

Eastside Memorial

WATERBURY, CT

CASE STUDY | SERVICES

Challenge

To create a comfortable and inviting atmosphere for viewing and make funeral planning easier through flexible, user-friendly AV and control systems.

Solution

Install Crestron control solutions for the audio, video, and presentation systems to provide full customization options with tablet control capabilities and security features.



Funeral Home of the Future

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People are amazed at how tastefully we are able to personalize a funeral or memorial service with modern technologies, while maintaining the respect and dignity of the deceased.”

— Garrett F. Casey III

Eastside Memorial Funeral Home

When most people think of a funeral home, the term “high-tech” is probably not the first thing that comes to mind. But high-tech, along with “flexible,” “convenient,” and “home-like,” are all accurate descriptors of the new Eastside Memorial – A Casey Family Funeral Home and Tribute Center in Waterbury, CT.

“Being one of the largest funeral homes in the state, the Casey Family was looking to set themselves apart and offer services that others can’t,” said Jared O’Mara of Smarhome & Theater Systems, the Milford, CT Crestron dealer who designed and installed the AV and control systems that help create the comfortable, inviting atmosphere that’s so crucial in the funeral home business.

With the aid of this new Crestron technology, Eastside Memorial employees are better equipped to help clients make difficult end-of-life choices in a warm and welcoming environment. In addition, when the time comes for the funeral service, friends and family of the deceased receive a completely customized experience.

“Eastside Memorial’s modern approach and technical advances are the way of the future in funeral homes,” O’Mara says. “This unique facility can accommodate anything from a private ceremony for 20 people up to a tribute with hundreds or even thousands of people in attendance. The environment is always warm and inviting, despite the circumstances.”



In addition to the funeral home, the new location features 275 parking spaces, a community center, and a medical facility.

"When we decided to relocate our family-owned and operated funeral home from an outdated, small and traditional space to a brand new, larger space, we knew we wanted to incorporate many of the new technologies that are just starting to be used in the death care industry," says Garrett F. Casey III, owner/manager of Eastside Memorial. "When we met Jared from Smarhome & Theater Systems, we knew right away who we were going to entrust with our new state-of-the-art facility."

Smarhome & Theater Systems chose Crestron control solutions to integrate the audio, video, and presentation systems across the space, providing control via in-wall keypads or a tablet with Crestron XPanel software installed.

Technology at-a-Glance

The viewing area, where funeral services are held, consists of 18,500-square-feet of divisible space, which can be configured as one very large room, two large rooms, or four smaller rooms.

Technology systems include 11 pairs of in-ceiling speakers for distributed audio through a Crestron Sonnex® multiroom audio system. Designed with flexibility and expansion in mind, the Sonnex system

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Smarhome & Theater Systems

provides numerous inputs to manage all the stereo audio sources, both analog and digital. Inputs include a docking station for the iPod®, DVD player, computer, and 300-disc CD changer, along with wired and wireless microphones for funeral services, as well as presentations. Local audio control is provided via Crestron 12-button keypads in each space to control functions such as source, volume, and on/off. The keypad can be locked during services so unauthorized personnel can't interfere with the system.

During funeral services, projection systems can play a life tribute memorial slideshow or display an appropriate backdrop on a 100" screen behind the



casket – anything from an image of a baseball stadium to beautiful pastures or a scenic sky. Additionally, 50" plasmas can duplicate the slideshow or play any video family members might request. For instance, family members might wish to produce their own video and have it shown on the 100" screen as well as the smaller screens, and even on the digital signage screens throughout the facility. Digital signage outside each viewing room indicates the name of the family in each room, along with a photo of the deceased, date of birth and date of passing, and a choice of 26 background settings.

User-Friendly Wireless Control

A Crestron processor controls the AV systems via an Android™ tablet with Crestron XPanel software for remote monitoring and management. Tablet-based control capabilities were an important part of the project, according to O'Mara. "The client wanted a wireless control solution that was so easy that any of the office staff can pick up the device, walk around the different viewing rooms, and configure them for the scheduled viewing."

By establishing pre-programmed scenes, users can select from the many configurations available with just one touch. For instance, users can select the "four room setup" or "two large rooms," and the AV systems will automatically adjust to that configuration. "Easy-to-

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understand choices make the system easy for anyone to control," O'Mara says, adding that the user can then walk around with the tablet and "tweak" the system, including adjusting volume or changing sources. Even when the in-wall keypad is in "lockout" mode, authorized personnel can still make changes via the tablet. The Crestron system also allows for minimum and maximum volume levels so that audio levels can never be adjusted in a way that is inappropriate for the setting.



Beyond Funerals

The AV systems installed in the divisible viewing rooms also enable Eastside Memorial to offer informative presentations that address common senior challenges, such as the decision to take out a reverse mortgage or financial planning for retirement. The funeral home can also bring in outside groups to discuss health issues, elder care, and other topics of interest to seniors. "We have already done several presentations for some local civic and neighborhood associations, which gives us the opportunity to showcase our facilities," Casey says.

Future possibilities for outreach events include bi-monthly civic meetings and a free movie night for seniors, all of which allow the funeral home owners to engage their client base and build a relationship before death care services are needed.

In the planning and arrangement/casket room, a 46" interactive touch screen enables family members to choose a casket, flower arrangements, and other options. It's just one more way technology helps create a uniquely comfortable experience during a difficult time. "The majority of our clients are not coming to us strictly based upon the technologies we offer," Casey says. "But it is an added value service we are providing to them that they would not receive anywhere else. Some guests have never seen this type of technology

before and are 'wowed' by the way we've chosen to integrate it into our new building."

Flexibility, Reliability, and Customization

O'Mara says he selected the Crestron control solution for its flexibility and customization capabilities, which allows Eastside Memorial to provide that tasteful, thoughtful, yet high-tech experience to clients.

"Lots of systems offer the ability to customize the programming, but they're still just music systems and that customization only allows for so much. Crestron is a complete programming platform, so any request can be accommodated."

The client agreed with this assessment. "We couldn't be happier with our decision to use Crestron," Casey says. "Between the ease-of-use, the reliability, and the flexibility to expand the system, we are comfortable knowing we made the right decision."

Integrator
Smarthome & Theater Systems
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