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AT HOME

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KING KONG
2-DISC SPECIAL EDITION

ULTIMATE
CONNECTED HOME
OVER $750,000

BLISS HOME THEATERS AND AUTOMATION, WESTLAKE VILLAGE, CALIFORNIA

BY CAROLYN HEINZE

You know your home is high tech when your automation system is capable of controlling the mist in your steam bath.

Such is the case for the owners of a newly constructed, 32,000-square-foot residence in the Colorado mountains. The home, configured in a compound-style U-shape, is comprised of several different buildings: the main house, which makes up the middle portion of the "U" and is comprised of the kitchen, living areas, and master bedroom; adjacent houses for guests and the caretaker; an "entertainment home" for the theater, billiards room, game room, and bowling alley; and a "carriage house" for additional bedrooms, a spa, sauna, steam room, exercise facility, and technical rooms.

As this year's winner of the Crestron Ultimate Connected Home Award in the $750,000+ category, the total cost of the audiovisual systems was $4.3 million. The systems were designed and integrated by Bliss Home Theater and Automation in Westlake Village, California.

George Bliss, Chief Technology Officer

at Bliss Home Theater and system designer for this project, explains that the homeowner was seeking "extreme automation." "He wanted to have all of the current automation that was available today, with the capability of upgrading to future automation as it becomes available," he says. "He also wanted touchpanels that were readily available in every room to control the house."

At the heart of the system are two

Crestron RACK2 controllers that are accompanied by two Crestron PRO2 controllers handling the lighting systems. These latter units control 97 Crestron CLX dimmer modules and 11 infiNET™ dimmers. One hundred and fifty-five CNX-B2 keypads provide control for all of the lights, either separately or as part of programmed scenes.

William Brewer, systems engineer at Bliss Home Theater and programmer for this
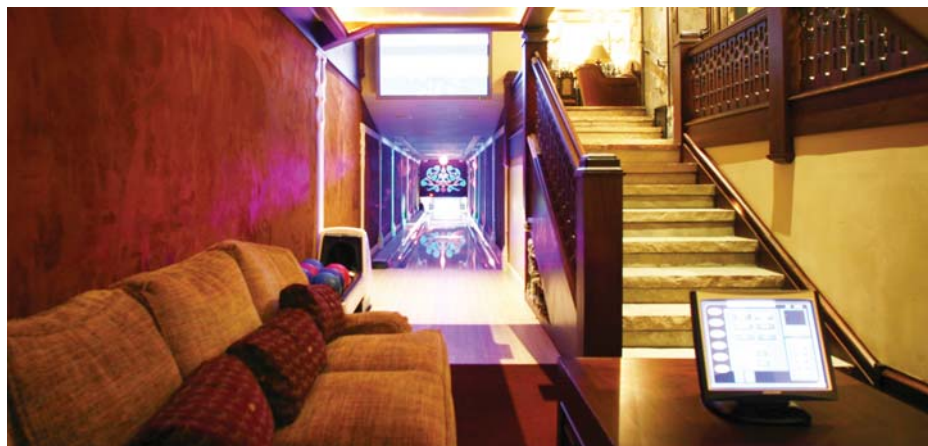
project, explains that each lighting processor is located in a different equipment room. "Because of the size of the house, we had to use two lighting processors," he says. "There are two equipment rooms. Some of the lights are wired to one equipment room and others are wired to the second equipment room. We had to use a lot of networking data processing communications to make it all work in a cohesive manner."

Control functions for lighting, shades, HVAC, access control, and audio distribution is available via eight large-format Crestron TPS-5000 and six TPS-6000 touchpanels, in addition to 17 smaller TPS-2000 and four STX-1700CXP interfaces.

Audio distribution for the intercom system is provided by a Crestron C2N-IADS, which is integrated with all of the large format touchpanels and five door stations. A C2N-IVDS distributes video to the door stations and all large touchpanels, enabling residents to monitor the security cameras.

There are 12 audio/video systems on the site, 11 of which are configured in surround sound. Displays for these systems are comprised of a combination of LCD and plasma televisions. These systems are controlled by way of Crestron STX-1700CXP, TPMC-10, and ML-500 interfaces. Plasma lifts were installed in the master bedroom, as

simulator are controlled by Crestron TPMC-10 and TPS-6000 interfaces that are mounted in a mechanized drawer that is housed in a coffee table.

In the bowling alley, a TPS-6000 — which features a "Touch the PC" function — controls the pinsetter scoring computer, in addition to Quad Force lights, Grove Wheel lights, strobe lights, fog machine, and audio/video system.

Residents may view the mountains and nearby ski runs via a high resolution, color PTZ camera, which is integrated with several of the large format touchpanels. Weather news is accessible via all of the large touchpanels via a Davis Instruments Vantage Pro II.

miles of wire in order to meet the needs of what we were installing, as well as for what might be installed in the future," he says. "We also ran a lot of conduits for wire that might need to be pulled in the future."

The volume of touchpanels also required the integrators to plan carefully. "Most homes have one or two large touchpanels, and then a few small touch panels," Bliss says. "There are a lot of sub-systems in the home, such as plasma televisions with surround sound, and so on."

Brewer notes that Crestron's extensive offerings enable a uniformity that can't be achieved with other automation systems. "They have products that cover all kinds of situations, and it makes things very easy to integrate," he says. "Some of their competitors don't have such a broad product line, and you must integrate a lot of things with third-party equipment. That becomes more difficult, and the results aren't quite as good. Using Crestron equipment, you have a much smoother interface, and you can do much more."

Bliss describes this residence as a truly "smart" home. "This house knows when it's unoccupied, and goes into an energy-saving mode. It knows what time of the day it is, and will adjust shades, lighting, and HVAC accordingly in order to conserve energy," he says. Without this technology, a house of this size would require a butler; turning the lights on and off would take up a considerable chunk of time each day, if the lights weren't controlled from one source. The house is so large that you would need to hire a person to manage the home, or you could install a Crestron system. This house needed an automation system in order for it to be properly engineered."

well as the bedroom and living room in the guesthouse.

Robert Bliss, head of sales and design for Bliss, designed the home theater. Images from the Digital Projection IS8-2K projector are displayed onto a Stewart Filmscreen screen mask. The 7.1 surround sound system and D-Box Odyssee motion

The homeowner has remote access to the control functions of this home through Crestron e-Control XPanel software.

Bliss notes that one of the most significant installation challenges was running the wire that was required in order to integrate all of this equipment. "It's a very large house, and we pulled approximately 96

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