Log Home Automation? Excuse Me?

On first hearing the term “home automation”, most log home owners will say something like… I didn’t build a rustic log home to turn it into a high-tech, silicon powered “smart building”.I couldn’t agree more, the ever-changing technology of our fast-paced, hyper get-ahead world is one of the things most of us were trying to leave behind. But don’t let misinformation *sell to home buyers* (or misunderstanding) keep you from achieving your original goal of simplifying your life.Most of us can recall the first time we felt the excitement of making a light turn on with a timer, or changed channels on our TV with a remote control. A home automation system is about automating everyday tasks like those while getting the most from our energy dollars and protecting our home. Further good news is that we don’t have to call in the professionals to make it all happen.Today’s home automation products are effortless to set up, even for non-geeks, and the cost is amazingly inexpensive. A typical starter kit, which includes home automation software several modules, remote controls and sensors is less than $100. Also, one of the best features of these systems is that you don’t have to leave your computer turned on for everything to work (additional modules for lamps and appliances cost as little as $15).A company called X10 is the leader in inexpensive home automation products and offers a product called ActiveHome Professional (learn more here). After programming by your computer, an interface box communicates with your appliances through your home’s electrical wires. You can program the system to do amazing things using the ActiveHome Pro software. It is possible to lower your energy bills by developing schedules for lights and appliances.You can download a plug-in from X10 that permits modules to operate on an “if-then” basis. For instance… if a room is dark and motion is detected, lights can be turned on in sequence, or music can play (or an alarm can activate). You are limited only by your imagination. In fact, X10 also offers a free software development kit that can interface with your e-mail. The point is, you can use the command modules to perform basic functions or get as creative as you want.ABC Television’s Popular Show Extreme Makeover Home Edition has a reputation for finding and showcasing the latest technology into the homes they remodel and build. The X10 ActiveHome Pro products have been featured on the show.So, you may have chosen to escape the city by building a log home in the country, but inserting a little technology in the mix will help you achieve your dream of simplifying your life. Its never been easier or more affordable to put home automation to work.

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