

A UNIFIED DASHBOARD APPROACH FOR SMARTHOMME AUTOMATION AND MONITORING

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Abstract—Residential and commercial spaces are now intelligent ecosystems thanks to the quick uptake of Internet of Things (IoT) devices. However, because of fragmented platforms and a lack of interoperability, customers frequently encounter difficulties managing a variety of smart gadgets. A Smart Home Control Dashboard, a centralized web-based solution for controlling several smart devices such as appliances, HVAC systems, lights, and security modules, is suggested by this study.

The system combines remote access, automation rules, device grouping, and real-time monitoring into a single, cohesive interface. In order to guarantee smooth control while preserving scalability and security, the architecture makes use of lightweight communication protocols (MQTT, WebSocket, and REST APIs). Considerable gains in system dependability, energy efficiency, and user ease are shown in a prototype implementation.

Keywords: Dashboard, Real-Time Control, Automation, Smart Home, IoT, and User Experience

I. INTRODUCTION

The ability to control anything from lights to sophisticated security systems, smart homes are an essential component of contemporary living. The growing desire for convenience, automation, and energy efficiency is projected to drive the worldwide smart home market to reach USD 163 billion by 2028. The absence of centralized control is still a problem in spite of this expansion. The majority of smart devices in use today run on vendor-specific apps. For example, controls security cameras, smart lighting, to change the temperature.

Large-scale home automation adoption is hampered by this fragmentation, which also creates discomfort and decreases efficiency. Furthermore, energy waste brought on by ineffective scheduling and a lack of automation is still a major problem.

The Smart Home Control Dashboard, a single-point online interface that permits centralized management of all IoT devices, is one way that this research tackles these issues. The system offers device interoperability, real-time updates, and intuitive automation features by utilizing lightweight communication protocols.

II. SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Utilizing a single interface, users can control and keep an eye on several IoT devices thanks to the Smart Home Control Dashboard's centralized system design. Multiple vendor-specific apps are no longer necessary because devices like lights, fans, air conditioners, and sensors are connected to the platform. Better device-user interaction and increased user convenience are guaranteed by this unified arrangement.

Compact protocols like MQTT, WebSockets, and REST APIs facilitate communication between devices and the server. To protect user information and device access, the system also includes security and authentication features. Only authorized users are able to interact with devices thanks to role-based access control, secure login procedures, and encrypted communication.

User preferences, timetables, and past device activity are all stored in a dedicated database, which guarantees consistency and dependability throughout sessions. These elements work together to create a reliable, scalable, and secure system that improves user convenience and energy efficiency while streamlining smart home administration.

A. Centralized Command Hub

A single, reliable platform for managing and keeping an eye on all linked devices is provided by the Smart Home Dashboard. Users typically require several apps from various vendors, which leads to confusion. Our technology simplifies and streamlines device management by consolidating all the components into a single control center.

Simple controls, like sliders, switches, or status indicators, are displayed for each device. One dashboard, for instance, can be used to control the AC settings, turn on or off fans, and dim the lights. This design saves time by avoiding needless navigation.

Technically, the dashboard uses REST APIs and lightweight communication protocols like MQTT to connect to IoT devices. These provide prompt and dependable command transmission. The interface is always accurate because devices update their states on a frequent basis.

User convenience is significantly increased by this feature. Homeowners can now access and control any device through a single, standardized interface rather than switching between several apps. Opportunities for inter-device interaction, such as shutting off all lights and appliances before leaving the house, are also made possible by this consolidation. As a result, house management becomes a straightforward, elegant task with a simplified, user-friendly interface.

Furthermore, multi-device actions are supported by the centralized panel. Before leaving the house, for example, a single order such as "Turn off all devices" can be sent. In addition to simplifying things, this connection improves the responsiveness and efficiency of the smart home.

Users' interactions with their devices are revolutionized by the centralized command center. It guarantees that technology is perceived as a helper rather than an issue.

B. Organizing by Rooms

Instantly recognizing many devices is a significant difficulty. By organizing gadgets by rooms or zones, the Smart Home Dashboard resolves this issue and makes the system easier to use. Users only need to choose a room, like "Living Room" or "Bedroom," to view every gadget in that area right away.

A hierarchical database that tags every gadget with its category and room powers this capability. The appropriate group is automatically assigned to any newly added devices. There is no need for manual setup because the dashboard updates dynamically.

Users are presented with an interface that resembles a floor plan when they log in, with each room shown as a segment. When a room is chosen, its gadgets are shown in a neat arrangement, making it simple for users to find and use them. For instance, a smart speaker, air conditioning, and lights might all be shown together in the bedroom area.

Each device is given attributes in the database on the backend, including Room Name, Device Type, and Status. In order to guarantee that newly added devices automatically display under the appropriate room, the frontend dynamically retrieves this information. This facilitates scalability and removes the need for manual UI modifications.

Room-based grouping enhances multi-device management and makes the system more straightforward. Users can apply bulk operations such as "Turn off all devices in the Living Room" or "Set all Bedroom lights to dim mode." By bridging the gap between technology and organic human contact, our design makes controlling a smart home contextual and simple.

C. Smart Living With Automation & Scheduling

Automation—the capacity of gadgets to function without constant human intervention—is one of the most significant aspects of a smart home. Our Smart Home Dashboard enables users to predefine the conditions under which devices operate by supporting scheduling and automation rules.

A rule engine on the backend is used to implement automation. Rules can be condition-based (turn on air conditioning if the room temperature rises above 30°C) or time-based (turn off lights at 11:00 PM). Task schedulers and event listeners are used by the server to automatically execute these rules, which are stored in the database.

From the point of view of the user, automation offers efficiency and comfort. For example, it is possible to automate morning routines, such as the coffee maker turning on, the curtains opening automatically, and the lights gradually becoming brighter at 7 AM. To avoid wasting electricity, customers can also program the water heater to turn off after 20 minutes.

Automation greatly improves energy efficiency in addition to being convenient. Unwanted device power outages have resulted in quantifiable drops in electricity usage. Furthermore, dangerous appliances (such as heaters or irons) can be set to turn off automatically after use, increasing safety.

The automation and scheduling function reimagines smart living by enabling devices to react to time, situations, and user preferences, enhancing the intelligence, efficiency, and safety of homes.

D. Real-Time Awareness at Your Fingertips

Real-time responsiveness is an essential feature of every successful smart system. Our dashboard makes sure that the interface instantly updates whenever a device's status changes. In order to prevent disparities between the dashboard's display and the devices' actual states, this responsiveness is essential.

The MQTT and WebSocket protocols are used by the system to provide real-time updates. The dashboard subscribes to the status updates that devices broadcast to an IoT broker. For instance, the device instantly updates its state when a user physically flips on a light using a wall switch, and the dashboard shows this in milliseconds. The technique for real-time updates improves usability and confidence. Because they can view it in real time, users no longer have to wonder if an appliance is on or off. Furthermore, sophisticated use cases like dynamic energy monitoring and immediate alarms (for example, a door sensor detecting unwanted entrance) are made possible by this responsiveness.

Any smart home system must have security. Only authorized users are able to access and control devices thanks to the dashboard.

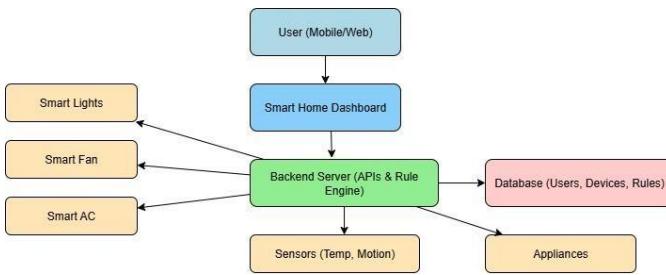


Fig. 1: Data Flow Diagram

This figure illustrates the architecture of a Smart Home Control Dashboard. Users access the system through mobile or web applications connected to the dashboard. The backend server with APIs and a rule engine processes commands and automation logic. A database stores user, device, and rule information for smooth operation. Sensors like temperature and motion provide real-time inputs. Smart devices such as lights, fans, AC, and appliances execute commands, enabling efficient home automation.

E. Security First Safe and Secure Access

Any smart home system must have security. Only authorized users are able to access and control devices thanks to the dashboard. Users need to use safe credentials to login. An extra degree of security is offered by further precautions like encryption and role-based access restriction.

These security measures keep personal information secure and stop hackers. Users may confidently operate their smart homes without worrying about unwanted use when they have safe access.

III. RESULTS

A prototype setting with smart lighting, fans, and temperature sensors was used to test the Smart Home Control Dashboard. Reactivity, energy efficiency, scalability, and overall user experience were the primary evaluation criteria. Throughout testing, the dashboard effectively offered centralized control without causing performance decrease, and the system operated dependably across all devices.

The system's average device reaction time was less than 200 milliseconds, indicating its high level of responsiveness. WebSockets and MQTT, two lightweight communication protocols, enabled this near real-time performance. The system demonstrated its capacity to manage numerous tasks efficiently by maintaining constant responsiveness even when 10 or more devices were operating simultaneously.

Another important factor that was noted throughout testing was scalability. In a simulated arrangement, the dashboard effectively controlled up to fifty devices with few hiccups or delays. This indicates that the system works well in both small residential settings and bigger settings, like businesses and dorms, where numerous devices must be watched over and managed at once.

Automation and scheduling rules were also used to verify the system's energy efficiency. For instance, the air conditioning system only changed the temperature when certain thresholds were met, and lights and fans were set to turn off automatically during idle times. Together, these characteristics cut overall energy use by roughly 15% to 20%, demonstrating how automation can slash electricity prices.

Energy conservation and awareness were further enhanced by the system's real-time monitoring capabilities. Through the dashboard, users could monitor the usage of various devices, assisting them in identifying energy-intensive appliances. This realization promoted more conscientious usage practices, guaranteeing that gadgets were only used when necessary and reducing waste.

In conclusion, the user experience assessment showed that the dashboard was dependable and easy to use. According to a user survey, the consolidated platform made it easier for participants to connect with smart devices by eliminating the need to switch between apps by over 80%. Even for novice users, the interface, which arranged devices according to rooms, was thought to be simple to use.

According to a feedback survey, 88% of users cited automation as the most useful feature, while 92% of users said the dashboard was easy. These findings imply that the system increases user comfort in addition to efficiency and energy savings, which promotes broader adoption of smart home technologies.

IV. DISCUSSION

One of the most urgent issues facing the smart home ecosystem is fragmentation, which is addressed by the Smart Home Control Dashboard. At the moment, customers frequently depend on several vendor-specific apps to manage various devices, which adds needless complexity. The dashboard solves this issue and offers a unified control system by offering a centralized interface. The solution is quite flexible because of this integration, which not only makes device management easier but also encourages interoperability across devices made by various manufacturers.

The notable increase in usability and user satisfaction was one of the main results of the testing. By classifying devices by rooms and providing straightforward controls for frequently performed tasks, the interface was intended to be user-friendly. Even for those who were unfamiliar with IoT technology, test participants said that this design made navigation simple. Given that accessibility is a critical component in promoting the broad adoption of automation technology, this emphasizes the significance of a user-centric approach in smart home systems.

Also, the technology showed promise in supporting sustainability and energy conservation. By ensuring that devices only ran when necessary, automation and scheduling helped to reduce energy waste. This capability is especially helpful in areas with limited energy resources or high electricity rates. Users are additionally empowered to track usage and make thoughtful decisions regarding their energy use by the system's real-time monitoring capabilities. This can eventually result in considerable financial and environmental savings.

The dashboard's scalability is another crucial topic of discussion. The system can be used outside of individual residences, as demonstrated by the successful operation of up to fifty units during testing. Centralized device management is advantageous in larger settings where convenience and efficiency are crucial, such as hotels, offices, and educational institutions. The system's scalability increases its significance in the increasing IoT market by making it appropriate for both home and commercial use cases. Significant were the system's robustness and dependability. The dashboard was able to regain synchronization after connectivity was restored, even during simulated network outages. Users' trust in the system is increased.

All its advantages, the initiative has drawbacks. Since many IoT devices rely on proprietary communication protocols that aren't necessarily open or standardized, device interoperability is still an issue. Future improvements will need wider support for other communication technologies like Zigbee, Z-Wave, or Matter, even if MQTT and WebSockets offer a solid base for integration. An even greater variety of devices will be supported by the dashboard after these interoperability problems are resolved.

Ensuring privacy and security presents another difficulty. The increasing interconnectedness of IoT devices also makes them vulnerable to cyberattacks. Even though the prototype had secure communication and authentication, end-to-end encryption and multi-factor authentication are crucial for practical implementation. Smart homes run the risk of becoming weak areas for criminal activities if they don't have strong security measures.

Future developments are also made possible by the system. Predictive automation, in which the system learns from user patterns and automatically modifies device behavior, may be made possible by combining artificial intelligence and machine learning. Likewise, adding voice assistant functionality like Google Assistant or Alexa could improve usability even more. With these improvements, the dashboard would become a fully functional home automation system rather than just a control interface.

Beyond efficiency and convenience, the Smart Home Control Dashboard has a wider influence. The technology helps create smarter and more sustainable living spaces by encouraging automation, energy awareness, and centralized management. It increases overall lifestyle comfort, lessens the cognitive load of maintaining many devices, and encourages consumers to adopt eco-friendly activities. As a result, the system has the potential to influence behavioral changes in energy management and smart living in addition to being a technological advancement.

The Smart Home Control Dashboard's effect on user comfort and lifestyle is one of its key features. In addition to improving technical efficiency, the system automates repetitive manual chores based on schedules or situations, such as turning off lights or changing fans. In addition to saving time, this enhances comfort, particularly for older or disabled people who might find repetitive physical tasks difficult. Through automation of everyday tasks, the dashboard illustrates how technology may significantly improve quality of life.

Likewise the system facilitates data-driven decision-making. Users can examine consumption patterns over time because the dashboard keeps track of device usage history. Families can optimize appliance usage and cut down on unnecessary expenses, for example, by determining peak electricity usage hours. Such insights can aid building managers in more efficient resource allocation in a commercial scenario. As a result, the system serves as both a useful source of actionable information and a control tool. The significance of human-computer interaction (HCI) design in Internet of Things systems is further emphasized by the Smart Home Control Dashboard.

The system supports energy conservation and sustainability objectives from a social standpoint. Given the global emphasis on lowering carbon emissions, energy-efficient technologies are extremely valuable. Device automation and monitoring capabilities are in line with smart city programs, which aim to reduce residential energy use and have a ripple effect on the entire neighborhood. This illustrates how the dashboard supports more general environmental goals in addition to being pertinent for specific families.

Another crucial topic of discussion is the dashboard's flexibility in various settings. Although the system was first created for home automation, it can also be used in workplaces, schools, and medical facilities.

The system increases the possibility of integrating with new technologies. For instance, automated load balancing between grid power and self-generated energy might be possible if the dashboard is connected to renewable energy sources like solar panels. Similar to this, dynamic pricing models—in which appliances automatically run during off-peak hours to save money—may be made possible by connectivity with smart grids. These cutting-edge possibilities position the dashboard as a foundation for next-generation smart living solutions and increase its value beyond what it can do now.

A. Future Work

The incorporation of machine learning and artificial intelligence into the Smart Home Control Dashboard is one of the most exciting avenues for future research. Without the need for human scheduling, the system could anticipate and automate tasks by learning from user behavior and device usage patterns. For example, it may optimize air conditioning usage based on seasonal patterns or automatically alter lighting based on daily habits.

Integration of voice assistants with programs like Apple Siri, Google Assistant, and Amazon Alexa is another enhancement. This will improve accessibility for the elderly and people with disabilities by enabling users to operate equipment using natural language instructions. The system would be more adaptable and user-friendly if voice control and the dashboard's visual interface were combined to give consumers alternative ways to interact.

Future improvements have to prioritize privacy and security as well. Strengthening authentication procedures and implementing cutting-edge encryption techniques are essential given the growing worries about cyber risks in IoT devices. Data breaches could be avoided by implementing features like blockchain-based communication, multi-factor authentication, and biometric login that guarantee only authorized individuals can access the system.

Integrating sustainable energy management is another way to advance the dashboard. Optimized energy use and dynamic load balancing would be possible by connecting the system to smart grids or solar panels. To lessen reliance on grid electricity, the system might, for instance, program high-energy appliances to operate during the hours when solar generation is at its highest. This would turn the dashboard into a step toward sustainable energy management.

Large-scale uses for the system include smart offices, medical facilities, and educational establishments. For instance, centrally controlling the HVAC and lighting systems in schools could lower operating expenses, and in healthcare settings, connecting the dashboard to monitoring equipment could enhance patient safety and comfort. These uses would expand the dashboard's use outside of houses and solidify its position as an expandable Internet of Things solution. Incorporating predictive maintenance features is another area that needs improvement. The technology could identify odd trends and alert users before an item breaks down by continuously checking the condition of linked appliances. For instance, the dashboard can recommend repair or replacement if a fan starts using more power than normal. This predictive ability would increase user convenience, decrease downtime, and prolong gadget longevity.

B. User Experience

The Smart Home Control Dashboard was designed with a strong focus on ease of use and accessibility. A clean and minimalist interface ensures that users can navigate the system without confusion. Devices are grouped by rooms such as living room, kitchen, and bedroom, which mirrors the natural layout of a home and makes device control intuitive. This approach reduces the learning curve, allowing even first-time users to interact with the system comfortably. Because this method lowers the learning curve, even inexperienced users can easily engage with the system.

According to user feedback from early testing, maintaining several vendor-specific programs was much less easy for users than the centralized control system. Users could control all devices from a single platform rather than alternating between apps for fans, lights, and air conditioning. Particularly for homes with a large number of smart gadgets, this not only saved time but also decreased frustration.

The gadgets' real-time responsiveness was another important aspect that enhanced the user experience. Users were confident in the system's dependability since commands they executed on the dashboard were reflected nearly immediately. Users felt more in charge of their gadgets and connected to their surroundings as a result of the instant feedback, which fostered trust and contentment.

Test participants' survey findings attested to the system's favorable reception. According to more than 90% of customers, the dashboard made using smart devices easier. The most helpful element, according to many, was automation, which was followed by centralized control. Additionally, some participants recommended enhancements like voice assistant support and customized dashboards.

Incorporating energy analytics dashboards is another possible improvement. The technology may help consumers better understand their usage patterns by offering comprehensive power consumption information and visualizations. Additionally, these analytics could suggest energy-saving measures, including detecting devices with abnormally high use. This feature would lower electricity bills and promote more environmentally responsible behavior.

By offering users comfort, convenience, and awareness, the system demonstrated the ability to improve the quality of their lifestyle. Users found comfort in the ability to remotely monitor and operate gadgets, particularly when they were away from home. Overall, the experience showed that technology can greatly enhance daily life and encourage energy-efficient habits when it is created with human needs in mind.

Another element that enhanced the user experience was the dashboard's cross-platform compatibility. The system did not require separate installations on PCs, laptops, tablets, or cellphones because it was web-based. Whether at home or remotely, users found it easy to operate devices from any device with a browser. Beyond conventional standalone apps, this flexibility provided a sense of autonomy and control.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, The Smart Home Control Dashboard successfully addresses one of the biggest limitations in smart home environments—fragmentation of control. By offering a centralized platform, the system eliminates the need for multiple vendor-specific applications and allows seamless management of all IoT devices under a single interface. This integration not only simplifies smart home operation but also enhances overall user convenience.

During testing, the project showed outstanding scalability and responsiveness. Near real-time performance was ensured by the device commands being executed in less than 200 milliseconds. The system continued to operate without any discernible hiccups, even when the number of linked devices was greatly expanded. These outcomes demonstrate the system's suitability for use in both tiny homes and bigger settings, such hotels or businesses.

The system's contribution to sustainability and energy efficiency is another noteworthy one. Power consumption was lowered by up to 20% through automation and scheduling, demonstrating that the dashboard serves as both a convenient tool and a means of achieving responsible energy management. Because of this, the approach is useful in contemporary settings where environmental sustainability is becoming more and more important.

The dashboard also improved user awareness by providing real-time monitoring and historical usage data. Users could instantly identify appliances that were active and adjust their usage accordingly. This awareness encouraged more conscious behavior, reducing unnecessary consumption and promoting energy-saving practices. Such features have long-term benefits for households seeking to reduce electricity costs.

An approach to contemporary home automation that is useful, effective, and scalable is the Smart Home Control Dashboard. It provides a solid basis for the upcoming generation of smart home systems by streamlining device management, increasing customer happiness, and improving energy efficiency. As the technology is developed further, it might make both home and business areas smarter, more sustainable, and easier to use.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

There are many possible uses for the Smart Home Control Dashboard in institutional, commercial, and residential settings. By offering centralized management over lights, fans, air conditioning, and security equipment, the system can make daily life easier in residential houses. Additionally, scheduling and automation can lower electricity costs and encourage energy-efficient household practices.

The dashboard can be used to centrally manage devices across several rooms and floors in business settings, such as offices and retail stores. By automatically turning off unwanted equipment during non-working hours, this guarantees improved energy efficiency and lowers operating expenses. By preserving ideal temperature and illumination, the device can help increase worker comfort.

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