

# Lake Ontario Home

OAKVILLE, ON

CASE STUDY | RESIDENTIAL

## ➔ Challenge

Take the stress out of daily living for two busy physician homeowners.

## ➔ Solution

Use flexible Crestron control technology to make their home basically 'think for itself.'



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— **Dr. Carol Parlow**

*Homeowner*

## Good Morning

*Crestron technology automates beautiful lakeside home*

Rise and shine has taken on a whole new meaning at the lakeshore home of Drs. Carol Parlow and Joseph Fairbrother. Their luxury condominium on the northern shores of Lake Ontario awakens even before they do. As the first rays of sun stretch over the lake, outdoor lights begin to dim, kitchen lights come on and window shades rise, exposing a breathtaking morning on the water.

As busy as these two physicians are, they found a way to get their day started as simply and smoothly as possible. Better yet, their Crestron technology has added a level of sophistication that makes their smart home brilliant all day long.

The 'Morning' scene is just one of ten programs designed to fit the doctors' lifestyle, even when they aren't home. Integrator OneTouch Automation in Oakville, Ontario, incorporated a Crestron control system that takes command of the home lighting, entertainment, temperature, security, and even the fireplace.

“Now that we're in a modern place, we thought control should be modern as well,” says Dr. Parlow, who describes herself as a tech geek. “We just knew it should be easy to get everything automated, like the music, lighting, and shades.”



While the doctors go about their daily routines, so does the condo, but that doesn't mean they can't take over when they want to. While some programs are set to run automatically, like the 'Morning' scene, others are triggered by the doctors.

They have complete control over just about every piece of technology in their home from a 24" Crestron touch screen located in the kitchen, a smaller touch screen in the master bedroom, and either a hand held or wall mounted Crestron keypad in every other room of their home.

## First things first

OneTouch Automation began their design and programming work with the automated scenes that include lighting control.

"It's the most important system in the house," says Naz Kawsar, OneTouch principal. "You always have to have lights." Lights come on to light the doctors' way in the morning, when they arrive home at dusk, and even dim to five percent in the hallways during the night. "That's enough light for someone to walk around safely, but not too much to disturb someone else sleeping," says Kawsar. "The 'Night' scene also keeps the outside lights on from dusk to dawn."

With 23 floor-to-ceiling windows and patio doors, the next order of business was shading. "When you have a lot of blinds on the windows, the thought of opening every single one is a little overwhelming," says Dr. Parlow. The OneTouch programmers set up the

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*OneTouch Automation*

shading to open and close automatically as needed throughout the day.

For example, the living room shades will lower mid-day, just as the sun's rays begin to come through the window and heat the room. This helps to cool the home without burdening the air conditioning system, and to protect expensive furniture and carpeting from sun damage.

The Crestron 3-Series® control system features a powerful built-in astronomical clock. OneTouch used this unique feature to its advantage by programming shade activity based on sunrise and sunset rather than a specific time of day. Shades and lights adjust at the perfect moment every day without any manual intervention.



“Without the astronomical clock, it would be very hard to determine when sunset happens on, say, January 7th or October 5th,” says Kawsar. “We just input the latitude and longitude of the home and the system automatically adjusts the time for the shades to lower or rise, based on the position of the sun. Obviously the client can always adjust them when they’re home.”

Another advantage of the shading is the hundreds of different fabrics Crestron offers, including designer fabrics by Hartman and Forbes®. However, what really sold the doctors was their motorized silence.

“When we showed them the shades, they were very impressed with how quiet they were,” says Kawsar. “If you stood under the shade, it could touch you on the shoulder and you’d turn and say, ‘Wow, there’s a shade coming down,’ but you would not hear it.”

Dr. Parlow chose a translucent shading material for all the windows, with a second blackout shade installed in the bedrooms. Custom-made valances hide the digital, brushless motors, while the translucent material allows light to filter through the room but block the sun’s harmful rays in the heat of the day. A touch of the ‘Privacy’ button raises or lowers all the shades in any given room.

## Creating concert quality sound

Once Kawsar and his team felt comfortable with the lighting and shading designs, they began working on the home audio and video systems, with audio taking priority.

“Dr. Parlow has a huge collection of music and she wanted to hear all the music uncompressed, the way it was recorded,” says Kawsar. “We loaded all her music and movies onto Crestron’s digital media server and installed high quality ceiling speakers to play it back at the best possible quality.” Audio sources include the media server, AM, FM and satellite radio, plus a Crestron docking station for the iPod®.

Video sources include cable, Apple TV®, and a Kaleidescape® movie server for DVD and Blu-ray™ discs.

Each room has a Crestron light switch and either a keypad or touch screen for full room control. The doctors can select audio sources, browse through music libraries, play songs, and adjust volume from the touch screen or keypad in the room. For addition convenience, the light switch also features buttons for volume control. “It’s like you are in a concert hall,” says Kawsar. “It’s an out of this world experience.”

## Simply stated

It was important to the doctors that operating this system would be simple, even though there are many components to a system of this size and scale.

From the kitchen touch screen, they can simply drag-and-drop an audio or video source icon onto the room or area they choose and instantly enjoy the content. They can call up any programmed scene, check the weather, control the lighting and shade position in any given room, adjust the heating or air conditioning, and



even go online, all by simply touching an icon. They can also watch TV from the same 24" panel.

"I like the fact that you can have different sources in different areas of the house," says Dr. Parlow. "My husband might watch the Masters in the living room, while I have music on in the kitchen." Dr. Parlow also has the ability to project her laptop contents onto any video display in the house, which allows her to easily review patient files at home.

"I don't have a specific office in the house. I want to look at my work on a big screen because I have trouble seeing it on the small screen. Instead of having an ugly computer monitor sitting on a desk in the middle of the room, I can just sit down in a chair and display it on a large screen TV."

## Don't panic

The doctors initially told Kawsar what they wanted the home to do on its own, but they added and subtracted things after living there for a few months and figuring out their routine. They have presets for just about every scenario, even ones they hope never to use. A push of the "Panic" button flashes all the lights in the home until help arrives, while going on vacation couldn't be made any easier.

"If you go on holiday, you press a button and it simulates your behavior when you're home," says Dr. Parlow. "So the lights go on and off and the shades



go up and down, making it look like you're home. The last thing you do before going out the door is press the 'Vacation' button."

## Welcome home

It's always good to arrive home after a long day's work, but for the doctors, homecoming is as simple and welcoming as possible.

A push of the garage door opener triggers the garage lights, the interior hallway lights that lead to the elevator, and several other lights, while soft music begins to play throughout the condo.

Without a doubt, Crestron has given the doctors the kind of living experience they wanted. The most comprehensive technology offered today, combined with a luxurious living environment, makes home life simple, safe, and stress-free.

Integrator  
OneTouch Automation  
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