



Crestron home technology helps Boston-area residential integrator build long-term relationship

Located in the Boston suburb of Westwood, MA, the 23,000 square foot home features Crestron whole-house automation. The homeowner called on Sudbury-based Home Entertainment Expo (HEE) to upgrade the existing AV and distributed audio systems. Crestron home technology took the design to lofty new levels of total home control in virtually every room.

The Challenge

The simple upgrade to the satellite TV system transitioned into a whole-house solution when the homeowner expressed interest in using other technology throughout the home. Systems Integrator, Jim Ares made some design suggestions, and his company was retained to upgrade the whole-house audio system.

The Solution

Ares and his team immediately began designing a new system that would replace all of the home audio components, saving

only the speakers and speaker wiring. As the audio system was installed, the owner also asked HEE to build a video system for the bar and begin work on a home theater.

“The homeowner was getting more and more comfortable with what we could do, and based on our early work he said, ‘OK, let’s do some more,’” notes Ares.

Crestron home entertainment and control technology was selected to integrate and automate all home systems.

Systems at a Glance

The audio system includes two Crestron CNAMPX-16x60 amplifiers and two Crestron CNX-BIPAD8 distribution processors, controlled by Crestron PRO2 processor. The system provides 16 separate audio zones, so that each family member can route the programming of his or her choice, from a wide variety of sources, exactly where it’s wanted.

Family members can control and switch each source from one of four Crestron wireless touch screens, three wall-mounted touch screens, and several 12 to 20-button wall



panels (one in every room and hallway in the house). There are also two Crestron WPR-48 waterproof wireless remotes; one for the outdoor pool and one for the indoor spa.

“We told the homeowner his kids could play with these remotes, even drop them in the water and they wouldn’t hurt anything,” adds Ares.

Theater and Game Room

The home theater Ares designed is unique. The original construction included a shell for a theater, but five years after the rest of the house was finished, the homeowner hadn’t moved forward with the build-out. HEE handled the entire project, from a high-end projector to acoustical treatments and theater seating. The integrator even subcontracted the carpentry, drywall and carpet installation.

As they finished the theater, Ares and Expo began integrating a home automation system, controlling the existing lighting, HVAC and security systems with the Crestron processor. That Fall, they added four more zones of audio, a telephone and intercom system, security cameras and gate control. Family members can view and speak to visitors at the front gate via each of the touch screens, as well as open and close the gate from anywhere in the home.

“Everyone loves this room,” Ares says. “It was a lot of fun to build.”

Since then, Ares and HEE completed two major upgrades to the home IP network, introduced streaming video and audio applications, added two more zones of outdoor audio, and incorporated Crestron control to the homeowner’s Apple® iPhone® and iPad® via Crestron Mobile Pro® and Mobile Pro®G apps.

“ We needed something that would integrate easily with many different manufacturers. Crestron allowed us to do all of that and do it well.”

Jim Ares, Systems Integrator, Home Entertainment Expo

“Crestron provides a control app for Apple® mobile devices, Mobile Pro® G, which we used to add Apple® support to the processor,” Ares explains. “We customized the app and installed it on each device, turning it into a wireless control for the audio, video, lighting, security and HVAC systems.”



Why Crestron?

Ares says he originally used Crestron components for three reasons.

1. “We needed a reliable control system. The homeowner brought us into his house because the system he had originally purchased, built by a competitor to Crestron, did not prove to be very reliable or flexible. He was definitely looking for something better.”

“In addition to that specific concern, I’m biased toward Crestron because I don’t want to have to go back into a house to make repairs or adjustments. And in fact, over the last seven years we have not had to repair or replace a Crestron component. We’ve had problems with TVs, with cable and satellite receivers, with lighting and with a music server, but the Crestron systems controlling all this equipment has worked flawlessly.”

2. “We needed something that would integrate easily with many different manufacturers. Because we added our systems into an existing house, we needed a system that would integrate cleanly with what was already in place, give us feedback, and allow us to diagnose and hopefully correct any problems from off site. Crestron allowed us to do all of that and do it well.”

3. “There were certain specific functions that we wanted to do that would have been very difficult or impossible with other systems. For example, there are very few companies that make anything similar to the CEN-TIA telephone interface. I suppose we could have integrated the phone system, gate access and touch panels some other way, but this was the best way.”

In the end, it comes down to trust. “If we make a promise, we have to deliver,” Ares says.

“The Crestron products work now and continue to work year after year, even when things happen that we can’t control. If the power goes out, for example, will the system come back up and work correctly without a service call? With this system, yes, it always has and we’re confident that it always will. Our client feels good about his investment and what we’ve been able to do for him. That means everything to us.”

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