

To summarize, research conclusively demonstrates that gamification transforms self-care from an internal process into a stressful, external performance. Users begin to work for the application's validation rather than their own well-being. This phenomenon reflects large – scale changes in society, where the basic aspects of human life, such as health and recreation, are turning into measurable achievements that require public confirmation. True well-being in the digital age may therefore depend not on total optimization, but on the ability to disengage – to reclaim the right to be occasionally unoptimized and listen to oneself beyond the metrics.

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## **SMART HOMES: MANAGING EFFICIENCY AND DIGITAL RISK IN THE MODERN ERA**

### **Умные дома: управление эффективностью и цифровыми рисками в современную эпоху**

The main goal of this work is to highlight the key problems in smart homes and how to make smart homes highly secure while keeping them easy and efficient to use.

A smart home is a home or working environment, which includes the technology to allow the devices and systems to be controlled automatically [1]. The contemporary smart home represents a significant evolution in how we interact with our living spaces, marking a pivotal moment in the digital transformation of domestic life. By connecting different smart devices and systems together, smart homes offer a new level of control and ease for homeowners. However, going fully digital also brings serious challenges.

The foundation of any smart home is built upon either wireless or hardwired systems, each presenting a distinct set of trade-offs. Wireless systems are celebrated for their ease of installation and relatively accessible entry cost, making them a popular choice for smaller residences or rental properties. However, they work well only with a strong and

stable Wi-Fi connection. This might require buying extra equipment like Wi-Fi extenders. On the other hand, wired systems are seen as a more reliable and durable solution for the long term. They offer enhanced security by being less vulnerable to remote hacking and can actually increase a property's resale value. While their installation is far more costly and invasive – often requiring integration during new construction or major renovation – they provide an adaptable and reliable foundation for a fully connected home [2].

The true functionality of a smart home comes from its connected devices working together in harmony. Devices and systems like smart TVs, thermostats, door locks, kitchen appliances, plugs, lighting systems, security cameras systems [3]. For instance, smart thermostats learn user preferences and automatically adjust the climate based on temperature and humidity, optimizing energy consumption. Lighting can be managed from a distance, put on smart timers, or activated by motion. At the same time, automated blinds can change their position depending on sunrise or sunset. Security is revolutionized through video doorbells, cameras providing live feeds and automated locks, all monitorable from a smartphone anywhere in the world.

The decision to adopt smart home technology ultimately involves a careful balancing of its advantages against its drawbacks. The benefits are substantial: the convenience of controlling an entire home's functions from a single device is transformative; enhanced security through real-time monitoring provides unparalleled peace of mind; and the potential for long-term cost savings on energy bills through optimized appliance usage is a significant financial motive. Conversely, the disadvantages demand serious consideration. As with any internet-connected device, these systems are potential targets for cyberattacks, requiring vigilant security practices like strong passwords and regular software updates [2].

In conclusion, smart homes are fundamentally reshaping domestic life, offering a revolutionary approach for control and automation: they empower individuals to manage their personal environments with a previously unimaginable degree of precision. The key to a successful and secure smart home experience lies in making deliberate choices, adopting a phased approach and maintaining an unwavering commitment to cybersecurity, thus harnessing the full potential of our digital future while managing the risks properly.

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