Cheaper Automation Through Ads?

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Ube (pronounced "yoo-bee"), a start-up led by former CEDIA CEO Utz Baldwin, has an interesting idea for a more affordable automation solution-- selling advertising on the platform.

The Ube proposal avoids central home processing units (and related programming) by providing a free iOS/Android app and IP-connected "appcessories." Using standard IP protocols, the app allows control of of IP-enabled smart devices such as smart TVs and thermostats. Very few vendors employ such an approach to automation (also known as "the internet of things"), other than Belkin and WeMo.

The company offers 3 flavours of smart device, all to ship from early 2013-- the Smart Dimmer (a light switch replacement running on Android OS), Smart Plug (allows remote device on/off and consumption measurement) and Smart Outlet (an outlet replacement with energy management and remote control).

While the Ube offerings above conform to US standards, the company promises it will also roll out in other form factor for worldwide markets.

The Ube system already impressed at DEMO 2012, winning the People's Choice Award and $1 million in advertising from event producers IDG.

Go Ube