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Home automation: heating with ebus and Bulex

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One of the targets of my house automation was to integrate heating. Having some familiarity with heating systems, it was already clear that interfering with the internal regulation would be a big no-no. Ideally the heating system needs to offer some kind of open interface to accept sensor values normally sent by a thermostat, but now from the house automation components instead.

The requirements:

- retrieve basic information from the system. Is it active? Are there any errors?
- replace the wall thermostat with house automation components and software
- control the temperature of every room separately (where there is need to at least)

So the journey started to boldly go where no man has gone before; asking the heating guy if he could deliver a module that offers some kind of “API” to do this. As it turned out, we fell out of warp pretty fast. I will really try to limit my rant here, but heating manufacturers live in another time-space continuum. Where most software companies need to reinvent themselves every 10 years or so, heating manufactures can do what they want so it seems. Instead of offering a somewhat flexible interface, most of them are starting to sell “Internet thermostats” to end users. Which is great if you want to retrofit but not if you want to integrate in a real house automation system. Of course, those modules can probably be ‘hacked’ in the sense that if a mobile app can operate it, it must have some kind of interface. However, most of