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EDITION

AGING IN PLACE

LIBERTY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

+Internet of Things

+Smart Homes

+Home Security

+Devices/ Software/ Support

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Aging in Place: Liberty Through Technology

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Introduction

We are in a time that allows us to benefit greatly from technology.

These benefits can be for all ages and types of people. This technology can also be a double-edged sword as there are ways to expose your private and financial information to those that wish to exploit, steal, or scam.

The best way to benefit from technology is to understand the basics. Senior citizens can specifically take advantage of modern technology by using it to enrich their lives and, in keeping with a growing trend, utilizing it to help them with Aging in Place. Imagine ordering your groceries with a device in your kitchen and having the fresh groceries delivered that same day.

But what is this Internet of Things that enables all these so-called smart devices? What is a smart home or even a smart device? How

do you protect your personal information and smart devices connected to your home internet? How do you behave while on the internet? How do you keep learning how to use technology while aging in place? How do you deal with all these questions and keep your head on straight?

All these questions and more are answered below in our Aging in Place with Technology paper.

Aging in Place



Figure 1 Jeff Sheldo on Unsplash

Aging in Place is becoming an ever increasingly popular topic among those preparing for or just entering retirement.

Why not live in a comfortable home and be independent at this age? The U.S. [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

defines aging in place as "the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably,

regardless of age, income, or ability level". Aging in place includes being able to plan for your home, health care, finances, travel, and entertainment. While making a plan for aging in place one has to consider how technology can assist with this process. How can a smart home be beneficial for those that want to age in place? What

is the role of smart home security and all devices connected to your internet? How is a personal tech support team and its services part of this process?

To understand this better one has to learn how all these devices that amplify living at home are connected. This is what is referred to as the Internet of Things (IoT).

The Internet of Things (IoT)

What is the Internet of Things (IoT):

The IoT is a term that has become new to many in recent years. At its creation it was a difficult concept for most people

to understand. Today we all have experienced and either been around or used devices that are considered part of the IoT.

This term refers to the interconnection of computers, the internet, and software included with everyday devices that allows for the exchanging of information with devices that are connected to



Figure 2 Hannah Joshua on Unsplash

specific networks. The IoT is connectivity of a device to the internet or other devices. This can range from a cell phone to watches, coffeemakers, thermostats, and even lamps!

Basic Explanation of the IoT

In the simplest sense, the IoT is a concept of connectivity. It is the idea of connecting any device with an on/off switch to the internet, and multiple of these devices to one another.

The devices associated with the IoT are pretty extensive. For example, cell phones, watches, lamps, coffeemakers, refrigerators, thermostats and cars are just a few devices that have been created with IoT capabilities. Basically, the IoT is a large network of these connected “things” and the intelligent use of data collected and stored by and through their relationship with the internet.

One example of current IoT technology is the [Nest Smart Thermostat](#). The Nest Smart Thermostat is a thermostat that’s connected to the internet. With smart technology, it collects data and learns your family’s routines, adjusting the temperature accordingly. Based on whether the inhabitants of a house are away

or home, awake or asleep, the Nest Smart Thermostat adjusts the temperature up or down. In addition, the thermostat can be managed via a smart phone, and it has the ability to alert users when problems arise with their heating and/or cooling systems.

You can take this concept and apply it to other devices. Almost anything with an on/off switch and internet capabilities can utilize the IoT. By not relying on human interaction, the IoT can promote increased efficiency and save energy. On a large scale, this could have dramatic implications for things like healthcare and transportation networks.

History of the IoT

The vision of intelligent, communicating devices was around even before the launch of the internet. Some of the major milestones of development are simply the growth of the internet and the way it has evolved over the past several decades.

A list of these milestones can be found [here](#), but an overly basic summary follows the evolution of the internet. First, the internet connected people to content. Then, it connected people to services. Later on, it connected people to people. Now, it is connecting things to things (IoT).

The term IoT was thought to be coined in 1999, by Kevin Ashton, during a presentation for Procter & Gamble. Ashton, the executive Director of Auto-ID Labs at MIT, spoke about the idea of computers capturing and sharing data without any help from humans. He

explained how direct communication between devices would allow for increased efficiency and get rid of human limitation.

Machine to Machine solutions (M2M) is a subset of the IoT. It is basically a broad label used to describe technology that allows networked devices to communicate and perform actions without manual assistance from humans. Machines talking to machines (things talking to things) is essentially the foundation of the IoT.

Impacts on Consumers and Society

Consumers

As a consumer, you may already have personal IoT devices. New cars come preloaded with IoT applications, and fitness trackers use the IoT to tell your friends how much you've been exercising.

If you are less familiar with IoT devices or simply wish to imagine a world where all of your devices are connected and communicating, take this for an example:

It's Monday morning. A calendar on your phone prompts a bedside alarm to go off at a certain hour. This alarm is familiar with how much time it takes you to get ready for work, and by knowing your routine, it chooses an hour that will allow you adequate time to prepare.

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