

What I want for Xmas  
or  
What's on Your Wish List

# Commercial Products

- TV Features
- DVD / BluRay
- Remote Controllers
- Thermostats
- Smoke Alarms
- Home Automation
  - Hubs
  - Devices
- Voice Response

# Smart TVs

- Definition:
  - TV's that support apps to allow viewing of Internet streaming content (free and subscription services), i.e., NetFlix (\$9-13/mo), YouTube (free), Acorn (\$5/mo), ...
- Options:
  - Can pay extra for TV to get “smarts” feature
  - Can pay extra for DVD / BluRay with “smarts”
  - Add on to TV Amazon FireStick or Roku Stick
- Recommend:
  - Add on stick as TV or DVD “smarts” never updated for new streaming services

# 4K (UHD) / 3D Special Features on TV

- Recommend:
  - 4K – no broadcast programming, limited streaming or satellite or cable, good for BluRay/DVD
  - 3D – unless you are a gamer
- Types of TV
  - LED
  - OLED (costs twice an similar sized LED)

# Cutting The TV Cord

- Eliminate SuddenLink or DirecTV payments (\$80 to 150 per month) and you can still
  - Add a small indoor antennae (\$60+) to TV to get local over the air stations. Be sure to try first as some of our homes have shielding that will reduce signal strength
  - Add streaming services for movies

# DVD / BluRay

- BluRay is popular standard, DVD older
- Recommendations:
  - Do not pay extra for “smart”, add sticks on TV
  - Do you still play DVDs? Many just use streaming services

# Remote Controllers

- Harmony Universal Controller (\$50 to 300)
  - Consolidate multiple remote controllers (TV, DVD, Roku, FireStick, etc)
  - Depending on version can also control Philips Hue Lights

# Thermostats

- Smart Thermostats can be much more easily programmed than default thermostat that comes with home
- Recommendation:
  - “Best of Breed” Nest Thermostat about \$200
- Installation:
  - Likely need spare wire to be connected inside furnace

# Smoke Alarms

- Default BRK FirstAlert Smoke (\$15) and Smoke+Co2 (\$35) alarms installed in most of our homes
  - Batteries need to be replaced each 6 mos or yearly
  - I have had to replace the combo alarms multiple times in six years
  - Beeps under multiple fault conditions and hard to figure out which alarm of interconnected alarms is causing fault.
    - I believe they are preprogrammed to start beeping in middle of night; never during day when climbing ladder isn't so bad!

# Smoke Alarms

- “Best of Breed” Nest Smoke+Co2 Alarms (\$99) are smart Internet enabled alarms
  - Talk to you and tells you:
    - which alarm raised alert
    - what is happening
  - Connects to cloud service for central notification and monitoring. Set up private username & password for your home.
  - Recharger and rechargeable batteries included
  - Installation:
    - Requires work on ladder to replace mounting bracket and minor rewiring (5 mins per alarm)
    - Max 5 mins to program (select location name from list, home router name and password, cloud service username and password)
- Recommendation:
  - What is piece of mind worth?

# Smoke Alarm Listeners

- Internet enable devices that listen for smoke alarm and connect to cloud service
  - Cloud service send notification to phone(s) on alarm or when it doesn't hear from listener for some period
- Leo (\$50)

# Home Automation Controllers

- Variously called hubs, bridges, controllers depending on brand – SmartThings, Wink, Wemo, Philips
- Support one or more radio communications protocol
  - ZigBee
  - Zwave
  - 433 Mhz
  - WiFi – usually used for setup and connection to cloud service
  - Thread – mesh network used by Nest devices
- Devices to be supported normally only have one radio protocol
- Recommendations:
  - Choose device types you want to control then select controller
  - SmartThings – good radio coverage, will work locally
  - Wink – excellent radio coverage, requires Internet service (although local operation for switches and lights has been announced there is no documentation)

# Voice Response

- Recommendations:
  - Amazon Echo (best for music playing) or Dot – wide variety of devices supported and growing quickly
  - Google Home – outstanding voice recognition and response, automation should eventually be good but too early
  - Apple HomeKit uses Siri

# Home Automation Devices

- Smart Lights
- Smart Switches / Dimmers
- Smart Outlets
- Door Locks
- Garage Door