NUREMBERG AIRPORT: BAGGAGE HANDLERS TEST A CONNECTED ROBOTIC EXOSKELETON

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Teams of baggage handlers at Nuremberg Airport in Germany were able to test the latest software update for German Bionic's Apogee exoskeleton for a week. The German deeptech company specializing in robotics and wearable technologies was thus able to obtain first-rate feedback prior to the official wide-scale roll-out of this new update. It significantly increases the amount of compensated load, from 30 to 36kg per lifting movement. Active walking assistance has also been optimized. Sudden or low-speed lifting movements are accompanied more precisely, improving ergonomics. Finally, the transition between the different support modes is smoother and more continuous.

The verdict of Matthias Reubel, Head of Baggage Handling at Nuremberg Airport, and his baggage handling colleagues, who were already using Apogee exoskeletons, is unanimous: “We immediately felt an additional support effect, especially during repeated short lifting movements between conveyor belts and carts. As far as baggage handling is concerned, I can already say that this update brings a real improvement in terms of ergonomics”.

German Bionic's active robotic exoskeletons, like its latest Apogee and Apogee+ models, are AI-controlled and rely on fully connected electronics. They are designed to provide active assistance to operators during operations in a wide range of sectors, from performing lifting activities to load-bearing walking, and to restraining the body leaning forward when handling heavy loads. The update was carried out remotely on the airport's existing fleet of exoskeletons using radio waves, almost in real time. This capacity for software updates, to constantly optimize the power of its exoskeletons, is a technological feat.

Norma Steller, Development Manager at German Bionic said: “We now carry out software updates for entire fleets of our connected exoskeletons while they are still running. These links also allow our ergonomics experts and biomechanics specialists to continuously improve the performance of our exoskeletons, based on real-life usage data and user feedback.We are currently working on the next iteration of the control software, with a view to continuously improving our products."

German Bionic's exoskeletons offer a further decisive feature in terms of equipment lifespan compared with passive, purely mechanical exoskeletons: they continuously update their software themselves. German Bionic customers do not need to renew their hardware to benefit from the latest technological developments. German Bionic is now providing software updates for all its customers' exoskeletons worldwide.

27 OCTOBER 2024

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https://50skyshades.com/news/airports-routes/nuremberg-airport-baggage-handlers-test-a-connected-robotic-exoskeleton