

# How Big Data is Driving Trends in Connected Home

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The connected home market is maturing quickly as more households fill out with connected devices. CTIA has its eyes on watching how wireless data is propelling the market segment. The Wireless Association recently announced partnerships with the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) 2014 “Design and Construction Week” (DCW) and Parks Associates for the CTIA 2014™ Super Mobility Week. NAHB and Parks Associates will focus on how wireless technology is being used to connect homes, providing homeowners with the convenience and cost-savings of “smarter” homes.

That said, other key players in the market are focusing on the huge amounts of data being generated by a connected home. Big data will factor in heavily at next week’s pre-show Connections event at the upcoming CTIA 2013 spring show. Amdocs, a Missouri-based software company with years of TelCo partnership experience, will be on hand to discuss big data’s impact on partnerships, competition and product deployments in connected home technology as well as how analytics will help customize and maximize the experience for individual users.

Adam Tichelaar, director of program management for connected home solutions at Amdocs, says that there is a lot of rich information rolling in from the large variety of connected devices populating homes now, from automated thermostats to door locks.

“The trend is now that there’s a lot more information, you’ve got these disparate data sources that are being fused together,” Tichelaar said. “Ultimately that can lead to personalization or a feedback loop to the customer to give them recommendations or enhancements to how their home is operating that they may not even realize.”

He added that the data being collected is helping devices and homes learn from and adapt to peoples’ behavior, which can lead to higher levels of comfort and cost savings as well.

Tichelaar sees the biggest challenge during the last 20 years for the connected home is getting everything connected. But now that cellular and Wi-Fi technologies have become more pervasive in homes, the ability to connect has become more prolific.

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Published on Wireless Week (<http://www.wirelessweek.com>)

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“Where I think the whole industry is going is the smart home, but we’re not there yet,” said Tichelaar. “But the smart home will take all that information and naturally infuse it.”

With the sheer volume of data already coming in, though, analytics has had to adapt in order to keep pace. Amdocs uses large, scalable databases in order to contend with the volume, but Tichelaar says the bigger challenge is in how fast the data can be turned into useful analytics.

“If we backhaul that data, run a bunch of analytics on it and I give you a recommendation six months later, it’s not really of value,” said Tichelaar.

He said that Amdocs is working toward speeding up that process as well as how to best manage all the varying forms of data coming in.

“As you start to recognize patterns and behaviors that are common, you can reapply those to new data sets,” said Tichelaar. “So rather than traversing through terabytes of data, you can start to index in and get rich information rather quickly. But it’s a learning process and you build that intelligence over time.”

As more consumers move toward embracing the idea of a connected home, the amount of data going out about their activities will elevate privacy concerns. But Tichelaar notes that connected home customers have control over how much they want to share.

“What we generally find is that providing an opt-in mechanism has been the easiest channel because then [customers] are participating in the process,” Tichelaar said. “The user’s in control and they’re controlling the services they want.”

**Source URL (retrieved on 06/11/2013 - 4:38pm):**

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