

“Smart” in every way thanks to AI, voice control, and connectivity

Home appliance trends at IFA 2018

Major and small domestic appliances are celebrating their ten-year anniversary at this year’s IFA from August 31 to September 5: manufacturers of major and small domestic appliances and their diverse and innovative products have been a part of IFA in Berlin since 2008. Trade visitors and consumers visiting the show will be impressed by the industry’s high performance and innovation again this year.

Increased connectivity in appliances continues to stand out as a development feature, leading to ever smarter, more versatile products. The functionality of connected devices, already quite high, will be enhanced even more this year. This is because of two overriding trends in the home appliance industry in general: voice control and artificial intelligence (AI). Both are appearing more and more in major and small domestic appliances, making them more versatile, more efficient, smarter, and more user-friendly.

Development in both market segments has been positive for over ten years, and both product categories reported growth last year. The reasons for this are uninterrupted innovation from manufacturers and more and more versatile and high-performance products. Not only do major and small domestic appliances help out at home, but they also make work more comfortable and save time and resources. They make life healthier, richer, often more comfortable, and they provide for positive experiences, fun and wellbeing. Preparing and enjoying meals, for example – alone or with friends and family – becomes an important event.

With their high technical standard and innovative and comprehensive functionality, domestic appliances have in many cases long taken over the role of a personal assistant of sorts. The connectivity they need to communicate with smart applications has increasingly become part of the world of major and small domestic appliances. Connected appliances can exchange information with one another, record personal

habits, and make and implement suggestions for improvement or optimization. That means that connected appliances save the user time, capacity and resources. They also provide many tips, such as for saving energy, caring for laundry, or new recipes and preparation methods.

Connected domestic appliances are conventionally managed and controlled using mobile end devices and respective apps. A user can request the latest program status, messages, or information on care, maintenance, and service for each appliance. Thanks to integrated cameras, checking the oven or the fridge from a distance is also no longer a problem. “Direct” controls using gestures and speech are increasingly commonplace. The advantages of voice control are obvious, as the appliances can still be used when hands are full – a clear benefit improving ease of use.

Concepts with integrated artificial intelligence allow for appliances that can think, learn, and give the user practical suggestions and tips. The result makes everyday life a little easier providing more comfort, safety, and efficiency. For years, domestic appliances have also been leading in the ever-important areas of sustainability, energy efficiency, and conservation of resources. Each new generation of appliances is further optimized to consume the lowest possible amount of electricity, water and detergents.

With reduced and improved consumption as well as countless technological innovations, the purchase of a new domestic appliance makes sense for many reasons: new, more comfortable means of use, financial amortization within a short time, and then there is also the design. Major and small domestic appliances are often true design objects – different from what the much-used term “white goods” would have you think. These products feature fine, high-quality materials and excellent design, often combined with fresh colors.