

Preface

Smart home technologies promise to transform domestic comfort, convenience, security and leisure while also reducing energy use. But delivering on these potentially conflicting promises depends on how they are adopted and used in homes. This book is one of the first attempts to explore systematically how and why people use smart home technologies, and what impact this has on different aspects of domestic life. The book starts by developing a new analytical framework for understanding smart homes and their users. Drawing on a range of new empirical research combining both qualitative and quantitative data, the book then explores how smart home technologies are perceived by potential users, how they can be used to link domestic energy use to common daily activities, how they may (or may not) be integrated into everyday life by actual users and how they serve to change the nature of control within households and the home. The book concludes by synthesising a range of evidence-based insights, and posing a series of challenges for industry, policy and research that need addressing if a smart home future is to be realised.

This book should appeal to an audience of researchers, policymakers and practitioners including smart home technology developers, designers, manufacturers and retailers. For researchers, the book is targeted at those with interest in the areas of energy social science, human–computer interaction and user-centred design. The book demonstrates the value of cross-cutting, integrative research questions and approaches across these disciplines. For policymakers and practitioners, the book is targeted at those with interest in the development and diffusion of smart home technologies, including those focused on the potential contribution of smart homes to a smarter, more efficient energy system.

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Smart Homes and Their Users

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