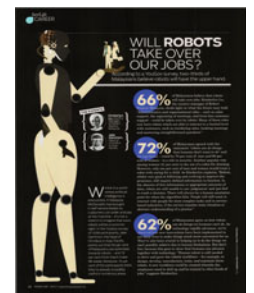


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WILL ROBOTS TAKE OVER OUR JOBS?

According to a YouGov survey, two-thirds of Malaysians believe robots will have the upper hand.

THE EXPERTS



Kimberlyn Lu, country Manager of Robert Walters Malaysia



Jake Gammon, head of Omnibus in Asia-Pacific

We live in a world where artificial intelligence is everywhere. In Malaysia, McDonald's has brought in self-service kiosks so customers can order and pay at the machine – it's not a stretch to imagine that soon, robots will be a common sight. In the YouGov survey of 1,058 participants, Jake Gammon, the head of Omnibus in Asia-Pacific, points out that 95 per cent of Malaysians are optimistic towards robots – and 70 per cent think they'll make life easier. Moreover, 74 per cent of the participants think they're already incredibly useful in numerous areas.

66% of Malaysians believe that robots will take over jobs. Kimberlyn Lu, the country manager of Robert Walters Malaysia, sheds light on what the future may hold: "Administrative and organisational roles – such as sales support, the organising of meetings, and front-line customer support – could be taken over by robots. Many of these roles now have robots which are able to interact to a limited level with customers, such as reordering sales, booking meetings and answering straightforward questions."

72% of Malaysians agreed with the statement "robots can do things that humans don't want to do" and the top choice – voted by 70 per cent of men and 60 per cent of women – is a role in security. Another popular vote among women (41 per cent) is the use of a robot for cleaning. However, only one per cent of men and women would trust a robot with caring for a child. As Kimberlyn explains, "Robots, whilst very good at following and evolving to improve the processes, still require defined information to function. In the absence of this information or appropriate amounts of data, robots are still unable to use 'judgement' and 'gut feel' to reach a decision. There will always be a human escalation point for when the algorithm fails. People will still want to interact with people for more complex tasks and in service-based industries, if the service requires some intuition or abstract understanding of a process."

62% of Malaysians agree on how robots can do things we humans can't do. As technology rapidly advances, we've observed how new innovations have been implemented in our daily lives to make things much more convenient for us. They've also been crucial in helping us to do the things we can't possibly achieve due to human limitations. But don't fret, because this goes to show that humans can advance together with technology. "Human talent is still needed to drive and grow the robotic workforce – for example, to design, develop, manufacture, train, and maintain these robots. A new workforce could be created whereby the employees need to skill up and be trained in other kinds of jobs," suggests Kimberlyn.