



FULLY CONNECTED HOME FORECASTS NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTEGRATORS

Sunset Green Home gives integrators a roadmap to the next generation of profit centers

Home-automation integrators are finding a high demand among clients for energy efficiency. Could this be the next big wave in the connected home market?

When the surge of Hurricane Sandy swept much of Kim Erle's 1940s beach cottage into the Atlantic Ocean in 2012, she resolved to build a resilient, energy-efficient home in its place. According to recent survey data, she's part of a rising tide in the home automation market.

Erle, an energy efficiency professional, was researching solutions for her dream home at a builders' trade show when she landed on an idea: not only would her future LEED-certified home be incredibly energy efficient, but it would also push the home-automation concept into new territory.

"She explained what she was doing with her Sunset Green Home [on Long Island], and I was immediately excited for the project," says Joe Lautner from Core Brands, manufacturer of the ELAN Entertainment and Control brand.

As construction progressed on the new 3,600-square-foot home, integrator Jeff Sakkal at Sakab Design Group got involved. During a five-hour brainstorming session with Erle, the duo conceived the interconnected home that he was able to bring to life with ELAN technology.

"We've always been into the green concept, and we wanted to link that with home automation," says Sakkal. "The goal was to use the minimum amount of energy without compromising any amount of luxury in the home."

What began with relatively simple concepts—including automated shades to allow the homeowner to preserve her prized ocean views while counteracting solar heat gain—expanded into a completely integrated, whole-home system. The ambitious project integrated security, climate, lighting, audio, video, shades, cameras, and door locks through an ELAN system that Erle can control at home from wall-mounted touch screens or remotely from a smartphone or tablet.

While security remains a primary motivation for consumer interest in connected smart homes, energy efficiency emerged as another strong influence in 2015. Like Erle, seventy percent of consumers now see smart homes as a way to achieve greater energy efficiency, with three-quarters of millennials and their parents leading this exciting trend.

For Sakkal, the Sunset Green Home represents more than an opportunity to take part in a landmark project—it offers a window into where the home automation market is heading, beyond luxury audio and video systems to creating systems that also preserve the quality of a homeowner's investment.

"This project gave us a real sense of what clients are going to ask about in the future, and what's going to be important to them," says Sakkal.

"This is where automation is going—when everything talks to everything and you can control energy consumption whether you're home or not. This is definitely the way of the future."

The ELAN Solution

"This platform is really designed for the green client," says Sakkal. "Programming is easy and perfect for this type of application. A lot of changes and requests from the client can be done remotely, and you can create an event, such as a 'goodbye,' with a simple waving gesture. Homeowners can see inside their house without having cameras in the house—that little screen does so much more, especially at the price point."