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News**High-tech houses**

*Calling people and tech savvy executives with deep pockets, there's a highly sophisticated lifestyle on the cards. By **Kushal Shah**.*

In this new age of automation and technology, new gadgets and technologies are not only used at your workplace but also for your comfort zone such as your house or vacation home. Many companies are venturing into the complete home automation market. One such company is Digihome Solutions, an Aftek group company.



Digihome recently announced its first offering for house automation the Digital Home Gateway solution that takes care of security, safety, automation, entertainment, information and communication. "We have always done well in embedded technology and we are strong in communications. We have got many patents over the years and when we thought of monetising them, the Digihome concept came to mind," says Ashutosh Humnabadkar, CEO, Digihome Solutions Pvt. Ltd.

In this solution, security is provided with facilities such as smart card, biometrics or PIN based access to your house. In terms of safety, LPG gas can be monitored and controlled using a LPG leakage detector which disables the gas supply by switching off the knob electronically. Automation is further provided for electronic appliances, lights, fans, heaters and air-conditioners. Downloading movies and music from media servers and wireless transmission to video and audio systems comes as the part of the entertainment option.

Surfing for information is done through Wi-Fi. Communication enables local and long-distance calls using PSTN lines or the Internet using VOIP. All these features can be monitored and controlled remotely using cell phone or PC-based Internet browsers.

"Most players in the Asian market venture in one particular area of home automation such as only a security device or a surveillance device. As of now we are the only player to offer a complete solution for the home," says Chandrashekhar Raje, Director, Digihome Solutions Pvt. Ltd. These facilities can be operated at the click of a button of the remote provided and the touch screen display device at each site. If implemented by a building society, these solutions can be serviced and maintained from a common server on the premises.



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One of the limitations of such an installation is that one has to get going before construction, wiring and light fittings are done due to its heavy wiring requirements. As of now these installations are not possible in occupied houses. The company is therefore looking for builders as its customers. Presently three players have got their hands on such devices—Godrej House at Mahalaxmi in Mumbai (under construction), Rohan builders in Pune and a builder in Bangalore. They are planning to implement this solution in 10 cities across the country. "We are already in talks with people from Qatar and UAE for the implementation of such devices," adds Raje.

These devices add about Rs 40,000 to Rs 10,00,000 to the cost of a flat depending on the needs of the owner since the product is made in such a way that each module can be separated and can be customised. "Within a couple of years such things will be common and we can see a year-on-year growth of Rs. 100 crore for Digihome after two years or so," says Humnabadkar.

While there is the danger that we will become lazy with all this automation, these devices will give an extra touch to the modern high tech living experience along with a secure feeling for kids and parents alike.



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