New internet of things protocol to transform hotel experience

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Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Hotel guests could soon access their rooms and control the lighting, temperature, television and coffee maker through their mobile phones thanks to an innovative protocol for internet of things (IoT) devices developed at the University of Surrey.

U-Linc, a next generation protocol much like Bluetooth, allows users to access different IoT devices from different manufacturers and gives them the ability to control those gadgets in a simple, seamless and secure manner from a single interface.

Once a user decides to operate a particular device through U-Linc, a customisable and branded interface is created by the protocol for that specific device. The manufacturer of each device retains full control and power to customise and brand that interface and user experience.

U-Linc could transform a number of industries, including the hospitality sector. U-Linc could allow hotels to develop a unique experience for each customer, as well as grant key access to rooms and leisure centres.

Anmar Rassam, CEO and Founder of U-Linc Limited, said: "Connected devices are becoming more prevalent in our day-to-day lives. The only problem is that they are not as connected as they appear to be. We are living in a strange world where you have to download separate apps to fully control your lighting, thermostat, fridge, security camera and doorbell.

"What U-Linc offers is a simple and elegant location to discover and control the increasing number of IoT devices in our lives. More importantly, we can work with manufacturers and vendors to fine-tune the U-Linc interface so that customers have the best possible experience."

Professor David Sampson, Vice-Provost of Research and Innovation at the University of Surrey, said: "We are proud that U-Linc was developed here at the University of Surrey's 5G Innovation Centre. U-Linc is indicative of the forward and enterprising thinking that we encourage our researchers to adopt. We are excited to see how this product develops in the years to come."

The IoT market is predicted to be worth £81 billion to the UK's economy by 2020, with the manufacturing sector set to be the biggest beneficiary.

Provided by University of Surrey