



HOME AUTOMATION

It's getting smarter and smarter

By Rose Barroso, Barroso Homes

Home automation may include such things as centralized control of lighting, HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning), appliances, safety locks on gates and doors, security systems, surveillance cameras and an assortment of other programmable features. And, all of this can be managed by a remote. You have automatic control of a wide range of devices while in your home, from your office or from an entirely different continent.

Lifesavers

The advantages are infinite and can be tailored to your specific needs. By entering a personal code, your home can come to life when you enter the door. Disengage the home alarm and close the gate behind you – remotely.

Home Automation can also alert you to when

someone enters your home, or to a household emergency. You dictate how, and when, a device should react. Set a schedule based on your personal preferences – and the rest is automated.

The Price of Contentment

Home Automation systems are designed to be expandable, allowing you to build your scheme around the features that you require. The size of the property factors into the cost, and for a comprehensive system, prices can range upwards from \$50,000. However, because it is a relatively new technology, the prices are still on the high end. As these technologies become standard in every home, the cost will decline.

Retrofitting an existing home doesn't cost much more than installing a system into a brand new build, but there may be limitations.

Things to Consider

Once a client has recognized the advantages of investing in an automation system, they need to understand what it can, and will, control. It's not as complicated as one might think. All of the devices that are connected to the home network are orchestrated to perform functions.

The underlying operating system connects devices and systems, such as security, lights, audio, video, heating and cooling, as well as entertainment systems and window shades. The depth of control can vary from one light or a door lock with unique applications, to an all-encompassing system that allows you to control multiple devices through one interface.

Don't Be Alarmed

Imagine being sent an email if there is motion in your house when there shouldn't be. Or, perhaps being alerted to a water problem in the laundry room or basement. Remote access through your Android, Apple devices or laptop computer, enables you to remotely control your home's automation system. If there's a power failure, you're still able to open doors or turn on your lights.

Many have privacy concerns as it relates to home automation, or they feel that virus might be unleashed on their system. Reputable automation manufacturers have ensured safety features through password protection and other security steps, and don't consider it to be an issue. If the company detects a problem, no



matter how minor, they will contact the customer.

This is not a phase. Those of us of a certain generation will remember George Jetson's futuristic abode. Bill Gates spent more than \$100 million building his smart home. What was once of interest to the tech-savvy or wealthy, is now becoming the norm, especially in newly built homes. Tech organizations are consistently launching new smart home products. As with most things, demand drives the market place.

or



Toronto Custom Home builder **ROSE BARROSO** has made a career of building and designing homes and, along the way, has acquired a lot of knowledge about all things home-related. She is very passionate about her work

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