

Press release

Awareness of smart home among Dutch consumers doubles since 2015

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Google Assistant surpasses Apple Siri as the best-known virtual assistant

Amstelveen, the Netherlands, 5 September 2019 – Awareness of smart home continues to rise in the Netherlands, where 62% of consumers now say they are familiar with the concept. This number has doubled since 2015. Over two-thirds of these consumers own at least one smart device. On average, consumers who are familiar with smart home own four devices, according to the 2019 Smart Home Monitor published by research company GfK in collaboration with the Smart Home Society.

Smart Journey

Among consumers who own one smart product at home, 42% of them own a smart TV. Most consumers are consciously pursuing a 'smart journey' by purchasing energy-saving solutions such as a smart thermostat or a smart energy meter. These consumers often go on to purchase smart entertainment products and lighting solutions as well. When purchasing new electronics, 63% of consumers that are aware of smart home technologies consciously select a smart option. While major electronic brands are still top of mind for most consumers shopping for new smart devices, there has been a strong increase in awareness of smart home appliance brands in recent years.

Highly educated men aged 18-49 with an above-average income are the most likely to own smart home solutions. Among consumers who have not purchased any smart home products previously, 51% prefer to have the products installed by a professional. Dutch consumers choose smart home products above all for the convenience, energy savings and pleasure they provide. The more smart products a consumer owns, the more benefits they recognise.

For owners and non-owners of smart home electronics alike, deterrents from purchasing smart products are the same: in addition to purchase price, which 37% of respondents cite as a deterrent, security is a key concern. Privacy issues and fear of hacking are both ranked number two on the list of deterrents. However, consumers also see smart home products as a solution for improving home security. Compared with last year, twice as many consumers now expect to fully convert their homes to smart technologies within the next two years.

Google tops the list of best-known virtual assistants

Ownership of smart speakers is rapidly increasing. Among consumers familiar with smart home technologies, nearly one in five owns a smart speaker.

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Smart speakers from Google, such as the Google Home and Google Mini, are the best known (57%) and most commonly owned (15%). Trailing somewhat behind is Amazon, which is known among 24% of consumers for its smart speakers, including the Amazon Echo. There is growing awareness of brands that focus on sound quality, such as Sonos, JBL and Harman.

The Google Assistant has experienced a major increase in recognition, with over 63% of consumers saying they are familiar with it. That makes the Google Assistant the best-known virtual assistant, with a 25 percentage-point increase in consumer awareness compared to last year. As such, it has now taken the top spot from Apple Siri. Meanwhile, Amazon Alexa ranks third among the best-known voice assistants, recognised by 27% of respondents. The preference for voice control has slightly increased, going from 16% in 2018 to 19% this year. Above all, consumers want to be able to control their smart TV, lighting and thermostat with voice commands, and they expect to be able to use spoken commands to play music and make adjustments to their smart devices around the house.

Barbara Schouten, Key Account Manager Technology at GfK says, *'Since we started conducting this survey, the smart home market has come of age. Awareness of smart home technologies has doubled since 2015, now reaching 62%, thanks in part to the rise of speech recognition technologies. Yet there are still significant challenges that the market must overcome in order to achieve general acceptance, specifically when it comes to the topics of privacy and security. This is why it is so important to bundle the knowledge of manufacturers, retailers and installation technicians with regard to products and privacy - and security-related issues. This is the idea behind the Smart Home Society, an initiative that GfK is affiliated with.'*

To learn more about the 2019 GfK Smart Home Monitor, please contact your GfK account manager or send an e-mail to salesupportnl@gfk.com.

About the GfK Smart Home Monitor

GfK has conducted the Smart Home Monitor each year for the past five years. For the second year in a row, we collaborated with the Smart Home Society, an initiative of the industry-wide organisation Techniek Nederland, Guilty People, GfK and BSH, with the goal of bringing smart home technologies to the masses. Premium Partners of the initiative now include BCC, D-Link, Gigaset, Netatmo, PostNL, Somfy and 50five.

The survey covers the following topics: awareness, ownership and use of smart home and voice-operated electronics, privacy and data security concerns, the smart journey, and the transition from a single smart device to a smart ecosystem.

The survey targeted a sample of 1,004 respondents representative of the Dutch population aged 18+ . It was conducted in July 2019 among consumers responsible for major purchases in their households who are familiar with the term 'smart home' at least by name.

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