Beaverton, Oregon-based Audio/Video Awakenings is a residential Crestron dealer with a passion for the iPad™.

Audio/Video Awakenings was recently invited to bid on a state-of-the-art audio system with user-programmable radio presets, a controllable iPod®, the ability to view security cameras without having to go to a particular room, as well as off-site control for their security system, heating, cooling and future lighting.

The client had another manufacturer's audio system, but gave up on it because it had never been reliable or easy to use. AV Awakenings proposed a move to Crestron, and demonstrated Crestron functionality on an iPad connected to programmer Brent Christian's home. After discussing control options incorporating iPhones and the iPad, getting the clients to say "yes" was almost a formality, according to programmer Bill Reynolds. "An approach we've started that has proven very successful is to present bids in person," Reynolds said. "Clients can ask questions on the spot, and being able to use the iPad and iPhone as sales hooks for Crestron projects has been fantastic."

To identify the right solution, AV Awakenings set out to understand the existing system, identify products and how they were connected and review it all with the client. They then proposed the Crestron system and discussed additional options. The bid grew beyond the original scope, as the clients requested even more functionality.

"We see the iPad as a gateway to a broader conversation with clients about what a Crestron system could do for them. I don't see it as a replacement for touchpanels – especially in-wall touchpanels," observed Reynolds. "There are just too many instances where it wouldn't be practical. Imagine walking into the kitchen, grabbing the iPad, walking to other end of the house and then walking downstairs to the guest room to turn on the TV. Not going to happen. What the iPad does best is add value to what we can do with a system overall."

The project ultimately included replacement of the existing audio system with an AES (Adagio Entertainment System), supporting six zones of audio feeding nine rooms each with independent volume control. Security system control was added and security cameras were integrated to make them viewable on both a touchpanel and an iPad. The clients travel frequently, and the prospect of connecting to their home system via 3G was very appealing to them. Now they can check the home's security system from the road, and no longer have to return from a trip and wait for the house to warm up in the winter; the temperature adjustment can be done remotely and well in advance.

A CEN-IDOCV Interface for Apple® iPod® is located in the living room. A TPS-6L is in the playroom, and the barbeque patio, backyard and master bathroom have system and volume control on CNX-B12 12-button designer keypads. An iPad loaded with the Crestron Mobile Pro G app is based in the kitchen, primarily for local control, including the great room and media room – or wherever they choose to tote the tablet. "People really love to carry their iPads around," Christian said.

"The Crestron iPad app launches really fast," Christian added. "The only time it took more than a couple of seconds was when we first connected the iPad to the system to download the archive and all the images." AV Awakenings has a lot of clients that work from home, the majority of which are Mac users, so XPanel for Mac has been a huge selling point as well. "XPanel for Mac gave us another 'plus one'," said Reynolds. "We can offer control from an iMac or MacBook for smaller spaces where a touchpanel isn't ideal."

There is a plan to add lighting control in the future, starting with the porch lights and barbeque patio. The clients were especially interested in programming the porch lights with an astronomical clock event, so they don't have to remember to turn them on and off. Additionally, they mentioned the XM radios they enjoy in their cars, and asked if they could they access the same account in the house. AV Awakenings not only served up the tuner card, but programmed the system to provide the desired user-definable presets that the clients' previous system lacked.