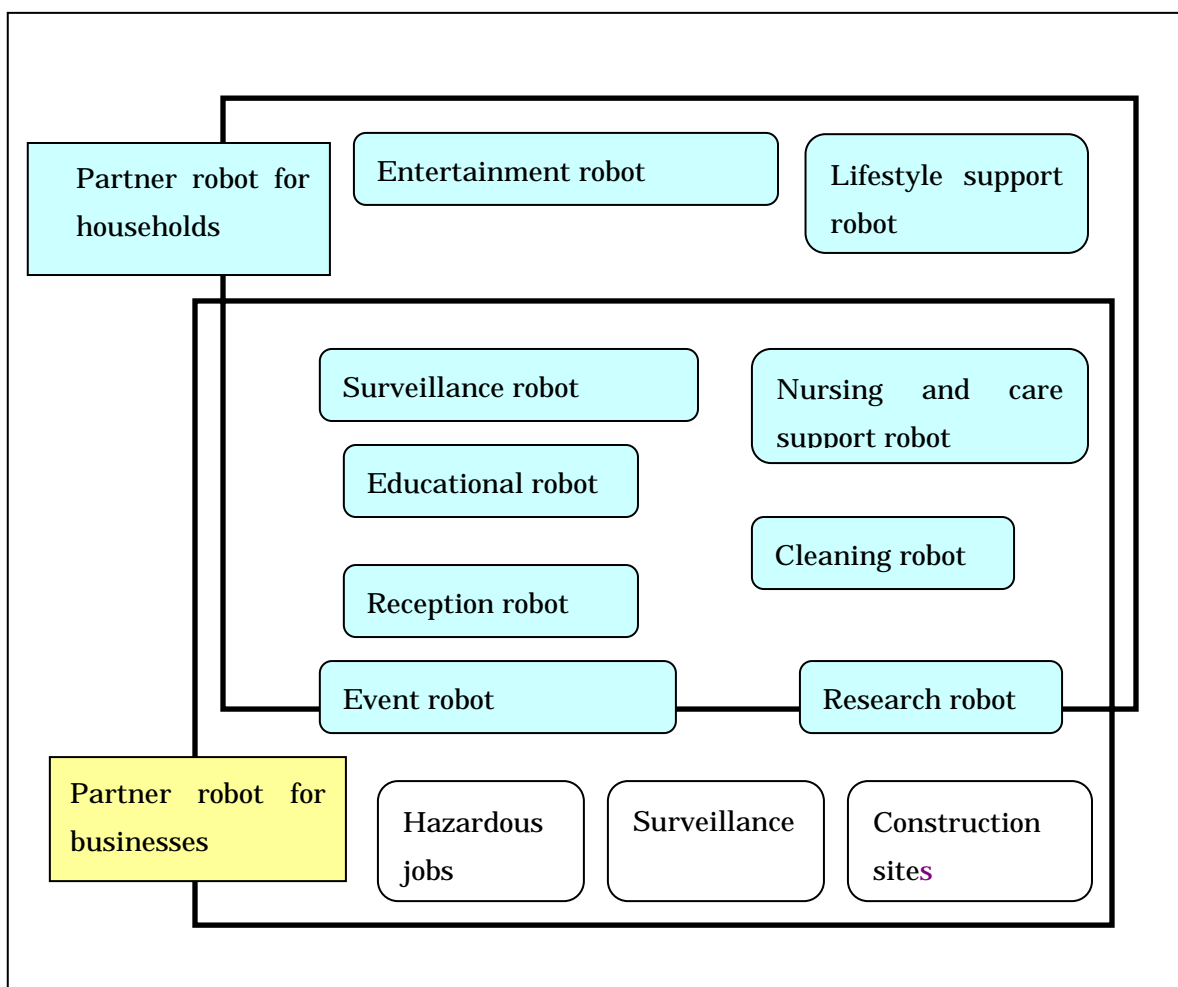


1 . Classification of Partner Robots

Household robots are also called ‘home robots’ or ‘network robots’ and so on. In this research, these robots are referred to as ‘partner robots’. The scope of this research is illustrated in the chart below. Partner robots are divided into two major categories according to their applications; robots for households and for businesses. This research mainly targets partner robots for households, but partly includes the ones that are classified into other categories such as research, events and business.

Research scope



There are many ways of classifying robots; ‘virtual type’, ‘visual (existential) type’ and even ‘unconscious (embedded in the environment) type’.

2. Current status of partner robot market entries

- **Recently, more than 90 partner robots have been announced or released in Japan.**
- **Nine such robots were launched in 2002 and 2003, and more than twenty models have been released since 2004, showing a continuous rise.**
- **Now a total of 62 partner robots have been made available in the market (including the ones scheduled to launch.)**
- **Of these commercially-available partner robots, entertainment robots are the most popular, followed by surveillance, educational, research, nursing, and cleaning robots.**

Looking at the domestic sales performance of partner robots, the number of robots that were announced/launched per year until 2001 was 5 or below. In 2002, however, the figure rose to nearly ten. A major change was seen in 2004 when the figure increased sharply to more than 20. Since that time, a cumulative total of 90 robots have been announced or launched, with 19 models being made commercially available from the beginning of 2006, as of June, 2006. To date, 62 of them have been released.

