Update on New Smart Home Features Now Generally Available (GA)

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Smart Home   News

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During our fall launch event, we announced previews for a number of Smart Home features to help you build even more exciting experiences for Alexa customers. Of the features we previewed, several are now Generally Available (GA), including **semantic extensions**, support for **garage door controllers and shades**, updates to the **cooking API**, **inventory sensors** and **networking API**. See below for a rundown of what each feature does, and resources to help you get started.

Semantic Extensions

Last fall, we introduced toggle, range, and mode – each with their own general voice model – as building blocks for Smart Home developers to easily model a wider range of device functionality. Now, with the addition of semantic extensions (generally available), you can map these building blocks to specific voice models that better fit the device's functionality.

We have launched four semantic extensions to support utterance that use "open", "close," "raise," and "lower" commands, which are more natural ways for your customers to speak to their smart home devices. Examples of how these semantic extensions can be used are "Alexa, open the window" and "Alexa, lower the movie screen." These new semantic extensions can be used to deliver seamless control of devices such as projector screens, windows, water valves, closets, drawers, garage doors, gates, curtains, shades, blinds, awnings, and more.

To get started with semantic extensions, check out the technical documentation here. You can refer to the preview announcement of semantic extensions here.

Garage Door Controllers and Shades

The semantic extensions "open", "close," "raise," and "lower" are especially relevant to garage doors and shades. With these extensions, garage door and shades developers can now fulfill requests across a wider, more intuitive variety of commands. Garage door openers from Nexx will be Alexa-enabled, designed using the mode controller, with open and close semantic extensions (coming soon) to support phrases such as "Alexa, close the garage door." Additionally, shades from IKEA can now easily make those

halfway", "Alexa, open the <device name> to 80%" and more.

To get started with using these new semantic extensions, check out the technical documentation for garage door openers here and for shades here. You can refer to the preview announcement of semantic extensions here.

Cooking API

Last year, we introduced cooking capabilities in the Smart Home Skill API that allow you to enable customers to control microwave ovens and other appliances that cook by time or preset. Now, we are releasing enhanced cooking capabilities (generally available) which allow you to enable Alexa control of conventional ovens, pressure cookers, coffee makers, toasters, slow cookers, and more, and to enable Alexa customers to check cooking progress from other rooms in the house. GE Appliance ovens, June Oven, and Traeger Grills are all taking advantage of these new cooking capabilities today.

With this release, Alexa Smart Home developers now have access to 40 new modes, including air-fry, bake, pressure cook, roast, and slow cook, and can enable customer commands like "Alexa, cook ribeye steak to medium rare in the oven." Additionally, you can use the Alexa Cooking TemperatureController to enable customers to set the temperature on a device without specifying a duration (e.g. "Alexa, preheat the oven to 350 degrees,") cook food until it reaches a given internal temperature (e.g. "Alexa, smoke the pork to 204 degrees in the smoker,") and even combine mode, temperature, and time in one command (e.g. "Alexa, bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes.")

Lastly, with the Alexa Cooking TemperatureSensor and FoodTemperatureSensor, you can enable customers to ask on the current status of their food by voice. For example, a customer could say, "Alexa, what is the temperature of my oven?" or "Alexa, when will the food be done in the oven?"

To get started with using these new enhancements to the Cooking API, check out the technical documentation here. You can refer to the preview announcement here.

Inventory Sensors

With inventory sensors, Alexa will let customers know when supplies used by your device are running low or parts need replacement. To further simplify the process of (re)ordering, customers can set up smart reordering through Dash Replenishment so that supplies are automatically reordered before they run out.

Any connected Alexa Smart Home device that requires the use of a consumable or has replacement parts can take advantage of inventory sensors. This can include printers (ink), thermostats (air filters), toothbrushes (toothbrush heads), washing machines (detergent), dishwashers (detergent), vacuum cleaners (dust bags, brushes), and more. Inventory sensors allow you to ensure that your customers always have the supplies required for their device to run at its best.

To get started with using inventory sensors, check out the technical documentation here. You can refer to the preview announcement here.

Networking API

With the new networking API, you can build the capability to enable your customers to manage Wi-Fi access for devices through voice. Customers can ask Alexa to restrict Wi-Fi access for individual devices or for groups of devices, so they can pause access for specific family members. They can say "Alexa pause the Wi-Fi" to pause Wi-Fi access for all devices when it's time for dinner, or "Alexa turn off Wi-Fi for PlayStation" or "Alexa, turn off Daniel's Wi-Fi" to restrict access for specific devices. Customers can also say "Alexa, enable guest Wi-Fi" when relatives visit.

Using Alexa routines, customers can also schedule Wi-Fi time limits for kids and automatically pause Wi-Fi during bedtime or homework time. Manufacturer eero has already launched their skill using the networking API, with more skills on the way from TP-Link and ASUS over the coming weeks, and support for Linksys and Arris routers coming soon. To get started with the networking API, check out the technical documentation here. You can refer to the preview announcement here.

We are excited to see how you use these features to build some incredible experiences for Alexa Smart Home customers!

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