

# ARCHITECT and INTERIORS INDIA

Inspiration and insight for architects and interior designers

Vol 9 | Issue 10 | January 2018 | ₹50

## Connect Four

Bridging the gap

## Flooring products

Striding into the future

## Home automation

Switching up lifestyles



# TEXTILE MAGNET

DESIGNED BY MATRIKA DESIGN COLLABORATIVE, SHRUJAN COMMUNITY GALLERY ONE  
SHOWCASES THE EMBROIDERY ART AND CRAFTS OF TEN KUTCH COMMUNITIES

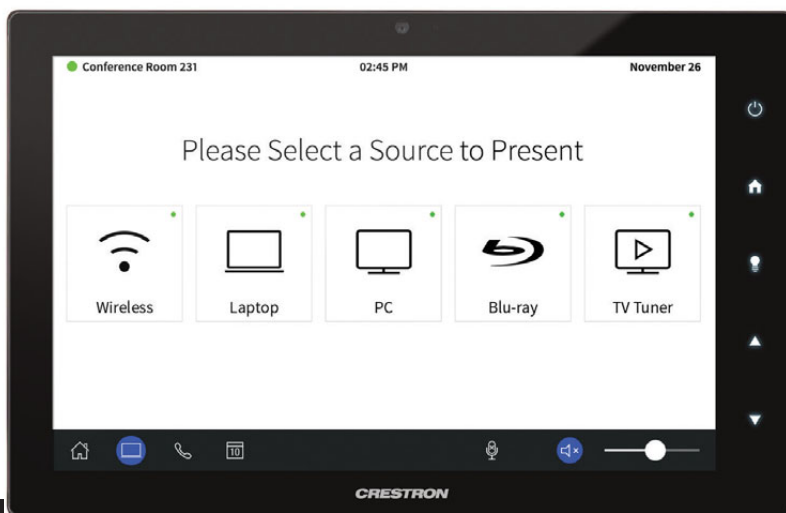
**D**esign always aims to make life easier and comfortable — even sustainable and energy efficient. Home automation and smart switches are among the many components that make this goal achievable. While it still holds a certain luxury status, basic automation, especially when it comes to security and surveillance, is being considered an essential by today's consumers. The fact that most of everyday life is linked to the Internet these days, the need to manage your home efficiently by smart devices doesn't seem as daunting. Times are changing, and that is a good sign for the home automation market.

People are allotting a dedicated budget for automation these days, points out Alok Hada, director, Anusha Technovision Pvt Ltd. As for other positive factors enabling this sector, he mentions, "The younger generation (in their 20s and even 30s) are forcing the elders to accept the use of automation in the home. Giants like Amazon and Google are virtually growing the automation market by leaps and bounds through the active promotion of devices such as Alexa and Google Home. Energy savings is also helping in making the controls acceptable."

When it comes to obstacles preventing automation's widespread application, Hada suggests that it is because of lack of experience centres, high initial costs, and resistance to change among a few influential specifiers like architects. It doesn't help that, in some cases, installers tend to make automation too complex and difficult to use.

1. Comfort and energy efficiency are making automation solutions more desirable.

2&3. Crestron believes smart IoT-enabled devices could impact the automation market positively.



## CASE STUDY: RIVIERA HOME



The Riviera home in France showcases the latest in poolside smart-home technology through its plush outdoor home cinema experience. A ten-metre, inflatable projection screen rises at the touch of a button, turning the pool terrace into an awe-inspiring screening room. It is built without the need for any kind of permanent structure that would obstruct the spectacular views of the Mediterranean. The home, and the poolside cinema, rely on Crestron technology to ensure quality audio and video. The patio of this St.Tropez home includes two cinema screens — a projector and its huge inflatable screen — and a 65" TV which emerges from the bar area. Movies, sports and other video sources are sent to both screens using Crestron DigitalMedia technology. This latest generation of DM provides a complete high-definition AV distribution solution, transporting all the HD video and audio over a single cable. To provide the best sound outdoors, the team installed 12 pole-mounted speakers and four underground sub-woofers. The ambience is enhanced by the Crestron DMX-controlled LED lighting system, effectively turning the pool area into an outdoor nightclub. The AV and lighting of the pool area, spa and changing room are controlled by a discreet yet powerful Crestron system. The Crestron interface provides the user with an interactive, virtual bird's eye view of the complete pool area and control over its lighting with real-time feedback. The result is total control.

"In India, the barriers to large-scale adoption of smart homes are high prices, lack of awareness, security concerns and absence of a complete home automation ecosystem. While products such as smart lighting and digital assistants have made inroads into Indian households, there is still a wide gap in the market with regard to other products and technologies," agrees Sumit Joshi, vice chairman and managing director, Philips Lighting India. Additionally, there are also concerns about data security as well as customer privacy in relation to automation solutions.

On an optimistic note, Joshi says, "The rapid strides in technology have made smart homes available to a wider audience, largely due to innovations that allowed for the development of smaller and lower-cost sensors and actuators that gather information from devices in real-time. In addition to sensors and hardware, the digital home has become accessible because of the further development of inexpensive, cloud-based hub services through which those automated devices are able to communicate in a seamless manner."

The reason automation still manages to gain traction, in the midst of many apprehensions, is because consumers have become more aware of their energy consumption. Vivek Yadav, senior vice president, Havells India Limited, explains, "Energy saving and safety features are major selling points for home



## CASE STUDY: ONE AVIGHNA PARK

One Avighna Park, the award-winning premium property being developed as a high-end residential project in Lower Parel, Mumbai, has an entirely automated show villa that has been developed to demonstrate the comprehensive amalgamation of luxurious home design with automation and technology. Conceived, designed and installed by Anusha Technovision Pvt Ltd (ATPL), the four-bedroom villa is equipped with lighting controls, motorised shades, speaker system, an integrated security system and total home control, including that of audio-visual devices such as TV, cable and music. As a client brief to ATPL, Nishant Agarwal, MD, Avighna India, said, "Having used the lighting and automation controls from ATPL in my own home for the last 10 years, I wanted to share the experience of convenience, luxury and ambience that automation helps provide, to all our potential home owners in the project. Hence, we asked ATPL to provide something in the show villa that is easy to understand, reliable and helps in adding convenience to the end user".

The user interface consists of various kinds of wired and wireless keypads, and an iPad or a smartphone. Home owners get to choose between an IP video door phone that allows them to see and monitor visitors even when they are not in the house. The main entrance lobby has an engraved and backlit control keypad on the wall. The home owners can choose an 'entry' or 'exit' scene that activates or deactivates the entire home devices. Predefined scenes such as Dining, Movie or Party help achieve the perfect ambience at the touch of a button.

The keypad on the staircase enables the welcome scene for the upper areas to be activated. The same welcome scene can be linked to the time of day, so that the night and day welcome scene could be different. In the bedroom areas, the emphasis is on convenience — both the sheers and blackout shades require just the simple press of a button on the remote. The lights of the master bathroom are managed through an occupancy sensor. The emphasis, says Alok Hada of ATPL, is on convenience with ease of use. The user interface on the iPad is designed to be simple and easy to understand. "By using products from top manufacturers such as Lutron and Crestron, we ensure reliability and long-time performance. We can also tailor the solution based upon the customer budget and requirement. All in all, for an apartment costing as much as it does in this area and in the high-end luxury segment, automation is not a luxury — but in my view, it's a necessity," Hada declares.



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automation products, apart from the convenience and comfort factor. The home automation concept is also gaining rapid acceptability in India due to luxurious and fast-paced lifestyles, increasing consumer awareness, higher disposable incomes, and product innovations like smartphone apps."

Technological fragmentation and misplaced perception are some of the reasons that are preventing widespread adoption of home automation in the country, Yadav notes. "There is a misconception regarding the cost and efficacy of home automation devices, and it is believed that the product is suitable only for certain types of homes and wallets. Home automation products also require uninterrupted connectivity for optimal performance. However, even today, the Internet connectivity and availability of required connection bandwidth are still a major challenge in India."

The most common application of home automation has been in the areas of security (CCTV) and lighting. Gagan Verma, executive director, Crestron, shares, "Burglar alarms are increasingly becoming popular; while in the case of lighting, it's showing its presence in a smaller way. However, customers who are aware of home automation have been upgrading their gadgets. Probably, the cost factor is the biggest element that is a deterrent for widespread adoption."

Verma also specifies that the challenge, in some cases, is that Internet access is still tardy and costly in most areas. We also lack platforms to integrate all the home automation products, because of security protocols followed by each device. "System

## SWITCH TO THE NEW

Modern switches are being revolutionised thanks to automated technology. Often, architects and designers would prefer to discreetly fit switch panels into the design, but newest offerings are all about making switches a design element in itself.

Legrand's range of switches are based on technology, design and simplicity. Arteor is an innovative range that excels by its unique aesthetics and rich choice of designs and finishes that create a floating impression on the wall. Conceived with the curved edges from the top, the minimalistically designed Myrius range offers anti-bacterial switches, designed for the healthcare segment. Enabled with installation-friendly LinLoc technology, the Mylinc range of switches incorporates elements of smart design in the minutest of details, and is available in four finishes: Pearl, Grey, Bronze, and Wood.

Inspired by nature, Amare range of switches by Crabtree (part of Havells India) has been designed to complement contemporary spaces. It comprises front switch plates made of natural wood, glass and metal finish, and offers a wide range of contemporary colour plates. Under metallic finish, the range offers variants like Lustrous Silver, Eclipse Black, Brushed Amber; and under wooden finish, variants like natural wood and teak wood. The glass versions come in muted colours with subtle shimmer: Dazzle Black, Snow White, Glittering Sand and Sombre Green.

4. Alok Hada, director, Anusha Technovision.

5. Gagan Verma, executive director, Crestron.