI, IHMC, Agility Robotics, Unitree Robotics, Tesla, and Boston Dynamics are among the leaders in the field. One source said, “The big ones including Figure are doing a good job. Others are getting started and have some promising technology and people such as Persona AI, and the IHMC think tank, which does control systems. Chinese humanoids are very promising but with low level machine design and they struggle with higher level cognitive functions. Japan is way ahead (perhaps 20 years) in societal integration; their robots are not very intelligent, but they are around and integrated in society. Humanoid robots are moving the idea of what a robot is, but they are not yet as ahead in AI, which is where real strides will be made.”

Sources expect AI robots to play a meaningful role in addressing labor



shortages and supporting underserved and aging populations, while also raising ethical and relational concerns. As one source noted, “AI robots will play an active role in addressing service shortages and aging populations. In healthcare and home care, their effectiveness is likely to exceed expectations. With AI support, these robots can not only provide care and assistance but also offer early warnings and prevention before health issues arise.” Sources also emphasized that data management, privacy, safety, and public protection must be addressed. One source explained, “When robots interact with people, they require sensors to complete their tasks, which raises the consideration of privacy. Often, it is hard to run complex AI models locally on a robotic computer (many GPUs are required), so cloud computing becomes a requirement, which means some data is leaving the physical space where the robot is performing. This raises the question of how this data is ethically managed so that the robot can perform while maintaining the privacy of the environment it is in.”



INVESTMENT
MANAGEMENT

EV, Robotaxi and Autonomous Vehicle Trends –US

Grassroots® commissioned interviews with US consumers on electric vehicles (EV), and their awareness and interest in autonomous vehicle services. 54% are considering purchasing or leasing a new vehicle within the next 2 years, while 30% are not planning to, and 16% are unsure. Of those planning to buy in the next 2 years, 58% would consider an EV for their next vehicle, while 19% are open to the idea, and 23% would not consider it.

Tesla's brand leads in robotaxi preference among those familiar with both Tesla and Waymo, with 47% favoring Tesla and only 18% choosing Waymo. Safety is the top priority for consumers when selecting a robotaxi service, followed by price and technological innovation. Waymo's rider satisfaction is high among those with experience. Of those who have taken a ride in a Waymo autonomous vehicle, 58%

rated their experience as excellent, and 37% said it was good. Awareness of Tesla's robotaxi initiative is moderate with 43% of respondents having heard of the service, and among those, half express some likelihood of riding in a Tesla robotaxi if it launches locally. Interest is tempered by concerns about safety and control, but the potential for convenience and monetization sparks intrigue.

Current Tesla owners are highly engaged with its autonomous features with 76% having purchased Full Self Driving (FSD) option outright, and 14% subscribe monthly. Notably, 78% of owners would definitely allow their vehicle to operate as a robotaxi when not in use, and another 14% are open to the idea of it, pending more information. Their main concerns center on passenger and vehicle safety, lack of control over users, and potential wear and tear on the vehicle.

Data Center Buildout Trends—US

To gauge the trajectory of data center expansion and shifts in regional build activity, sources across infrastructure, economic development, and both public and private sectors told Grassroots® that construction has surged over the past 12–24 months. Every source cited escalating demand for AI and cloud computing as the primary driver. One source noted, "The pace for data center builds has been unprecedented. Even as you look at historical tech revolutions, nothing has spurred investment and construction like AI in the past two years."

This trend is expected to continue through at least 2027, with hyperscalers investing heavily in gigawatt-scale campuses to meet growing compute needs. Looking ahead to 2025–2027, all sources expect momentum to persist as AI use cases evolve. A source said, "We will see a broadening of demand for data center construction. We are

currently in the first phase of AI, the learning or training phase. The next phase is moving into inference, the insight of all this data." According to sources, regional patterns are shifting as power availability increasingly dictates site selection. One source explained, "Data centers started out near urban cores, then suburbs, and now remote areas. Microsoft's biggest data center is in Cheyenne, WY; Google's in Council Bluffs, IA; Facebook's in eastern OR. Big additions are happening in Texas because of cheap power, it's all about power."

On the supply side, sources cited transformers, high-voltage switchgear, and chillers as the most constrained components, extending lead times up to 25 months. Still, every source said there are no signs of overbuilding. One source added, "If you look at the Mag 7 capex, none have reduced budgets, these companies remain the biggest source of demand."

Remanufactured Robotic Surgical Devices –US



Robotic surgical systems have become a cornerstone of modern medicine, offering precision, improved outcomes, and expanding possibilities across specialties such as orthopedics, urology, obstetrics, and general surgery. Grassroots® recently commissioned interviews with hospital executives involved in procurement and clinical operations across the United States. The findings reveal a landscape marked by cautious awareness and persistent barriers to adoption. Of those interviewed, 71% were aware of remanufactured robotic surgical systems, yet uncertainty prevailed. As one source explained, "We haven't looked at this seriously yet, but we may look at remanufactured robotics." Biggest concerns are reliability and clinical outcomes. One source said, "We have looked into the remanufactured robots extensively but we're not confident they will work very well because they are reprocessed. We've had negative feedback from others".

For 29% of executives who had not heard of remanufactured systems, the idea was met with surprise and doubt. "I didn't even know this existed. It is not likely something we would use," said one. Another noted, "I have not seen anything on those systems, and I am not sure doctors would be interested." The primary barriers to adoption are dependability, reliability, and trustworthiness. 77% cited these as their main concerns, with 24% pointing to the inability to achieve desired outcomes or accuracy. "Our biggest concerns would be reliability and accuracy, because the new ones are so good. We would not want to move backward," said one source.

(Cont. from page 2)

Another source emphasized, “Primarily we don’t want to risk the reliability. The biggest asset of robotics is accuracy and better imaging. If we lose that, that’s an issue”. When asked if peer-reviewed evidence or cost savings might sway their opinions, 47% were uncertain, 41% said it would not change their view, and 12% saw potential for reconsideration. One source said, “We just haven’t considered it seriously yet, so I don’t know if this would make a difference. Certainly, cost savings is always considered”. Another source said, “We would be more likely to keep buying original equipment that is fully backed by the manufacturer. I doubt we would risk using these systems if they were remanufactured”.

Regarding overall capital spending at hospitals, 94% reported stability or expansion. One source said, “We are strong financially and there doesn’t seem to be an issue getting what the surgeons want in terms of robotic systems.” Robotic procedure volumes are stable or increasing, driven by surgeon preference and improved patient outcomes. One source said, “Physicians prefer using robotics for a lot of procedures, and we are seeing better results for patients”. While robotic surgical systems have become increasingly prevalent in scheduled procedures, their use in emergencies or off-hours surgeries remains limited.

According to the report, 59% indicated that robotic systems are not typically used for emergency procedures. “We are using them for only scheduled surgeries,” one source explained. Another added, “Not to my knowledge are we using them for patients coming out of the ER.” Occasionally, however, robotic systems are utilized in urgent cases. As one source said, “We do but not very often for ER patients. If it’s necessary, we’ll utilize the robotic systems for those patients as much as we can.” Another noted, “Yes, at times it calls for it, but that happens only a few times each year.”

Restaurant/Grocery Delivery Habits –US

Grassroots® surveyed 500 U.S. consumers who use restaurant food delivery at least once a month to see how sources engage with delivery services across restaurant takeout, grocery, and convenience categories, uncovering usage frequency, preferred service types, and how economic pressures are shaping delivery decisions. 51% of sources said they order food delivery from restaurants at least once a week, while 28% order 2–3 times a month and 20% once a month.

Sources said the top three restaurant food delivery services used regularly are DoorDash (79%), Uber Eats (59%), and Grubhub (38%). 44% of sources are subscribed to DashPass and 41% to Uber One, while 36% report having no subscription. Meanwhile, 35% of sources say they order restaurant food delivery regardless of cost, while

23% reduce their orders when prices rise and 21% adjust their behavior based on income changes. In terms of grocery delivery, 76% of sources also use grocery delivery services and 24% do not. Of those that don’t use it, the top three reasons are a preference for picking their own groceries (63%), concerns about cost (22%), and a lack of need for the service (21%).

The three most commonly used grocery delivery services among sources are Walmart+ (38%), Instacart (25%), and DoorDash (16%). Among those who have tried both DoorDash and Instacart, 43% prefer DoorDash for grocery delivery, while 38% favor Instacart, and 11% have no preference. For those who prefer DoorDash, the top reasons cited are better prices or deals (45%) and faster, more reliable delivery (38%), followed by the ease of using the app or website (12%).

Stablecoin Adoption – US

Grassroots® conducted interviews with U.S. industry experts and consultants to gauge interest in adopting stablecoins for business operations. Stablecoins, cryptocurrencies pegged to reserve assets like fiat currencies or commodities, are gaining traction for their ability to deliver faster settlements and lower transaction costs, a major advantage for sectors burdened by high payment fees. The study revealed that companies are at different stages of adoption: some are actively integrating stablecoins, while others remain in exploratory phases.

Beyond payments, businesses are investigating applications in decentralized finance (DeFi), e-commerce, B2B transactions, cross-border transfers, and treasury management. Despite the growing interest, the path to adoption is not without obstacles. Trust in stablecoin issuers and concerns about operational risk weigh on decision-makers. Many organizations are also closely monitoring the evolving regulatory landscape,

seeking clarity before making significant commitments. The complexity of integrating new payment technologies and the need for robust compliance frameworks add further hesitation, especially among larger enterprises with established processes. Momentum, however, is clearly building. Major players like PayPal, Visa, and Mastercard are actively exploring stablecoin solutions, and there’s speculation that retail giants such as Amazon and Walmart may eventually launch their own coins.

Industry experts believe that as more companies pilot stablecoin initiatives and demonstrate tangible benefits, broader adoption will follow. The consensus is that the next 12–24 months will be pivotal, with stablecoins poised to transform how U.S. companies manage payments, liquidity, and cross-border transactions. As one source noted, “It’s hard to predict. I think we’ll see a lot of movement within the next six months. The crypto and blockchain networks are there and we’ve seen projects spin up quickly. We’ll get there soon. Right now, the smart companies are hiring consultants and strategizing.”

About Grassroots Research®

The Grassroots Research® division combines a variety of resources and methodologies, including in-house employees; a global network of independent, experienced journalists and consumer researchers; more than 50,000 industry contacts; and online panel surveys. We use this network to apply innovative market research and investigative journalism techniques to identify stock and sector trends before our competitors do.

Advantages:

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- Expertise of independent journalists and consumer surveys to reach sources on the ground
- Technological tools to target consumer and business panels online
- Timely business insights via quick turnaround times
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Resources:

- Access to thousands of consumers in more than 60 countries via targeted online consumer and business panels
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- 55+ reporters who conduct interviews with industry experts
- In-house team based in the US
- 50,000+ industry contacts worldwide from a wide range of industries, including consumer, technology, healthcare, materials, industrials, energy and financials companies

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