



NOT SO SMART HOW TO SEE

The Pitfalls, Frustrations, and Hidden Costs of the Hi-Tech DIY Dream Home

For the first time in recent memory, I had to call tech support. It wasn't for my computer or my smartphone. *It was for my house.*

This summer, I had the bright idea to connect my home to the Internet. As anyone who has walked into a Home Depot recently can tell you, the future has supposedly arrived. And it's called the Internet of Things. The idea is that all the gadgets and devices in our home — including light bulbs, security cameras, door locks, smoke alarms

and thermostats — will be connected online and can be controlled wherever there is the Internet, such as on our smartphones.

Did the babysitter lock herself out of the house? Did you leave the lights on? Forgot to lower the thermostat? No worries. The solution is a few screen taps away.

So to join the future, I picked up dozens of so-called smart products with the mission to install them myself. These products are touted as “plug and play,” meaning they are supposed to just work. But as I soon learned, that could not be further from the truth.

A STORY BY NICK BILTON