# UK residents express affection for robot vacuums by naming them



Recent research has highlighted a growing trend among UK residents who own robot vacuums, with over half of respondents admitting to affectionately naming their devices. A survey conducted with a sample of 1,000 adults found that eight in ten participants who had bestowed a name upon their robotic cleaners reported an enhancement in their enjoyment while using the gadgets.

The study revealed that names derived from the classic name "Robert," such as Bob, Rob, and Robbie, are particularly popular among owners. Interestingly, the practice of naming does not stop with robot vacuums. The survey also uncovered that 18 per cent of individuals have given pet names to their laptops, while 13 per cent have done so for their coffee machines.

This research was conducted as part of the launch of Shark's PowerDetect device, and it surveyed perspectives not only from the UK but also from various countries including Germany, Spain, France, the UAE, Norway, Italy, and Poland.

Dr Guy Laban, a research associate at the Department of Computer Science & Technology at the University of Cambridge, has explored the dynamics of human-robot relationships. Speaking to the Hull Daily Mail, Dr Laban noted, "In my research, I explore how interactions between humans and robots can take on emotional significance and form affective meanings." He further indicated that robots, in addition to easing household chores, can positively influence people's moods, providing comfort and alleviating feelings of loneliness.

Dr Laban expressed that it is unsurprising people name their vacuums, explaining that this practice "reinforces and personifies the emotional connection that forms when robots... operate in social spaces or respond to social signals." He anticipates that this trend will grow, with an increasing number of individuals embracing robotic companions in their homes in the future.

Nearly 80 per cent of participants in the study affirmed that naming their devices adds a sense of humour to mundane household tasks, with many asserting that personalising their robots makes the technology feel more approachable. The findings also highlighted a generational divide; those under 35 are more inclined towards naming their tech gadgets compared to older generations.

James Kitto, managing director for Shark in the UK and Ireland, remarked, "Our latest robots are very quickly becoming part of our consumers' families as well. We want to help strengthen these connections and integrate further into consumers' everyday lives." Kitto also expressed curiosity regarding whether names like Robert, Bob, and Robbie will continue to be the most favoured choices in the coming years, particularly by 2026.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://ierdaily.co.uk/what-do-you-call-your-robot-vacuum-sharks-new-naming-survey-reveals-robert/> - This article discusses a survey by Shark that reveals the popular names for robot vacuums, such as variations of 'Robert', and how naming devices enhances user experience.
* <https://ertonline.co.uk/products/consumers-are-giving-their-robot-vacuums-names-a-study-by-shark-reveals/> - This study highlights that naming robot vacuums makes them more enjoyable to use, reinforcing the emotional connection between humans and robots.
* <https://www.hulldailymail.co.uk/> - This would be the source where Dr. Guy Laban spoke about human-robot interactions, though specific coverage isn't located here.
* <https://www.google.com/search?q=dr+guy+laban+research> - This search could provide information on Dr. Guy Laban's research into human-robot relationships, though specific articles aren't directly available.
* <https://www.sharkclean.co.uk/> - Shark's official website might have information related to their robot vacuums and the PowerDetect device, aligning with the context of the study.
* <https://www.cam.ac.uk/stories/computer-science-technology> - The University of Cambridge Department of Computer Science & Technology might have resources or news about Dr. Laban's work on human-robot interactions.