

CES 2018 ...

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Tucson Computer Society

April 5, 2018

This annual event is always full of interesting stuff. Some of it is very new, often not even available yet, but still being shown to exhibit a company's forward looking aspect.

One of the most notable ideas was the implementation of Artificial Intelligence (intelligence displayed by [machines](#), in contrast with the natural intelligence displayed by humans and other animals). AI was shown by many companies in products that not only communicate with IoT devices, but also take action as a result of that communication.

One example was LG's mechanical assistant Cloi, which can communicate with their refrigerator, identifying the foods contained, when they expire, when supplies of each food are getting low and advising to refill, and offering recipes that use some of the contents for meals.

Another example is the air filter offered by Filtrete. Their Smart Air Filters contain a Bluetooth sensor that tracks filter life based on air flow and usage rather than just time, monitors air quality, and remembers filter performance level and size.

The implementation of IoT devices continues strong. Many more devices with this capability were on display, with

increased abilities. There were quite a few applications which have a broader range, communicating with their own company's devices, but also with many others as well. There were several IoT apps that were designed to protect your IoT devices from harmful invasions and from the hacking we've heard so much about.

VR, virtual reality, is ever more popular and widespread this year. Its use has expanded from 3-D amusements to training, medical applications, and safety issues.

In past years, the growth of ever-expanding TVs of larger size was promoted by several of the large manufacturers. This year the emphasis is instead on quality of picture. The trend to OLED screens is dominant. These OLED screens allow the set to be very thin, yet have an superb display. The 55" and 65" sized ones predominated.

Everyone is aware of Siri and Echo. It's amazing how this field has expanded this year. There are several more "assistants" and each can connect with more things. This trend will undoubtedly continue.

Last year there were quite a few Smart Home products, but this year the display area was crowded with these products. A Smart Home involves the control and automation of lighting, heating (such as [smart thermostats](#)), ventilation, air conditioning, and security, as well as home appliances such as washer/dryers, ovens or refrigerators/freezers. They usually have a central hub that

connects with other devices. Prices can be as low as \$100.

Cars were a favorite subject as in past years. Although there were the usual sound installations that produce the loud, booming bass that we object to so much when that car is beside us, this year's emphasis was more on dash features. These include navigation, sound system, and special warning signals to help prevent accidents. The other predominant subject was autonomous driving, with display vehicles that include the accessory sensors to allow driverless movement.

These are the prominent subjects that I saw and though were important at this year's CES. I look forward to even more “newness” next year!