

The Loan or Demo of Home Automation

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Loaning home automation technology can be problematic for those not experienced with wifi connectivity. A wifi savvy borrower can make it work if they can respond to some basic questions regarding connectivity. If you plan to loan, practice resetting the device/s after a loan to give the borrower an out of the box experience and reduce compounding connectivity errors.

If possible, devices can be set-up in the borrower's home to increase successful implementation of a loan.

Missouri Assistive Technology has set-up several devices in borrower's homes. We do not loan devices directly, or market on our website, but we use what we have in the library for demo purposes and targeted loans.

Loaning home automation devices requires several skills to get devices up and running:

1. WiFi- Wifi is required. Wifi speed is relative and some systems may eat bandwidth. You can make 3-5 MPS work but more is better.
 - a. Question: Do you have home wifi?
 - b. Question: Do you know the user name and password of your wifi?
 - c. Question: Do you know the wifi speed? (optional)
2. Tablet or Smart Phone: Borrowers will need a tablet or smart phone that connects to their home wifi and has the ability to load the free home automation app.
 - a. Question: Do you own a tablet or smart phone that connects to the home wifi?
If a borrower does not have a tablet or smart phone you could loan them one but they will have to connect to their home wifi using the loaned tablet.
 - b. Question: Do you have the ability to load the free home automation app onto your tablet or smart phone?
3. *Plug into_router: Some home automation requires a hub that may need to be plugged into a router (Philips Hue) via Ethernet cable. Depending on what the borrower wants to try it, may add another question:*
 - a. Question: Can you plug devices into your router?

Using a voice assistant (Alexa, Google Home) for stand alone or to control home automation

The requirements for setup for a voice assistant device are the same as home automation. Remember, voice assistants only communicate with the actual home automation device so it piggy backs and requires both to play nice with each other. Voice assistants need to discover the home automation devices so the borrower's technical skills need to be much higher than connecting dedicated home automation devices.

Devices like Alexa and Google Home can function independently for skills having nothing to do with home automation. Connecting to a borrower's home wifi with a voice assistant requires the same basic wifi skills as setting up home automation devices. It requires a smart phone or tablet with the assistant app.

Summary

Home automation is an easier demo than loan given the complexity of wifi setup. Libraries can setup devices onsite for demo purposes. Loaning voice assistants and home automation can be accomplished by borrowers but they must be vetted for wifi and app problem solving skills.