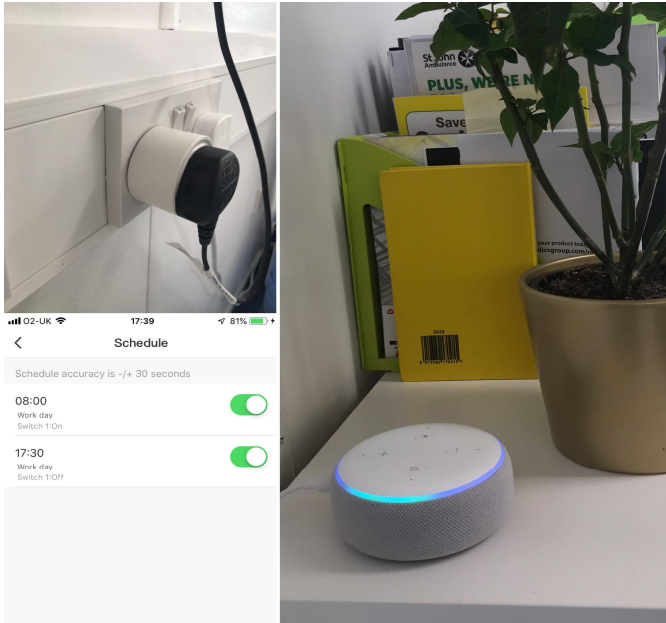


## ALEXA – Moving with the times



Where:  
**The Madison, London E14**

When:  
**2019**

Who:  
**UKCS London Regional**

*“Instant access to a whole spectrum of valuable information is ingenious”*

**John Watts, MEP Project Manager, Balfour Beatty**



### The Challenge

There are 24 of us and one secretary. Whenever you walk through reception there are numerous paper notes with question, action or instruction requests. To address this issue we have found a solution that revolutionises her duties. Not only is it environmental friendly, efficient and simple, but technologically advanced too!

### The Measures

We have installed PIR lights in the office, not only to have a positive impact on the environment but also to save costs and energy use by ensuring the lights don't stay on for longer than necessarily. Building on this idea, we thought about doing something similar for staff computers, photocopier machines and the reception television.

We installed an Amazon Alexa. A virtual assistant with compatible wifi smart plugs. The smart plugs enable you to set the plug to switch on or off at a pre-determined time. The relevant 'Alexa skills' were linked via wifi to the smart plug application. Time schedules have been setup for photocopiers, the television and computers. Schedules can be managed either via the app or through voice commands. The plugs can also be turned on/off manually.

### The Results

Introducing Alexa had an immediate reduction in paper waste. Voice commands replaced paper note requests. A To-do-list was created in Alexa to which staff can add various requests. This has helped her to make prioritising easier & significantly increase efficiency. It has also improved the reception appearance.

Stationary list – Staff simply walks to reception and ask Alexa to add their item to the list. For every voice command, Alexa creates a written entry under the specific title in a folder. Our secretary now only uses the 'Alexa compiled list' in the Alexa application once a week to create an order. This

has resulted in a more disciplined ordering system, and a marked reduction in multiple deliveries to site, which in return has reduced emissions & impact on the environment.

Staff enjoy the benefits of 'on demand' travel updates before leaving the office, making them aware of any travel disruptions, in which case alternative travel arrangements can be made.

The appointed lifting person benefits from Alexa's on demand weather update. He can ask for a specific wind update in order to plan the day's hoist and crane programme.

Alexa is programmed to call the Police or an Ambulance on voice command without the need to enter a telephone number. It is also programmed to provide the site specific location, particularly important in a case of an emergency.

Smart plugs do not only save costs but also have a positive impact on the environment.

The reception television has been scheduled to turn on at 08:00 & switch off at 17:30 five days a week. The computers and photocopier machines are scheduled to turn on at 06:00 and turn off at 20:00 to accommodate the late working rota.

We are currently considering the Alexa business package to continue developing the office environment, and aid us in taking even bolder steps into the future.

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