CES Gets Smart

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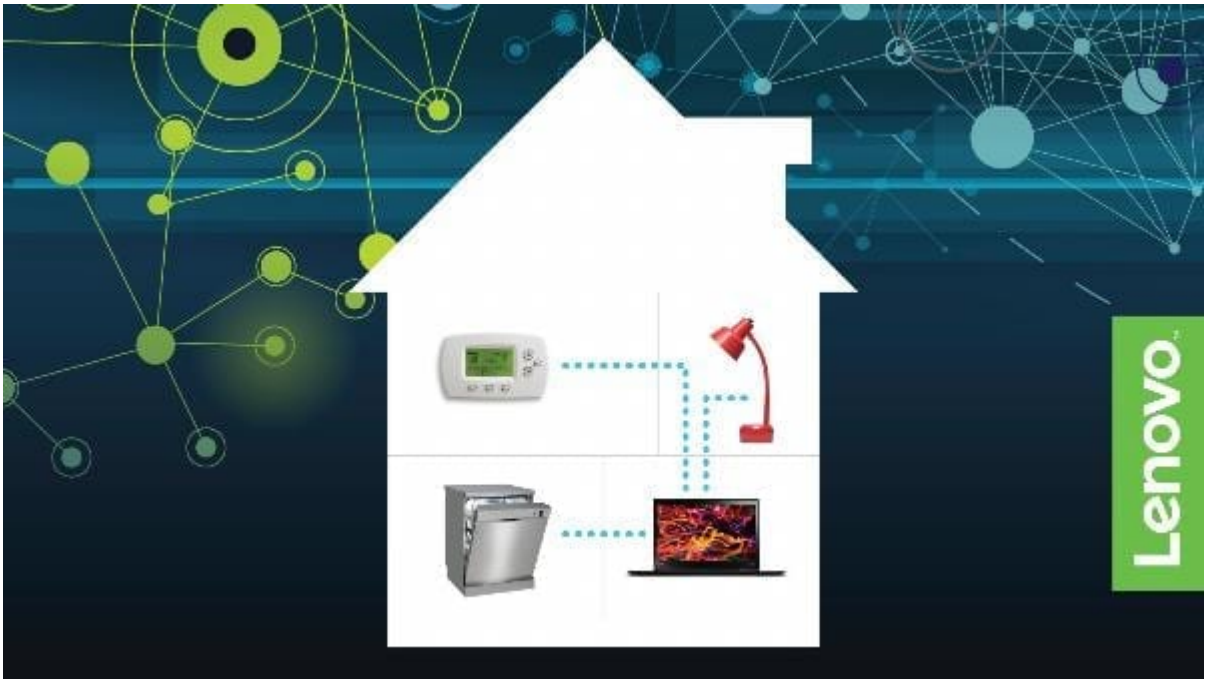

by Peter Hortensius.
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Each year, the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) sets the stage for what's hot – virtual reality, drones, convertible PCs or curved TVs. Some of the biggest buzz at CES 2016 came from smart home technology; innovations ranged from smart refrigerators and toilets to app-controlled devices that help detect water leaks, and everything in between.

With so many new ways for consumers to use and integrate smart home technology, I think this is the year of the Internet of Things (IoT). Analysts are predicting more than 25 billion devices will be connected by 2020.

In this new, smart connected world, we must give consumers a seamless and satisfying customer experience. We're continuing to research and experiment with more natural connections between users and their devices, and we're beginning to see IoT vendors do the same.

Here are a few of my favorite smart products launched at CES:

- **iTouch Faucets' Smart Faucet:** A smarter way to conserve water. The Smart Faucet design replaces the handle on your sink, shower or bathtub with an easy to use control panel for hot, cold or warm water. It also allows users to set a timer for water flow, helping families control water consumption and save on water and gas costs.

- **Keen's Smart Air Filter:** Keen introduced an add-on to its existing smart air vent technology (which can control how much air reaches each room of your house): the smart filter. The air filter can be easily snapped onto the air vent to provide air purification and odor neutralization to the entire house. Real-time monitoring of HVAC usage will also prompt automatic re-orders of smart filters as needed.

- **Master Lock's Smart Padlock:** The Smart Padlock turns your phone's Bluetooth connection into your new keychain for your house or personal items. Users can unlock the Smart Padlock for others and monitor any attempts at tampering while out of town with just a touch of a button.

- **Vivint Doorbell Camera:** I especially like this. Vivint's doorbell camera allows homeowners to see who's at the door on their smartphones, and can even lock or unlock the door remotely. It also features two-way talk capability via a built-in microphone and speaker, a 180-degree camera lens with night vision and on-demand access to the 30-second video clips it records.

As anyone who's been to CES knows, the show is big and there is so much innovation to see. Share your favorite connected products from the event in the comments below or with me on Twitter @PeterHortensius.