



What Are Voice Assistants?

Voice assistants can be the center of your smart home. Control smart devices, play music, and get up-to-the-minute information – using just your voice. These devices can be standalone smart speakers, or be included as part of the operating system of a phone or tablet.

What are the benefits of voice assistants?

Voice assistants can do many things, such as perform tasks like reciting calendar events and to-dos, to controlling smart home devices (independent of a smart hub) and home entertainment systems. Combining these tasks allows a voice assistant to become the “central command” of the home. ■

How do voice assistants work?

Voice assistants work over wireless protocols for a variety of purposes, including being linked to services such as Amazon, Google, music applications, and more. They include proprietary control systems that, depending on the manufacturer, utilize that manufacturer’s algorithms and data for responsive control. This can include ordering from online stores, controlling specific smart devices, and even ordering pizza! ■

What are the challenges of voice assistants?

Voice assistants, in order to provide home control and other various capabilities, are always listening. This means that unless you turn off the speaker/microphone combo on a standalone speaker, the device can be listening to any potential conversations you have in a home. If a voice-enabled speaker is present in a home for sale, work with the selling agent to make sure it is turned off in order to keep your conversations with clients private. Some voice assistants also only control certain brands of smart home products, so before purchasing, check for compatibility with any existing devices. ■



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