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BIKINI BERLIN HAS A NEW EMPLOYEE – FEMALE ROBOT GISELA SETS UP SHOP IN THE CONCEPT SHOPPING MALL WITH HER KIOSK

With the arrival of Gisela the robot, who is now a permanent tenant on the mall's ground floor, Berlin is now home to Germany's first humanoid sales robot. Gisela's inventor Matthias Krinke, who has a degree in engineering, and Antje Leinemann, Managing Director at BIKINI BERLIN, came together to present the "workerbot" to an audience of invited guests. "Germany's first humanoid sales robot is an innovation for stationary retail. Gisela is giving us a taster of the exciting possibilities that lie ahead in the future of retail," says Antje Leinemann.

Eleven hours a day – without a break – the hard-working robot is now assembling and selling a toy robot (Toybot™), designed as a small 3D puzzle, in her very own kiosk. The toy is made of robust cardboard and approx. 210 mm high. It is adapted to Gisela's motor skills so she can assemble it for each customer and hand over the finished product herself. The plan is to also add clothing to the range of products available in the future. And payment is just as simple as in any other kiosk in the German capital: customers can pay Gisela for their 3D Toybots at the payment terminal, either by cash, or debit or credit card. "BIKINI BERLIN is the place to come if you're looking for something special and unique. With Gisela, we are now the first destination in Germany to offer our customers the opportunity to be served by a robotic sales assistant. For us as retailers, this is the first step towards retail 4.0. We can't wait to see our visitors' reactions," explains Antje Leinemann.

Standing at 2.10 m tall, the robotic lady uses her 85 cm-long arms to navigate the space around her and serve customers. And Gisela has her inventor Matthias Krinke to thank for her name: "We didn't want a name that sounded too technical because our Gisela is more hands-on, good at dealing with money, likes to wear red and usually has a smile on her face. That reminded me of my mother, who was also called Gisela and would have been delighted to have a robot named after her!" he explains.

When the last stores at BIKINI BERLIN close for the day, Gisela also calls it a night, or in her case: goes into sleep mode. Eventually the plan is for Gisela to also customise the Toybots in her "free time".

The pioneering invention was developed by fashion label Robots & Girls, which was established in 2017. Matthias Krinke and his team are the brains behind it. From the initial idea to completion, the development of the innovative helper took several years. But the construction of the kiosk, which mainly consists of steel and aluminium, took just four weeks.

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