Smart Home in times of COVID-19

How smart home software can help to make our everyday life easier during the pandemic.

So far, if you ignore age-appropriate living and preventive measures, smart devices have been one thing above all: digital gadgets to play around withs. But due to COVID-19, smart gadgets turned out to actually be important everyday helpers.

Smart devices are firmly being established in our daily routines. Smart watches, telephones, kitchen appliances and voice assistants; today at least one of these devices is present in the vast majority of households. With them, electrical devices, lighting, heating, ventilation or air conditioning, window shutters, awnings or blinds can be conveniently controlled and monitored via app regardless of time and location. In this way, we are gradually creating an individual environment that supports us in everyday tasks.

Conceived in a larger context as a holistic system, we find this combination of different technologies primarily in Ambient Assisted Living models. These aim to connect products and services that support the age-appropriate life of the elderly as well as disabled people to help them to live self-sufficient, self-determined and unobtrusive.

This was already standard before Corona interfered in our life. However, statutory measures like partial lockdowns permanently changed our familiar routines.

Smart functions for a smart everyday life

Whether it is to fight cabin fever or for practical reasons: "Smart Living" as an anti-crisis philosophy is increasingly gaining acceptance and rightly deserves recognition. The topic of "Smart Living" is versatile, broad and at the same time very special. For example in terms of …

… Homeschooling

Digital skills are now just as much a part of general education as reading, writing or math. COVID-19 was an accelerator that exposed the sometimes bad conditions at German educational institutions. Because there is a need for action here.

The pandemic forces students to be educated at home; suddenly parents become teachers. This may be overwhelming to students and parents as well. Even domestic peace may sometimes be at stake. Of course, homeschooling features cannot replace schools, teachers and lessons, but having a digital classroom thanks to smart devices can be very useful in the current situation.

... gardening

During the lockdown, there is more time available to take care of your garden. In times of crisis, many people discovered their passion for gardening due to the lack of alternatives. First you might start with a lot of verve. That might get over your head pretty quickly. With smart garden and balcony gadgets, however, you can relax and let the technology do the work.

The range of smart garden products is vast. For example, clever robotic lawnmowers take care of the perfect lawn or backyard. Another helper evaluates weather data and independently waters or wets plants and flowers. Those who neither have a garden nor balcony can use a small, controlled ecosystem "indoor". So called “smart gardens” are controlled via an app on a tablet, computer or smartphone.

... health, fitness & leisure

Fitness studios were or are still partially closed. And those who are open are only allowed to offer limited training areas and courses. Smart gadgets and apps support people to get better health and fitness.

In the area of fitness and health, there is almost nothing that does not exist. The assortment ranges from smart WiFi scales including body fat analyzation, individual workout and training apps, digital coaching via “Smart Fitness Mirror”, fitness and sleep trackers to intelligent room climate monitoring. Another interesting example (especially for senior hikers): Smart walking sticks that send out an emergency call or message, when the user falls and is unable to pick the sticks back up.

... cabin fever & depression

According to the WHO, one in four will suffer from a mental illness at least once in their life. And right now these numbers are increasing drastically. It doesn't matter whether you live alone or share a common household. Loneliness can be just as frustrating as a cabin fever. Smart apps for depression and mental health (developed jointly by psychologists, doctors and those affected) screen the well-being of the user in real time using emotional questionnaires, for example. The answers are then evaluated by an algorithm that adapts to each individual user. Depressive relapses can be recognized without the user noticing anything in everyday life. App courses then suggest behavior therapy exercises and techniques that help battling depression. Functionality and the analysis methodology vary from app to app.

However, this type of "monitoring" is only intended to improve the diagnosis, therapy and prevention of depressive disorders and not replace professional treatment.

Smart crisis management

We already use many smart devices or functions today already – probably even unconsciously. The global corona catastrophe shows once again what smart devices can

achieve and how effectively they facilitate, improve and sometimes even make our existence more livable. This is the perfect time to get your hands on some smart gadgets and finally make your life smarter.