

Openings

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Advancing technology of automation adds benefits

Nice UK

www.niceforyou.com

By Charlotte O'Farrell

The technology of home automation continues to improve, with greater control and flexibility, and new ways to ensure user safety at the forefront.

Automation is an increasingly large part of the internal blinds industry, whether it's used for high up or hard-to-reach windows, for the sake of convenience or style, or to automatically open and close depending on the time. The use of this technology is becoming more widespread in commercial and residential settings.

Nice UK's newly-launched Era Inn product is on the cutting edge of what can be achieved with automation technology. Winner of the InnovAction Award and named the 'most innovative product' at the R+T Shanghai exhibition this year, Era Inn shows how versatile such products can be – and how product developers

in the industry are working on ways to overcome the issues usually associated with traditional blinds.

Part of the attraction of automated systems is their increased safety over manually operated models. The lack of cords removes the most dangerous aspect of traditional blinds, while modern automation systems go further still: Era Inn has a sensitive obstacle detection function that is 'top of the range' within the industry.

This is compatible with all sorts of blinds – roller, Venetian, Roman and pleated – and is backed up by a 'soft start' and 'soft stop' option. These features mean automation systems can be the perfect solution for areas with young children or animals present.

Alongside the safety of the systems themselves, modern automation systems for internal shading can be a great way of protecting the security of a building. They can be timed to open and close at certain times, hiding the fact that the building is

not occupied.

Residential users may find this a particularly useful feature during holidays or other prolonged absences. It can also be extremely useful in buildings with materials that are sensitive to light or temperature, such as libraries and galleries or areas housing fresh produce.

There have been further technological developments in other areas. Automation allows perfect alignment between blinds, which is extremely difficult to achieve with a manual blind, and the smoother movements associated with motorisation can mean the blinds last longer due to less daily wear and tear on the materials.

One of the problems traditionally associated with automated blinds - the noise - has been greatly reduced by advances in motors – today's models are the quietest ever. The Era Inn has been designed to minimise the vibrations associated with opening and closing, further cutting down on unpleasant noise.

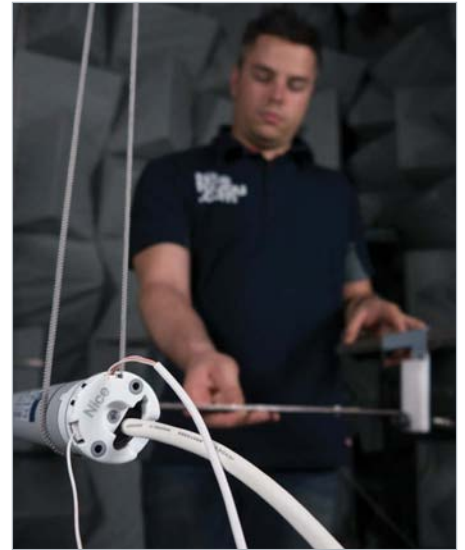
Modern internal shading automation systems such as the Era Inn are much easier to install, maintain and control than their predecessors. Designed with versatility in mind, the Era Inn can be adapted to almost any space, either domestic, public or commercial.

For interior spaces with hard-to-reach windows, an integrated system in which all of the blinds can be controlled together could be the easiest option, and with sturdier and longer lasting motors, there will be less maintenance or replacement needed once the system is installed.

The technology of automation has improved greatly in recent years and innovations continue to appear. Nice places a high value on continuous product improvement because its products are developed in-house at specialised research and development labs, meaning Era Inn is the result of



rigorous testing, development and innovation, leading to improved performance. As technology continues to



evolve and become more user-friendly, automation systems are likely to become much more widely used.

Roller system offers an even bigger lift



Lutron Electronics

www.lutron.com/europe

By John Christoyannis

Lutron Electronics, a global leader in light control systems, has been a proud contributor to the British automated blinds industry for more than 10 years.

Based on our pioneering precision-controlled and ultra-quiet Sivoia electronic drive, Lutron has launched a number of shade products, including

internal roller blinds, curtain tracks, Venetians, and tension shades.

As part of our effort to make shading automation a more accessible solution, in recent years we have introduced our Triathlon battery-powered shades. These offer a battery life of three to five years, with easily replaceable batteries.

They are available as roller or honeycomb blinds, while maintaining our shades' reputation for precision and quiet performance. Triathlon shades use Lutron's proprietary and reliable wireless

technology called Clear Connect, and can be seamlessly integrated into a Lutron home control system via the QS protocol.

Now, as part of our ongoing expansion in battery-powered shades, Lutron is proud to introduce the Triathlon WIDR roller blind. WIDR can lift a 3.65m square fabric panel with a roll-up diameter of only 7.6cm. The Battery Boost option means it offers the same three to five years' battery life, and the shades are also available in an elegant, fabric-wrapped fascia.