This smart garage door controller is no longer very smart

The Chamberlain Group – owners of the MyQ smart garage door controller tech – has announced it's shut off all "unauthorized access" to its APIs. The move breaks the smart home integrations of thousands of users who relied on platforms such as Homebridge and Home Assistant to do things like shut the garage door when they lock their front door or flash a light if they leave their door open for 10 minutes, or whatever other control or automation they wanted to do with the device they bought and paid for.

The move comes a year after Chamberlain discontinued its official Apple HomeKit integration and a few months after it finally killed support for Google Assistant. It's sadly another example of how the company continues to be hostile to the interoperable smart home.

Last week, in a blog post, Dan Phillips, chief technology officer of Chamberlain, explained the reasons behind its latest move:

> *Chamberlain Group recently made the decision to prevent unauthorized usage of our myQ ecosystem through third-party apps. This decision was made so that we can continue to provide the best possible experience for our 10 million+ users, as well as our authorized partners who put their trust in us. We understand that this impacts a small percentage of users, but ultimately this will improve the performance and reliability of myQ, benefiting all of our users.*

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The MyQ was the first connected garage door controller on the market. It launched in 2011 to solve problems like being halfway to the airport to start a two-week holiday and having to turn around because you can’t remember if you shut the garage door. Today, it’s both a standalone device that can connect to and control your existing garage door opener and a technology integrated into Chamberlain and Liftmaster garage door openers (Chamberlain owns Liftmaster).

People were relying on “unauthorized integrations” because Chamberlain doesn’t have any useful authorized ones

This means if you’re like *Verge* reader Mike Dougherty, who first alerted us to this situation, and you have a Chamberlain door opener with the MyQ tech built in, you now either have to buy a whole new opener or a third-party controller device like the Meross Smart Wi-Fi Garage Door Opener remote to get back the functionality you used to have.

“Out of general principle, it irks me to know that my garage door opener has built-in smart functionality that I will no longer be using,” he said. “I hate that I have to add an additional device (and yet another IP address on my network) to serve the purpose of functionality that I have had for years. But if I want HomeKit as well as Amazon Key, this looks like the way it has to be.”

The bait and switch here is another warning to consumers about the downsides of buying cloud-integrated products, which the manufacturer can change the functionality of at any moment.

The reason people were relying on “unauthorized integrations” is that Chamberlain no longer offers any useful authorized

ones for those who want to do more than control their smart garage door opener with the MyQ app or through their vehicle software.

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Despite being the main partner for Amazon Key, Amazon’s in-garage delivery service, MyQ has never worked with Amazon Alexa. Its half-hearted Google Assistant integration (which only allowed you to close the door remotely, not open it) has died a slow, painful death that included an attempt to charge users for the privilege of closing their doors with their voice.

While it was one of the first Apple HomeKit accessories, MyQ no longer supports new HomeKit integrations, having discontinued its $70 Home Bridge Hub that enabled the integration last year. Today, the only open smart home platform MyQ is compatible with is IFTTT, which is cloud-based and requires a paid subscription for setting up more than two of its “applets.” (Following publication, several IFTTT users reached out to say that integration is currently broken as well. Chamberlain’s Marenson says this failure is not related to the latest change and that they are “actively working to resolve it.”)

I asked Chamberlain Group what it recommended its customers who relied on these now-defunct integrations do. “We have a number of authorized partners that we will be happy for people to use,” said spokesperson Christina Marenson, pointing to its .

However, those partners are primarily smart security companies with monthly subscriptions (such as Alarm.com and Vivint) and car manufacturers. The Ring integration is just a shortcut to the MyQ app. Marenson did confirm that if you bought a Home

Bridge Hub, HomeKit integration will continue to work. But Chamberlain no longer makes that product, and she said there is no other way to integrate your MyQ controller with Apple Home. (Note: the MyQ Home Bridge Hub is separate from the Homebridge platform, which is an open-sourced software solution to bring devices into Apple HomeKit).

Chamberlain just left over 200,000 people without workable solutions

Interestingly, Chamberlain has been ramping up its car company integrations with a new MyQ software solution, , which integrates its smart door controller technology directly into a car's software platform. This has spawned partnerships with as well as more recently with Honda, Acura, and Mercedes-Benz. It appears this type of lucrative partnership is where it wants its customers directed, not playing around in free smart home platforms.

Marenson points out that this change only affects a small number of users, "around 2 percent" of the customer base. However, considering Chamberlain just announced it has 10 million users of its MyQ platform, that's around 200,000 people who have been left without workable solutions.

I spoke with Home Assistant founder Paulus Schoutsen, whose platform's MyQ integration has been available since 2017. He said Home Assistant has reached out multiple times about becoming an "authorized partner" but that Chamberlain has not officially responded. "Nor would we ever pay to integrate with a manufacturer. It's a user that wants to access their own data," he said.

Schoutsen just published a blog post on the situation explaining why Home Assistant is pulling the integration and suggesting users buy Ratgdo. Here's a look at this and other options for anyone looking for a way to reestablish their smart home's functionality.

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a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin [&>a]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-white”>Tailwind iQ3 Pro smart garage controller

Canadian company Tailwind’s $90 smart garage door and gate controller has wide smart home integration, including Apple HomeKit, Amazon Alexa, Google Home, Samsung SmartThings, Home Assistant, and more, plus support for Android Auto and Apple CarPlay (through HomeKit). Tailwind also offers a local control API for developers.

It’s expensive but comes with a commercial-grade wired sensor that will not fall off the door and send you a false alert that your garage door is open (something that happened to me multiple times when testing wireless sensors on smart garage door controllers). It also has a very neat auto-opening and closing tech built in and supports up to three doors.

Tailwind is one of the only alternatives to MyQ that complies with the UL safety standard for remote garage door controllers, and Tailwind will ship the additional hardware required for Chamberlain Group openers with your order for free.

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dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-white”>iSmartgate garage door controllers

iSmartgate’s garage door controllers work entirely locally and are compatible with gates as well as garage doors. The Spain-based company also offers wired and wireless sensors. The iSmartgate Mini starts at $40 and works with Amazon Alexa, Google Assistant, IFTTT, and Samsung SmartThings, but it’s not UL-certified.

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If you want Apple HomeKit, you need the iSmartgate Lite for $140. For the UL safety features such as an alarm and flashing lights plus support for three doors, you need to step up to the iSmartgate Pro for $200. If you have a Chamberlain Group opener, you’ll also need to buy iSmartgate’s $25 Universal Switch Adaptor.