

‘Robocop’ rollout in city malls

1 A fleet of crime-fighting robots will soon patrol malls in New York City – pushing the buttons of security guards who fear they will one day be replaced by the soulless gadgets.

2 The tech start-up Knightscope will roll out the rent-a-cops at shopping centers, college campuses and sports arenas in 16 cities, including Manhattan, by the end of the year, company co-founder Stacy Dean Stephens said. “Just their

presence lowers crime. They have a commanding physical appearance and a psychological effect on people who are breaking the law,” he said.

3 The 5-foot-tall watchmen on wheels weigh 300 pounds, come equipped with multiple sensors and a 360-degree camera, along with license-plate recognition technology.

4 But the robots lack one important feature, say city security guards – a winning personality. “Shoppers like to interact with people and socialize. People come over to me and tell me how nice I am. Robots aren’t comforting,” said Michelle, a security guard at the Manhattan Mall.

5 The bots are potentially attractive to malls because they cost less per hour to ‘hire’ than humans. They can be had, via subscription, for \$7 an hour.



New York Post, 2017