

Brooklyn Apartment

NEW YORK, NY

CASE STUDY | RESIDENTIAL

➔ Challenge

Provide a reliable, easy-to-use, easy-to-maintain home automation system for a hard-working bachelor and business owner.

➔ Solution

Utilize Crestron Pyng™ to control Crestron lighting dimmers, thermostats, and audio products.



Easy Living

Crestron Pyng brings home automation to the rest of us

“

When I have people over for a party or a game, it's a much more enjoyable experience, simple and impressive at the same time. I don't have to worry about getting music together, setting up the lighting or anything else – I touch one button and I'm done!”

— Homeowner

Brooklyn Apartment

“There's a perception that home automation systems are only for the very rich,” says residential technology integrator Todd Anthony Puma. “People think the convenience and simplicity of an automated home are just too expensive for most of us to enjoy.”

While that may have been true until recently, it has certainly changed with the introduction of Pyng, Crestron's new home automation app. Puma recently used Pyng to help a client automate the audio, video, lighting, shading and climate control systems in his Brooklyn apartment.

“Once you have Pyng, you'll never want to live without it,” Puma says. “It's like going from a smart phone back to a flip phone. You didn't realize how great it was going to be, but once you have it, you really won't ever want to give it up.”

For this client, the new technology has made his home remarkably easy to enjoy.



Researching home automation

The homeowner says that when he decided to move to a new apartment last year, he started researching home automation systems. “I was looking for convenience and a little bit of a ‘wow’ factor,” he explains. He soon connected with Puma, owner of The Source Home Automation in Manhattan. They talked on the phone, and then Puma invited him to see the automation system he had installed in his own home.

“It was great to see how these systems work in a real home,” the homeowner says. He’s a big Yankees®, Rangers® and Redskins® fan, so when Puma showed him his home theater setup, he was impressed. “The surround sound in Todd’s home was unbelievable. I could see how it would really add to the experience when I have friends over for a big game.”

Puma also showed him his lighting system and how he could set up various scenes for different purposes: watching a game, throwing a party, even getting up for a late-night snack. “I thought that was very cool, but then Todd showed me how easy it is to incorporate your whole music library into your system.”

There was just one problem: the homeowner had budgeted carefully for a new audio and video system, but he didn’t think he could afford to automate the whole apartment.

“Then I showed him Pyng,” Puma says.



Once you have Pyng, you’ll never want to live without it. It’s like going from a smart phone back to a flip phone. You didn’t realize how great it was going to be, but once you have it, you really won’t ever want to give it up.”

— **Todd Anthony Puma**

The Source Home Theater, Inc.

Pyng almost completely eliminates the expense of custom programming. “We calculated the difference and found he could afford lighting, shading and climate control, as well as AV, for a price he was comfortable with. Best of all, we were able to put everything into one unified system using Crestron gear. It looks great, sounds great, it’s extremely reliable, and it’s remarkably easy to use!”



Installing the system

Puma says Pyng is affordable, not only because it eliminates programming, but also because the Pyng hub, and the Crestron Cameo® and infiNET EX® control units it operates are all wireless, so there's no need to install extra cabling. "We simply replace standard switches and thermostats with the Crestron versions, and we're good to go," he explains. Once his team has installed the hardware, they walk through the home with an iPad® and join each device to the Pyng network.

There are other preconfigured automation systems, Puma adds, but nothing as simple or flexible as Pyng. "With the other systems, you can very quickly find yourself in a bind," he explains. "If the manufacturer has not created a module you need, you have to go back to them and ask them to program it for you. That's expensive and very time consuming. But with Crestron you can control anything you want. If you want to install a hot tub, for example, and find that it's not part of the Pyng system, you simply install what I call a 'Crestron classic' processor, program it for that one item and then you can operate it from Pyng."

In the Brooklyn apartment, Puma's team at The Source used Pyng to configure the lighting, temperature, shading and audio systems, but he brought in his Crestron programmer, Rich Fregosa of Fregosa Design, to set up the video system.

"We set up three preprogrammed 'scenes,'" Puma says. There's a Party Mode which allows the homeowner to push one button to turn the audio system on, select a playlist, set the volume, turn the lights on in the living

room, hallway, and kitchen and turn the lights off in the master bedroom and office.

There's an Away Mode, which turns lights on and off in a pattern designed to make potential thieves think the apartment is occupied. "It's different every day," Puma says. "We'll have the kitchen lights come on for an hour, then the office for a couple of hours, the bath for five minutes, now the kitchen turns off. If someone is looking for a regular pattern, they won't see it, but they will see something that mimics a homeowner going about his day." Away Mode also turns the heating down to a lower temperature or the air conditioning off.

Finally, there's a Good Night mode, which features the shades all the way down and all the lights off, except the hall, which is dimmed.

In addition, Puma's team automated certain events to the time of day. For example, The Source originally had the shades go down fully just before sunset, and the main room lights come up to 75%, so that the homeowner had privacy when he came home from work.

Once an installer has launched the system, however, a user can access Pyng to create more lighting scenes or automate whatever functions he wants. On his own, the Brooklyn homeowner set up his shades to open just a couple of minutes after his alarm goes off in the morning. "I always like to hit the 'snooze' button and sleep a few more minutes," he explains. "But by the time my alarm goes off the second time, I have sunlight streaming into the bedroom, and that's how I know it's really time to get up."



He also modified the programming so that the shades lower just halfway at sunset to block the view from nearby high-rises, but not cut off his views of the street. He could have Pyng automatically close them later, but so far, he has not. “It depends on what I’m doing. If I have friends over, I like to control the shades via the touch screen. But I can always change whether I want them scheduled or not, and I can make adjustments accordingly with Pyng.”

Puma says making Pyng easy for the homeowner to configure was an inspired move on Crestron’s part. “My company is all about service, but nobody wants a technician hanging around their home. This way, if my clients want to change something, they can just take care of it.” Another advantage, he says, is his ability to access Pyng over a secure connection from his own computer or iPad. “If a client has a problem he can’t solve on his own, he can call or send me a text. My service is 24/7, and with Pyng, I can normally take care of it right then and there.”

In addition to the automation system, the homeowner had The Source install TVs in his living room and office, and audio throughout the apartment and on his balcony/patio. He has cable, Apple TV®, and music from his iPhone® and iPod®.

“One thing I find really great is that when I have friends or family over, they can play the music they have on their own phones over my system,” he adds. “I just give them my Wi-Fi® password, and as long as they have



AirPlay®, they can connect to my Crestron streaming player. Todd showed me how it works in his house. I tried it and loved it.”

The homeowner says entertaining is a snap with the new system. “When I have people over for a party or a game, it’s a much more enjoyable experience, simple and impressive at the same time. I don’t have to worry about getting music together, setting up the lighting or anything else – I touch one button and I’m done! And when it’s just me, or if my girlfriend is over, it’s nice to be able to relax, watch a movie, and turn down the lights without having to get up.”

“It’s not a necessity, but it’s very nice,” he adds.

Integrator

The Source Home Theater, Inc.
www.thesourcehometheater.com

Programmer

Fregosa Design
www.fregosadesign.com

Photos: Don Pearce Photographers, Inc.