# 'Smart' living gets real as connectivity rates rise

November 7 2014, by Conor Barrins

From robots that chop up your vegetables to detectors that measure how long you sleep, such "smart" appliances are becoming more and more a part of daily life, according to industry players.

Developers at the Dublin Web Summit, one of Europe's biggest technology conferences, said interlinkage between people, their homes and their devices were opening up new frontiers.

The developers of Everycook, a cooking device that takes in raw material and independently processes it to a finished meal, hope their product will transform healthy-eating.

"You go to our app, pick a recipe, get the ingredients, follow the instructions and Everycook does the rest," founder Maximilian Tornow told AFP.

Boston-based Chris Cicchitelli, founder and CEO of CastleOS, said his system would revolutionise geriatric care, allowing older people to remain out of nursing homes for longer.

"Using motion detectors and sensors connected to a smartphone, you'll know how active a person is, even how long they have spent in bed.

"You will know if they have fallen and if they do fall, the system can take action based on that, call 911 automatically, even say where in the house the fall took place."

With 22,000 attendees, the Web Summit brings together some of the world's top companies with start-up ideas for a series of lectures and networking events.

One of the focus areas at the Web Summit was on how people, objects and devices can become connected in what the tech industry is calling the "Internet of Things".

"We're trying to connect 99 percent of things, not only physical things such as street lights but people and even animals to transform lives and improve businesses," Wei Zou, technical marketing engineer with Cisco, told AFP.

## 'Less chaotic' traffic

Cisco estimates there will be 50 billion Internet-connect "things" in the world by 2020.

The US company's chief technology officer Padmasree Warrior said one benefit could be the end of traffic congestion when driverless cars become available on demand.

"These cars will also be connected to each other and to traffic lights, meaning the flow of traffic will be far more organised and less chaotic. That's the dream for the cities at least," she said.

On a larger scale, Cisco hopes the growth in connectivity will improve medical care by developing systems for hospitals, such as allowing paramedics to feed patient information back automatically while an ambulance is in transit, so hospitals can be prepared.

It also hopes to reduce the demand for resources by allowing patients to connect with doctors remotely.

"Some people with medical conditions do not need to go to the hospital, they can use digital media to provide the doctors with diagnostics remotely and automatically," Zou said.

One project demonstrated at the summit was "CitySense" in Dublin which monitors pollution through sensors fitted on courier bikes.

"The Internet of things places the citizen at the heart of all technologies," said Willie Donnelly, director of the Telecommunication Software and Systems Group (TSSG), a research centre taking part in the initiative.

While tech is big business mainly based in the developed world, a number of tech companies taking part outlined ambitions to revolutionise daily life in the developing world.

A US start-up said it hoped its kinetic energy-generating shoe insole could transform and increase the use of smartphones in areas of the world where there is no access to electricity.

"In the developing world, 1.2 billion people don't have access to electricity but have mobile technology—that's a huge problem," Matt Stanton of Solepower told AFP.

"They use it increasingly for daily critical tasks, healthcare, banking, education. It's truly integrated into their lives but the power is not widely available to power the devices," he said.

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