My Home Assistant Setup

I am currently abandoning my previous smarthome solution "digitalStrom" after 10 happy years using it. There are multiple reasons, which i may write about later, but basically one can say it hasn't aged well: the web UI is still the same as 10 years ago, 0 development went into it, so it isn't responsive and it even doesn't fully work anymore on modern browsers (presentation issues, issues with zooming etc.). Also, the company has shifted away from the original hacker friendly and open source based approach, holding annual dev days etc, to basically doing everything closed and hidden away from the users. What really pushed me over the edge where two things.. 1. i started having more and more interference issue on the powerline side, first caused by my EV when it was charging and later caused by unidentified sources which i was never able to isolate.. support helped once but could not entirely fix it. they have adjusted frequencies for the powerline side, but would not go into detail on how i can fix this myself in the future. sadly the problem reappeared half a year later in exactly the same way. It led to me having to cycle the Circuit breaker of certain circuits in my house every few hours, to keep the light switches working, which is not acceptable. also when searching for the devices causing issues, they gave me a list of devices, that are prone to cause issues on digitalStrom and well, it was basically everything we use nowadays, including EV charging stations, Solar Inverters, Air conditioners, non-resistive ligts such as LED lights, switching power supplies for phones, notebooks, tv's, you name it.. so literally everything that uses power in a modern house. Last but not least, they refused to continue to support me, because i had changed their **default root password** which, as they have defined now, voids any warranty. That's simply not something you can do in 2024, force a user to keep a default root password on a device that is connected to the cloud and made available to the publich through a reverse proxy... no no no... that was the end of it for me

so I am now in the process of migrating to Home Assistant mainly with shelly 1 devices with ESPhome firware attached behind my Switches and zigbee for my lights. right now i am still in the process of figuring it all out, the target is to have a system that is smarter than digitalstrom was, integrates more stuff and better but when the shit hits the fan (server down, wifi down or ethernet down) still allows basic funcitonality like lights on and off. I believe ESPhome on the shelly devices can give me exactly that in combination with zigbee lights and home assistant for the good times, when everything is working :)

In this article i will cover how I've installed different parts of the whole setup, but this is a work in progress and probably will be for as long as i am using home assistnat :)

Zigbee

I am using Zigbee2MQTT and not ZHA, because i was intrigued by the lager list of supported devices over ZHA. As a Coordinator I am using the very recommended and cheap SLZB-06. Mosquitto will be the MQTT Broker and it will be installed in HAOS.

MQTT

I simply went to the add-on store and installed Mosquitto, no further config was done, simply start it and hope for the best :)

Zigbee2MQTT

you need to add a repository first, go to the installation instructions for Zigbee2MQTT and copy the repo url, then go the the add-on store and click on Repositories and add it there. the url at the time of writing this was `https://github.com/zigbee2mqtt/hassio-zigbee2mqtt`

now reload the home assistant page and then install the "Zigbee2MQTT" Addon.

now enable all options like show in sidebar, watchdog and start on boot, but don't start it yet. head over to Configuration where we want to add something to the "serial" line. in order to find the right url to add there, open the SLZB-06 ip address in a web browser, then go to "Z2M and ZHA" and copy the `port:tcp:…''` *line from the Zigbee2MQTT configuration example. add this URL in the "Serial" input line on the Configuration pate of the Zigbee2MQTT addon in home assistant, then start it. in a Video from digiblur DIY I learned, that we should change the Zigbee channel to 15 instead of 11, to reduce the risk of overlapping chatter on Wifi Channel 1. To do that, click on the Zigbee2MQTT menu Item and then go to settings —> advanced and scroll down to find the channel setting. Change it and restart Zigbee2MQTT now we can start pairing devices. simply click on the "Permit join (All)" button and put your zigbee device into pairing mode. ==== Integrate MQTT ==== Next up, we need to integrate MQTT into home Assistant, so that we can start using devices through MQTT. To do so, go to "Settings" in home assistant and then to "Devices and Services". Find the MQTT device and click on "Add" and then "Submit". It automatically adds Mosquitto as MQTT Broker and should then immediately find Zigbee2MQTT Bridge, letting you chooes an area for it. Leave it empty and click finish. You should now be able to see all your zigbee devices listed under the MQTT devices.*

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Last update: **11.11.2024 00:28**