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INDIA

GET...
SET...
SMART!

AN INDUSTRY
PERSPECTIVE ON
SMART HOME TRENDS.

FUTURISTIC
DESIGNER

An exclusive with interview
Sou Fujimoto and his idea of
sustainable design.

THE MAN OF
THE MOMENT

A special on BV Doshi,
the first Indian to win the
Pritzker Prize.



GET...SET... SMART!

The revolutionary movement of Smart Homes are taking twists and turns like never before.

PHOTO COURTESY: PENINSULA LAND LTD



The market offers competitive smart products for lighting, mirrors and even glass.



PHOTO COURTESY: YOO VILLAS BY PANCHSHIL REALTY

Adjustable shutters and curtain systems are a boon for large windows.

Saving time and costs, integrated digital technology with IoT (Internet of Things) and automation have reached every field. In India too from the Smart Cities Initiative, to e-billing and e-governance, the impetus of technology in day-to-day activities cannot be ignored.

As the standard of living increases, people are looking for solutions to make a complete experience. From entertainment to comfort, security and sustainability, users are looking for more... in every sense. "Technology has touched each industry, whether it is consumer business, banking or telecom. Real estate is no exception. With evolving lifestyles, global exposure and changing preferences of consumers over the last decade, the concept of Smart Homes is now more than a reality in India", says **Chirag Shah, Head - Technical Services, Arvind SmartSpaces.**

Today, technology has gotten much deeper in personal spaces around the home. It has changed the way people live; it has even changed the way people perceive luxury and comfort.

As **Snehdeep Aggarwal, Founder and Chairman, Bhartiya Group** puts it, "Design and technology is a powerful tool to make a home smart and bring added value such as community, health, culture, learning and most importantly, happiness."

From chunky TV boxes, to the unrecognisably sleek units that now fit in - devices that go in to the home have gone through a sea of change. Going beyond the aesthetics, the functions of these devices have also drastically evolved. Thorough scientific research and development has gone into the making of the products, based on consumer insights for added functionality and sustainable use.

"Technology in homes not only aims to replace much of human effort but also scales out the rate of error drastically", adds **Amit Porwal, Director and Principal Designer, Icon Projects Inspace Private Limited.** Easing the way people function, technology has revolutionised each step of daily processes. It has become an intricate part of the DNA of homes.



With the Bluetooth AL 150 Lock, your phone is now your smart key.



The Zemi Arya is a powerful and stylish speaker.

PHOTO COURTESY: ASTRUM, ANUSHA TECHNOVISION PRIVATE LIMITED



With a 1300 m3/h suction power and an optimal airborne grease control zone, hoods are getting more efficient.



The theme units are equipped with slide-in hinged doors.



Smart technologies are available in retrofit systems too.



The touch pad control- Showertronic iV2 is an intuitive electronic thermostatic mixing system.

KNOW YOUR PRODUCTS

Most Indian consumers think that smart home technology is meant for the elite which restricts their selection opines **Dhaval Doshi, Founder, SmarthomeNX**. “Until a few years ago smart home products were priced at premium costs, however, with the advent of low manufacturing costs and easy access to proprietary and open-source technology the costs of smart home technologies have reduced drastically. On the other hand, there are devices that are stand-alone like the Amazon Echo and Philips Hue that will let you build your home incrementally at a low cost.”

Parts of the home are beginning to provide much more than its singular function. Collecting and analysing user data, devices now not only store our preferences but also give recommendations. This in turn affects user

behaviour. That’s where the ‘smart’ comes in while technology remains just the medium. Knowledge about choosing the right products here are pertinent. Their selection and use become a major grey area for a market spoilt for choice. Doshi says, “It is necessary for consumers to look into lifestyle requirements first and then go about thinking of building a smart home. Just

as you speak to an interior designer to ensure your house has ‘the looks’, consumers need to look into their lifestyle and think about how home can actually be made ‘smart’ as opposed to simply providing ease of usage of products. For example, A double income no kids couple that have a hectic work-life will see value in



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Smart bathroom products have changed the way this space is used.



Windows have become intuitive to filter heat, air and UV rays.

security solutions that will ensure easy and secure entry and exit of their household help.”

With the increasing competition in the market, better and cheaper products are bound to enter. Moreover, instead of using entire ecosystem of products, stand-alone devices are also proving to be a good solution at a much cheaper cost. This does not require the consumer to commit to up-front high cost to a system that becomes obsolete in a couple of years. The limited awareness of the smart homes market needs to be addressed first by consumers to see a long lasting positive impact of the segment.

SHIFTING THE FOCUS BACK TO GREEN

Smart homes that emerged on the premise of efficiency have gone above and beyond its initial intentions. The sector has definitely expanded and gotten to undertake a lot more than energy solutions. With the advent of smart entertainment products and even those for niches like the

PHOTO COURTESY: ROCA, DECEUNINCK



Design inspired by futuristic technology.

kitchen and bathroom, the dynamics of household technology has gone on a parallel tangent. While the security market has picked up strongly, sustainable energy solutions have received lesser attention. Talking of the utilitarian side of available technology, **Raghav Kapur, City Head - Bengaluru, SILA** brings a very important concept to the discussion. “Indian consumers have started using energy-efficient HVAC system, water-saving plumbing fixtures, solar and wind power, installing latest energy management controls and recycling. This change is seen due to the increasing concern on health benefits. There is definitely an increased awareness on home health ratings,



The water purifier uses the age old technique of copper.

TRENDS IN HOME AUTOMATION

- It's fragmented and going to get even more fragmented: There are way too many brands and solutions available. There is also too much confusion about what's the best for the consumer. This trend will continue because more and more brands are coming into the market.
- Smart Homes are set to get cheaper: There will be something for every target segment and status. Just like it is right now with the Smartphones market.
- Artificial Intelligence is the next big frontier: Using your phone or your voice to control your home is just one part of the story. More value will be experienced by us as consumers when our homes can directly tell us what we should watch over the weekend based on our previous history of binge watching.

(Contributed by Dhaval Doshi, Founder, SmarthomeNX)



Parents can monitor their kid's smart device usage and even restrict it with this one.

air quality, water quality, indoor pollution levels and personal well-being.”

Kapur also adds that a renewed focus on energy efficiency is leading a whole generation of sustainable living. The way he sees it, ‘green’ is the future and is definitely the new ‘smart’ when it comes to homes. It is important to shift the tangent back here to making day-to-day life sustainable. Using smart home products for energy solutions not only helps streamline long term usage of the products but also proves to be more cost-effective in the long run.

The Numi toilet has wireless Bluetooth®* music sync capability to the heated seat and foot warmer.



Allure is a voice-activated speaker powered by Amazon Alexa Voice Service.



The electric mop can sweep, scrub and clean the toughest dirt.



THE NEW DIRECTION

The IoT and Android revolution has changed the way everything in the home works. As these technologies were accepted, smart homes and its various products too received a major boost. Together, the technology in homes only gets bigger and better. From actuation to automation, sensors, devices to handheld technologies, all aspects are taken care of. Along with strong WiFi services, even retrofit technologies are making general devices like fans, TVs, and lighting connected and smart through IoT with Android and iOS support. Artificial Reality, further push the segment with their added support of being able to visualise spaces and hence personalise them better.

The smart homes segment is largely driven by personal needs. The beauty about technology is that it can be integrated, internally connected and there are 360 degree solutions available.

Mahesh Lingareddy, Founder and Chairman Smartron, talks about the future for the smart homes space. “Most of the products that are available in the market are either complex or only for the tech enthusiasts, or early adopters. These are highly unsuitable to the Indian market. The smart home products and solutions must meet a certain price point for the Indian consumers and therefore local design, engineering and manufacturing will play a vital role in the business model to be successful.”

While convenience becomes a major buying point for home technologies, there has definitely been a convergence to sustainability. As the products in the market expand and newer fragments evolve, it has definitely single-handedly been the most disruptive sector in markets world-wide. A point of concern would be – how far it can go, for it has scope in every direction. India’s acceptance of the segment has been that of a late bloomer with the most drastic impact seen last year. The increasing luxury real-estate offerings and affordable housing on the other side of the spectrum, offer further scope of integration in a booming economy like India where infrastructure is still evolving. The awareness and ‘choice’ here too remain priorities, especially in the near future. ■

The Eclipse bed has an LED Tv, smart lighting and other in-built features.

