

Smart Homes – What Electricians Need to Know

Description

For too long the custom install market has had its pick of the high margin work. Now that Satellite and Audio Visual installations are displaced by the IoT (Internet of Things) and an ever increasing choice of new devices and systems, the electrical contracting industry has a fantastic opportunity to cover new ground. The market has moved on from just Audio Visual control in every room. Today, a more diverse range of skill sets is required to deliver fully integrated AV systems, lighting and heating. Essential to delivering these solutions is a solid understanding of electricity and structured wiring. It is my view that the electrician is ideally placed to become the smart installer and technology expert to meet the needs in this growing market.

Opportunities

Smart Homes are now big business in Scotland and across the UK. The spend on assisted living solutions, home security and automation was estimated at £800 million in the UK last year. It is growing at a rapid pace and is expected to increase by 30% this year. Even then it will only have reached 40% of homes. There is a long-term opportunity and one worth investing in to upskill and claim your place in this cutting edge market.

Cabling infrastructure

Cabling is the backbone of Smart Buildings. A structured wiring scheme allows the smart installer to bring technology everywhere in the home without having to lay wires every time a new device is introduced. You can even get standalone devices (eg. Alexa, Nest, Sonos) to communicate with each other. Installing cables is bread-and-butter work for an electrician. Designing a project plan and using software to programme the devices is more complex, but manageable within the skillset of the electrician.

Becoming a smart installer

Good electricians are in huge demand, but in short supply. The greater imbalance will exist in the Smart Home sector but most homeowners don't currently know where to go to make their homes smarter. Up until now, the home automation market has focused on high-end customers, which account for perhaps 10% of the market, whereas the real opportunity exists in the much larger middle section. Home automation is now an affordable reality for them. As prices continue to fall, the market is speeding up, helped by the likes of Amazon advertising on TV.

Seizing the opportunity

For the electrician looking to develop their business, my advice is to get involved with home automation. Increasing the value of projects and taking advantage of upselling opportunities will significantly increase your profits. You will spend less time laying cables and more time planning and managing installations.

If you are learning to become an expert, you will have to take on a lot of information. There are no easy routes so find out about the latest innovations and developments. Identify your knowledge gaps in cable networking, security, heating or lighting and learn accordingly.

Become an expert in a system that is open, flexible and scalable with no customer tie in. Be seen as an expert in the field of Smart Homes in your area by improving your digital presence. Invest in your website's search engine optimisation and your Google ranking for your Smart Home keywords and phrases. The rewards will come for those that share my vision. [Read CableTalk published article](#)

Ron Skirving, Director at Delta Digital Ltd.

Category

1. News

Tags

1. Audio Visual
2. CableTalk
3. Electricians
4. Internet of Things
5. Published Article
6. Smart Homes

Date Created

20/12/2019