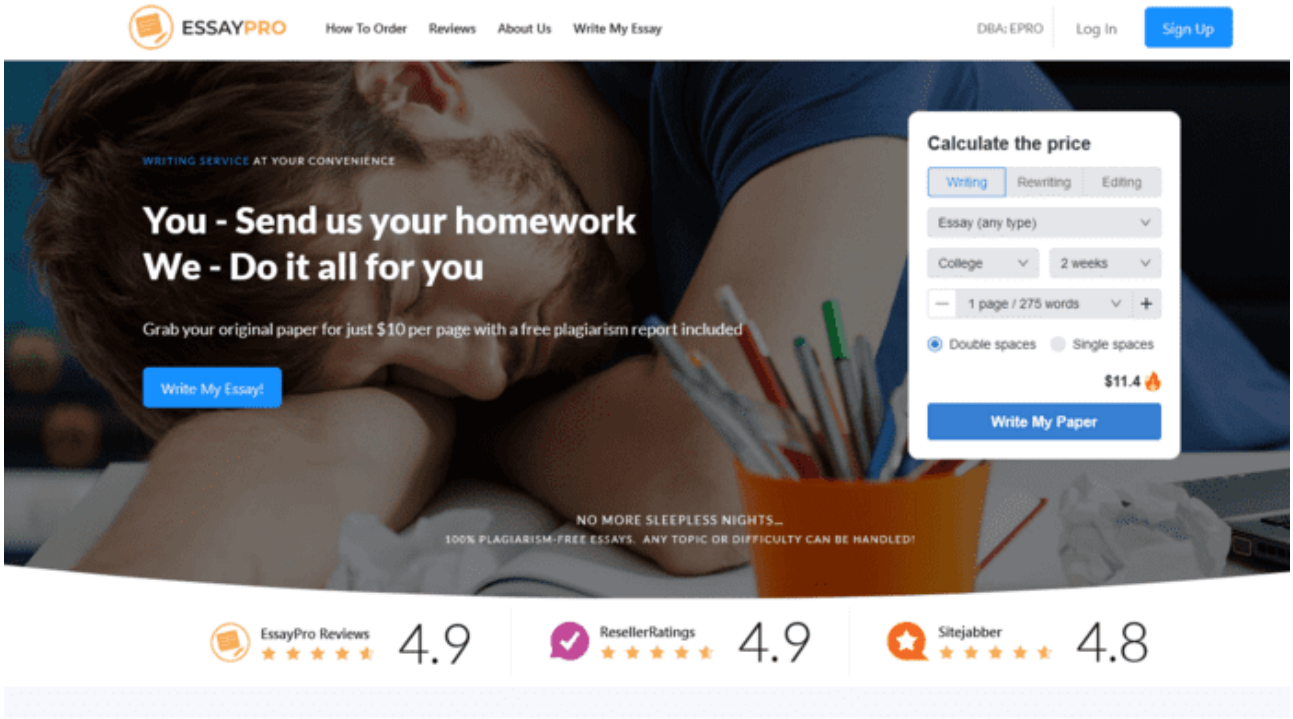
Robotics-Advancement or Setback?



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“Robotics-Advancement or Setback?”

“When it comes to robots, reality still lags science fiction. But, just because robots have not lived up to their promise in the past decades does not mean that they will not arrive sooner or later. Indeed, the confluence of several advanced technologies is bringing the age of robotics ever nearer-smaller,cheaper, more practical and cost-effective”. This statement was taken from an article written by Jim Pinto titled, “ROBOTICS TECHNOLOGY TRENDS”.

In order to better understand the age of Robotics and how they came about in the Manufacturing Industry, it is necessary to go back to the start of “automation” in industry.

In 1907, Henry Ford announced his goal for the Ford Motor Company. His dream or goal was to build cars that every American could afford. At that time, automobiles were very expensive custom-made machines that only the rich could buy. Henry Ford knew that to make his dream come true that he would have to find a way really lower the cost of making cars but still be able to make a profit.

Ford took the first step toward this goal by designing the Model “T”. The Model “T” was a simple, tough car, offering no factory options- not even choice of color. Henry Ford told his team that the customer could have any color that they wanted- as long as that color was black! The Model “T” was less expensive than most cars, but the majority of the people still could not afford to buy one.

Ford realized that he needed a more cost-effective way to produce the car in order to lower the price enough to make it affordable for everyone. He and his team of experts looked at other Industries and found four principles that would make their goal of creating a less expensive car happen. These principles are as follows: inter-changeable parts, continuous flow, division of labor, and reducing wasted efforts.

Using interchangeable parts meant making individual pieces of the car the same every time.

At this time, each piece was hand-crafted-and no two pieces would be exactly the same. By using inter-changeable parts, any valve would fit any motor; any steering wheel would fit any car body. That idea would be used for all of the car parts. This meant improving the machinery and cutting tools used to make the parts.

To improve the flow of the work that needed to be done so that one task was finished, another one began, with little time spent in set-up.