Siri Takes Its Place in the "Smart Home"

The IPhone 4S will soon control thermostats, lights and home theater systems, as Apple's voice assistant Siri debuts in the "smart home."
Custom home automation installer Carnes Audio Visual released a YouTube video showing Siri communicating with various home appliances and systems. The video features Siri dimming lights to 50 percent, setting the thermostat to 70 degrees and turning on a home theater system using voice commands.

The system uses AMS-AIP home automation equipment from Creston and an intermediary proxy server to help Siri communicate with home appliances and systems.

The Little Rock, Ark.-based company created the promotional video to showcase its own capabilities on the forefront of home automation. However, it also highlights how Apple's voice assistant can venture beyond iPhone 4S functionality.

The "smart home" is one of this year's up-and-coming technology innovations, with several recently unveiled products aimed at controlling a full array of appliances and systems using a smartphone as the hub.

For example, LG debuted a connected refrigerator at this week's Consumer Electronics Show that will help people stick to their diet plans and manage food storage needs. Home improvement retail chain Lowe's will release kits later this year to control thermostats, alarms, lighting and other home systems with a cloud-based home network.

Apple's rival, Google, also hinted at its own smart home strategy this week. Speaking at a CES panel discussion on smart home technology, chairman Eric

Schmidt pointed to his company's open-source Android platform as key to his company's future success in the connected home, and hinted Android will soon connect every household electronic and appliance via a cloud platform.

Carnes Audio Visual's Siri-enabled smart home system puts Apple in the race alongside Google, but with the added twist of voice recognition. Last year's 4S release gave Apple an edge over rivals because Siri pushed the boundaries of voice with its intelligence-based search capabilities and intuitive voice recognition.

Now that Siri is also capable of controlling appliances and systems in the home, Apple stands at the intersection of two popular emerging technologies, voice and the smart home, and has the chance to become a forerunner in both.
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