Affective Intelligent Driving Agent

MIT researchers develop Affective Intelligent Driving Agent (AIDA) - 10/29/2009 SUPPLIED PIC

Audi and MIT are developing in-car technology that could curb road-rage.

Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have developed an in-car robot that can woo upset drivers with a calming smile or a wink.

The dash-mounted Affective Intelligent Driving Agent – developed by MIT in conjunction with Audi – is able to read input from all the car's sensors and systems, as well as attempt to read the driver's mood from facial expressions.

It can then interact with the driver using "socially appropriate and informative" responses such as a smile, a nod or sympathetic tears.

As well as drawing on information from inside the car, MIT says AIDA is able to see beyond the driver's field of vision, using real-time event information and environmental conditions. It can assess the effects of tourist attractions, residential areas and commercial activity.

AIDA can learn the driver's regular daily commute and is able to suggest an alternative route if the satellite-navigation system detects traffic, or if the fuel gauge is reading low.

Within a week of regular driving, AIDA should also be able to work out the driver's good – and bad – habits, with MIT saying the system could then recognise when to offer advice to drive more safely.

MIT hasn't revealed how soon it expects helpful little bots such as AIDA to become a regular feature of car interiors.