

COLLECTOR'S ISSUE

INDIA
TODAY

HOME

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THROW A PARTY

FOUR TABLE
SETTINGS THAT GO
FROM DAY TO NIGHT

LIGHT UP

EXPERTS SHARE
FESTIVE LIGHTING
TRENDS AND TIPS

Time to Celebrate

We tell you how best to get
your home Diwali-ready

Artist-lawyer Bahaar Dhawan
Rohatgi gives us a tour of her
Delhi farmhouse dressed for
the festive season

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READY FOR THE FUTURE?

From switching on the lights to monitoring appliances, from sharing the day's forecast to telling you to restock your refrigerator, smart homes are changing the way we live

By HARSHITA DAS

It's 7am and the alarm clock is buzzing earlier than usual. It's not a malfunction. The smart clock has scanned your schedule and adjusted because you have got an important presentation first thing in the morning. Then as you rush to reach office on time you forget to turn the lights off. But you can communicate this concern via WiFi with an app installed on your mobile to switch off lights, fans and the AC. Imagine every day to be like this where automated gadgets learn about their owners, anticipate their needs and offer a helping hand. This might be the 'smart' houses of the future where we move from manually turning the lights, fans and television on and off to total immersion in the Internet of Things (IoT) and artificial intelligence.



WITH A CLICK
Home automation
by Schneider Electric

WHAT IS A SMART HOME?

“Smart home is a term that refers to homes that have appliances, lighting or electronic devices that can be controlled remotely by the owner via a mobile application,” says Marthesh Nagendra, Country Manager India, Middle East and SAARC, NETGEAR. Home appliance brands are also introducing latest technologies such as voice commands, WiFi, Bluetooth connectivity, IoT and Artificial Intelligence to make usage of the appliance more efficient.

WHY SHOULD YOU INVEST IN IT?

Cameras and sensors embedded in refrigerators will guide us on nutritious alternatives if we reach out for sugar-sweetened beverages a little too frequently. In the current scenario, we are already using some kind of AI-powered voice-assistant gadget such as Alexa/Google assistant/Siri to get the latest news or weather forecast every morning. But in the smart home of the future, those AI platforms could serve as the brain for the entire home, learning about its residents and



automating various smart gadgets. “A smart home gives the ability to control everything with one touch,” says Sushil Matey, Director–Marketing, Livpure and CEO, Livpure Smart Homes. Smart home appliances, above all, are a more eco-friendly option.

WHAT ABOUT SAFETY?

“Apart from adding glamour and elegance to the home, automation also helps in securing the home from unwarranted intruders,” says Karan Kumar, co-founder and CTO, Hogar Controls. However, every device that’s connected to the internet is a potential target for hackers. “All the devices controlled via internet can be hacked which can further endanger your home’s safety. Intruders can get access to your in-and-out schedule, disable your security system and burgle the house. Hence while installing home automation solutions it is necessary to ensure that it is installed with proper cyber security measures,” says Srinivas Shanbhogue, VP-Retail Business Schneider Electric-India. Another disadvantage of home automation as per Shanbhogue is, “If your internet goes down, most smart systems and devices have some form of backup that enable them to keep working. However, you might run the risk of losing connect with some of your home automation devices until the connectivity is restored. Make

SWITCH TO SMART

This smart residence by Anusha Technovision is located in Mumbai

sure that your internet connection is strong and fully functioning to avoid such problems.”

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

The cost primarily depends on the budget and the type of services a home owner avails. “If you are enabling automation in your living room only, it will cost you a lot lesser than having it in your entire apartment. Another factor that affects the home automation system cost is the type of wiring your house already has. In some cases, the existing wiring requires an upgradation to accommodate the electrical specifications of your new smart home,” says Alok Hada, Director, Anusha Technovision. “A smart switch eliminates the need to change the switch panel. A smart switch is a simple switch which sits behind the traditional switch panel, yet offers all the features of smart lighting or fans. The lights or fans can be controlled via the mobile app as well. This could cost a few thousands. Same for a video doorbell or a SensorCam for securing the home. Typically, basic light or fan automation for a two-bedroom home should cost around ₹1 lakh,” says Kumar.