

Futuresource: Smart Home's Worth "Rising Fast"

Written by Marco Attard
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Smart home devices are fast becoming part of the mainstream, Futuresource Consulting reports-- the market is one of the fastest growing CE categories of 2017, with global revenues worth \$6 billion.



Such revenues are forecast to triple by 2021, reaching \$18bn.

"The smart home has arrived and its impact is indisputable," the analyst says. "Smart home devices help with daily tasks, improve security and generate savings in energy bills through heating and lighting control. With high profile brands like Samsung, Apple and Philips getting in on the action, consumers are becoming attuned to the benefits, excited by the possibilities and are beginning to flex their purchasing muscle."

One category making notable inroads is smart assistants, which are found embedded in a range of devices. Amazon and Google lead, with Apple and Microsoft lagging somewhat behind. However while smart speakers and their ilk are successful, they will not topple the smartphone as the go-to interface for smart home control. After all, users carry their smartphones everywhere, and gesture control has a role to play alongside voice commands.

Currently security and monitoring products lead in smart home with the highest penetration rates and largest retail value and volume. Lighting appears to be picking speed faster in retail and through the custom install channel, with new products combining lighting with other functions such as speakers and cameras adding both value and appeal to the category.

When it comes to geographical regions Europe still lags behind N. America, which represents over 60% of global smart home shipments. The UK currently has a "starring role" in the

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European smart home revolution, as it is the biggest market in the region despite a smaller population than both Germany and France. Meanwhile MEA is behind the smart home curve, but the region sees some pockets of innovation at a number of market opportunities.

In channel terms, retailers and service providers are the main smart home market contributors. Custom installers account for just 20% of installations, since most growth comes from easy-to-install DIY devices.

"Over the coming months and years, the CE winners will be those who place the smart home at the heart of their business planning," Futuresource concludes. "In addition to providing smart home devices, vendors can benefit from selling a wide range of related services and complementary products, as well as using the connected home to cement ties with their customers."

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