Home outlet | Photo source Pixabay

MODULAR OUTLET TURNS ANY HOME INTO A SMART HOME

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

A new outlet with a suite of inserts uses existing wiring to turn any house into a custom smart home.

Many new build houses now come with smart technology built in, allowing residents to control entertainment, environment, phones, lights, shopping and much more from a single control or even voice commands. For the rest of us, however, retrofitting smart home technology can be expensive and intrusive. A new Kickstarter campaign aims to fund an outlet that can be installed using existing wiring, and a suite of inserts that can turn any home into a smart home.

Swidget is made up of two elements, the Swidget outlet and inserts. Once the outlet is installed, users can instantly snap in any of the inserts to create a nightlight, USB charger, motion sensor, Bluetooth speaker, power monitor, video camera, timer, mood lighting, AI repeater (such as Alexa or Google Home) and more. The inserts will connect with smartphone, tablet or existing smart home hub, allowing users to control all the functions from a central location. You pick the Swidget insert that has the function (nightlight, carbon monoxide sensor, etc.) and connectivity (Wifi, Z-Wave, ZigBee, etc.) you want, plug it into the Swidget outlet — and that's it. On its own, Swidget operates as a normal electrical outlet, and fits into a standard electrical wall box.

Swidget was founded by electrical and mechanical engineers who wanted to rationalize the confusing array of smart home devices on the market. They have a prototype and are currently raising funding through Kickstarter to begin production. If they reach their funding target, shipping to the US and Canada is stated to begin in June 2018. Swidget are also offering a development kit, which includes a Swidget outlet simulation board, power monitor, CAD design files, and blank test

inserts, for anyone with an engineering bent who is interested in developing their own insert. What other solution could upgrade existing buildings in a cost-efficient and non-intrusive way?

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Email: hello@swidget.com
Website: www.swidget.com
Contact: www.swidget.com/contact/