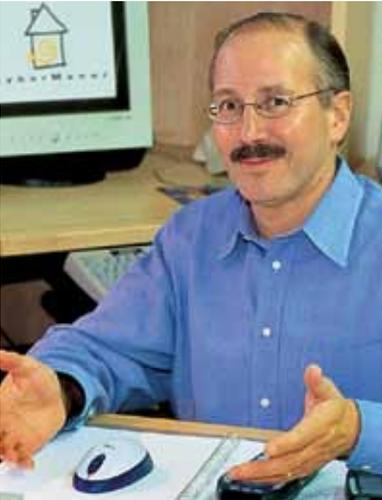


Re-Thinking Home Control

Multi-App Home Control vs. Integrated Total Home Control

BY GORDON VAN ZUIDEN



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With more than two billion iOS and Android devices and a million-plus apps deployed worldwide, it would be logical to ask how a multi-application control system running on an iPad or Android platform can measure up as a home control solution versus a single app total home control hardware/software solution for clients of custom residential integrators.

It is a serious enough question that Control4 placed the following comments in its corporate filing statement with the SEC on July 1, 2013, before the company went public:

Consumers may choose to adopt point products that provide control of discrete home functions rather than adopting our unified home automation solution. If we

are unable to increase market awareness of the benefits of our unified solution, our revenue may not continue to grow, or it may decline.

It's a question that I have asked my own client base, manufacturers with whom we work, and my peers in the industry over the last few years. It is also the topic of a course that I teach at CEDIA EXPO, titled: "Total Home Control – A Multi App Approach." While there are pros and cons to both solutions, the pendulum is swinging toward the multi-application approach in the high-end single-family residential market. To better understand why this is happening in our channel, I have written a white paper, called, "Digital Platform Strategies for the

CEDIA's new iOS and Android App Pavilion will give the custom integrator one location to see all the intelligent connected-home products from all the digital platforms shown in this connected home ecosystem diagram.

Connected Home," that focuses on best-of-breed intelligent audio/video and home control solutions for the custom integrated home. This white paper is posted on *Residential Systems'* website and can be found at www.residentialsystems.com/0414. Also, it will serve as informational background for the iOS and Android App Pavilion that CEDIA will host for the first time this year at EXPO.

CEDIA's new pavilion will be an opportunity for all manufacturers (including total home control companies), from home AV systems to door locks to sprinkler systems to hot tub controls, to showcase their app-based interface for control of their products. It will give the custom integrator one location to see all the intelligent connected-home products from all the digital platforms shown in the connected home ecosystem diagram on this page.

As the internet of things picks up momentum in the home, this pavilion will make it easy to see and compare one company's offerings against another's in the same category. These are the new products that frequently make news headlines and that our customer ask us about. As integrators, we need to know first-hand about their strengths and weaknesses, and this pavilion will make this education more accessible.

It Started with the Sonos App

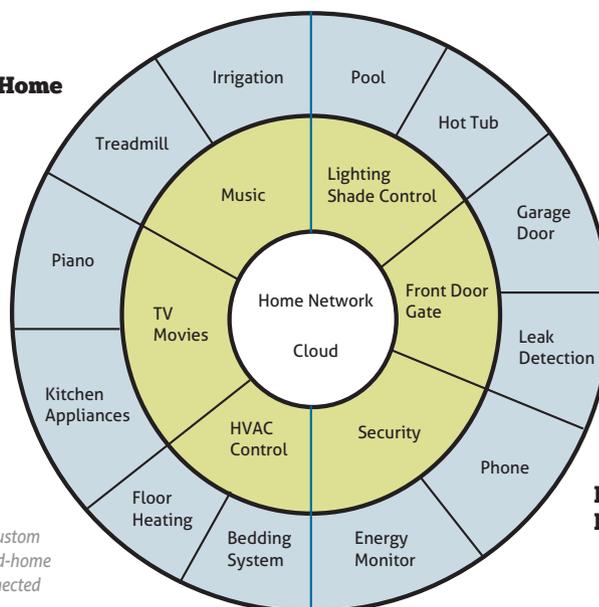
My interest in evaluating the multi-application approach for total home control started almost three years ago when I watched a custom integrator from a competing company in my market lead a group of 25 people touring a custom integrated showcase house. While using an in-wall iPad to demonstrate the features of the total home control system his company had installed, he said that for the best whole-house music experience he needed to close down the total home control application and open the Sonos application (the whole house audio system was driven by Sonos).

After that demonstration, I began to think about best-of-breed products (hardware and software) for the home and the impact they would have on single-application total home control systems. When Nest was launched in the HVAC space a few years ago, it represented another platform that would inspire our clients to leave their total home control app. Since then, it has become increasingly clear that this multi-app approach has become a very familiar total home control option for many of our customers.

Many of the subsystems I describe in the white paper have opened their APIs to total home control manufacturers, but unfortunately the manufacturer implementation of the control interface is rarely as good as the manufacturer's own implementation, and almost always lags behind the manufacturer's GUI upgrade releases.

What do you think? Please read my white paper, attend my course at CEDIA EXPO this fall, and tour the CEDIA App Pavilion. I look forward to the opinions of my industry peers. That's always been my best source of information.

Connected Home Ecosystem



Digital Platforms