

HOME Smart Home

Life under control

WEST SIDE STORY— CONTROL BY THE COAST

BIG EASY AUTOMATION

Jazzing up a home in
the French Quarter

BUCKLE UP

Automation earns
its racing stripes

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Hop in and let's take this sleek new issue of Home Smart Home for a spin! This month we get up to speed with the newest developments in home controllers, we cruise the latest in high-tech creativity, and we explore the roads less traveled.

Why am I in such a driving mood? Well, one of our stories features a smart homeowner who is also a racecar aficionado, and the way he's merged those passions together is truly inspirational. We also get to ride in the classiest of cars, an Aston Martin, while we visit an upscale home in London that's been even more upscale-ified. Then, there's the owner of a vacation home in Laguna Beach who gave his Control4 installer "the keys to the car," requesting that the installer let his imagination and capabilities go wild as he tricked out the home. As you'll see, this installer did not let his client down.

We will travel to an historic home in New Orleans' French Quarter and an unbelievable penthouse in San Antonio, and you won't be disappointed when you step out of that car and into our cover story—a smart home on the California coast. Really—this home could not be more on the coast. Wow!

It touches our hearts when we see Control4® systems making profound differences in people's lives. In this issue, we also get a heartfelt and honest essay from a mom who uses Control4 to dramatically improve the life of her autistic child.

Buckle up, and let's enjoy some high-velocity ingenuity!



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Life under control

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WHAT'S NEW?



OS 2.9, What a scene!

Make your day with new levels of personalization and enhancements from Control4 OS 2.9. Create your own "Wake" and "Sleep" scenes that include lighting, music, TV, shades, and temperature right on your touch screen or TV. Also new: "Experience" buttons that bring your fountain, fireplace and more to your touch screen, mobile device, or TV. You'll also find added control for blinds, roller shades, and drapes—and more sophisticated interactions including tilting motions and partial openings within a single control.

How's your network?

Stop for a moment and think about the number of devices in and around your house that rely on your home network. Ten years ago, this might have amounted to no more than a laptop, a desktop or two, and maybe a DVR. Today, your network is likely congested with tablets, TVs, media streamers, music systems, multiple smartphones—including those of your frequent guests—and maybe even a few appliances. And that's not even considering the fact that the home network forms the foundation for any home automation system.

Needless to say, the local airwaves in your own home are likely crowded and getting increasingly so. That's one reason that Control4 recently acquired Pakedge—creators of one of the most advanced, intelligent, and powerful networking solutions in the world.

What sets Pakedge apart from typical routers found at your local electronics store? First, an innovation called Pakedge Zones™. Think of these zones as individual networks within your home that segment and prioritize the various types of network traffic. You might have one zone dedicated to home automation, one for streaming audio and video, one for voice communications, one for web browsing and email, and another for guests who bring their own devices into your home. Better still, your installer can

prioritize each zone independently to ensure that devices needing the most bandwidth get the most bandwidth when they need it.

In other words, the different types of network-connected devices in and around your home exist in their own little island networks, so your laptop doesn't interfere with your home automation system and the Netflix stream in the den doesn't cause your security cameras to stutter.

The other big advantage of Pakedge's network solutions: truly custom WiFi designed and installed to provide perfect coverage for your home. Instead of relying on a single router in an out-of-the-way spot in your home, Pakedge relies on wireless access points placed strategically in walls or in ceilings around the home to give you perfect WiFi in every room (and even outside!).

"People have learned to just accept the mediocre experience of WiFi," says Control4 Director of Product Marketing Brad Hintze. "They've gotten used to walking to a different spot in the house to get a better signal. With a system like Pakedge®, improvements to wireless performance are immediate and obvious; the system has enough processing power and memory to support all of the wireless clients in the home, even if you host a packed dinner party. With Pakedge, mediocre WiFi is a thing of the past."

It's about time

The new Control4 Apple Watch Complication offers quick and easy access to your Control4 Smart Home. One tap on the face of your Apple Watch launches you immediately into wrist-control mode. (Just for fun and in case you didn't know: "Complications" is a watch-making term adopted by Apple to be applied to additional functions on a watch face.)



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INTRODUCING THE SIMPLEST WAY TO CONTROL YOUR ENTIRE HOUSE YOUR VOICE



Imagine this...

We've all been there—walking through the door into a dark house, arms full. Wouldn't it be nice to tell your house to offer a helping hand? Now you can. A simple voice command, such as "Alexa, turn on Welcome," lights up the hallway and kitchen, and fires up your favorite Pandora station, while the door locks itself behind you.

This is real. This is now.

This is Control4 home automation with Amazon Alexa.



Ask your Control4 Dealer to schedule a demo. Or visit Control4.com to learn more.

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Control Yourself

How much automation do you need for your home? The answer seems pretty straightforward on the face. For smaller homes, condos, and cottages, a little may do—perhaps a few connected lights, smart locks, and a modest entertainment system. For mid-sized properties, perhaps a bit more—a few extra zones of audio and some enhanced security. For larger houses to expansive estates or for those looking for control of virtually every device or system in their homes, the sky's the limit.

No matter the size of your sanctuary or the scale of the smarts you want to outfit it with, the new Control4 EA series of entertainment and automation controllers offers something for everyone, fit for your home and lifestyle.

EA-1: THE ULTIMATE ONE-ROOM CONTROL SOLUTION

Never before has any home automation solution offered so much power, so much flexibility, and so much potential in such a tiny package as Control4's new EA-1, the smallest and most affordable model in the new EA line.

"The EA-1 was purpose-built with the one-room entertainment experience in mind," explains Control4 Vice President, Solutions, Paul Williams. "What we're seeing out in the market is that it appeals to a whole new customer segment—providing a great way for first-time home automation buyers to get started."

Simply put, for most homeowners, the EA-1 represents freedom from the tyranny of a coffee table full of remote controls whose real purpose only one person in the house really understands. It's control, simplified: one remote to operate the TV, the satellite box, the media streamer, the Blu-ray player—all in the most intuitive way imaginable. Plus, it creates a foundation that can be expanded as your appetite for home automation grows, or as budget allows. Want to add a

smart door lock or two? The EA-1 is more than up to the task. A smart thermostat? The EA-1's scheduling and remote access capabilities make it a no-brainer. It's also a great way to add lighting control to the key areas of your home and tie them into your home entertainment experience so that the mere press of the "Watch Movie" button sets the scene perfectly for family night.

With its built-in HDMI port, IR control, serial control, IP control, ZigBee wireless, and ShairBridge wireless compatibility with AirPlay devices, the EA-1 is primed to tackle even the most complicated home entertainment systems with the utmost in speed and reliability. In a way, you can think of it as the ultimate universal remote control solution, but in reality it's so much more than that. After all, can your universal remote control stream studio-quality high-resolution music?

"One of the biggest advantages of the new EA lineup—the EA-1 included—is audio performance," Paul says. "Even with their existing amps and speakers, users will notice an immediate boost in sound performance when powered by an EA-1."



And you don't have to replace your entire audio infrastructure to go completely high-res." Using the same HDMI output that delivers on-screen menus to your TV or projector, the EA-1 is able to pass along high-resolution digital tunes to your receiver or AV preamp, and it even offers access to uncompressed, CD-quality streaming music services like TIDAL without the need for any additional black boxes.

What's more, since it's so small, so unobtrusive—and perhaps most importantly—so affordable, the EA-1 is perfect for expanding larger home automation projects into smaller rooms.

Speaking of which...

EA-3: MAKING MULTI-ROOM ENTERTAINMENT EASIER THAN EVER

As great as it is, there's one thing the EA-1 can't do, at least not on its own: provide the foundation for a multi-room entertainment and automation system. "The EA-3 is a great crossover device from the one-room entertainment experience into a more complete whole-home experience for mid-sized homes," Paul explains. "With the EA-3, you can go all-in, whole-home, in a space that's not exactly palatial or that doesn't have too many devices."

As a general rule of thumb, Control4 recommends the EA-3 for homes with 30 or so connected devices, which may include a couple of TVs, satellite receivers, and Blu-ray players for each TV, a surround sound system in the main living room, a Roku or two, smart locks on the front and back door, security cameras around the home, and Control4 dimmers or switches for every light in the house.

The real beauty of the EA-3, though, is that with one device, you can deliver three rooms' worth of audio playing at the same time. You don't need separate music players in each of those rooms, nor are you



You might have a scene for dinner preparation, another for a quiet family night at home, and yet another for larger get-togethers. No matter the occasion, each of these scenes will be activating multiple devices throughout the home simultaneously...

limited to listening to the same tunes in all three rooms. From one device, you get three simultaneous, independent zones of music, without the expense of buying a standalone multi-room music system.

With seven times the speed of the last-generation HC-250, the EA-3 also provides more than enough processing power to enable your own personalized "scene-driven" lifestyle, where a single press of a button activates sophisticated combinations of lighting and, if you'd like, music. You might have a scene for dinner preparation, another for a quiet family night at home, and yet another for larger get-togethers. No matter the occasion, each of these scenes will be activating multiple devices throughout the home simultaneously—and, thanks to the enhanced processing power of the EA-3, instantaneously.

EA-5: THE PINNACLE OF HOME ENTERTAINMENT AND AUTOMATION

While the ability to control 30 connected devices in and around your home may seem like a lot, that's actually a quite modest number these days. "In the past few years, we've seen a vast increase in the number of connected devices in the

average Control4 home," explained Paul. "Just a few years ago, the average Control4 installation had 11 connected devices. Today, the average is 40, with the largest projects running upwards of 250 connected devices. And the controller is tasked with automating all of those connected devices."

That's where the EA-5 comes in. As the flagship offering in the EA lineup, it offers significantly more in terms of processing power and connectivity. It provides the Control4 Dealer with everything he or she needs to install, program, and reliably operate homes with dozens of simultaneously connected and controlled devices. And, in terms of audio performance, it simply puts to shame many expensive audiophile components expressly designed for no purpose other than music delivery. All combined, the EA-5 is capable of outputting five independent zones of audio throughout the home, but this isn't simply a case of quantity over quality.

Yes, the EA-5 boasts all of the horsepower and connectivity you would need to automate even the largest palatial estates, but that doesn't mean you have to live in the lap of luxury to enjoy everything this controller has to offer. Due to its enhanced processing power and advanced audio architecture, the EA-5 delivers better and

purier high-resolution audio performance than many dedicated audiophile music players. "We have customers with dedicated listening rooms, and that's really the extent of the automation in their home," Paul says, "yet they're still choosing the EA-5 to deliver that enhanced audio performance."

"And on the other end, we have customers with mansions who only want a better and simpler control solution for their home theater room. And the EA-1 works great for that. Ultimately, it isn't just about looking at the square footage of your home and buying an EA controller to match. We built the EA line so that we could bring the smart home to every home, and we're providing more choice for integrators, and more choice for customers, to create the smart home lifestyle that meets their requirements, meets their expectations, and meets their budget."

Maybe your home would be best suited by an EA-5 and a pair of EA-1s. Or perhaps an EA-3 and a pair of EA-1s. Ultimately, that decision is best left to your Control4 dealer. The great news is that, thanks to the flexibility and scalability of the new EA lineup, it's easier than ever to design and install the perfect home automation and entertainment system for you, your home, and your lifestyle. ■

LIGHTS, CAMERA, AUTOMATION!

If there's one town where the home automation craze caught on early, it's Hollywood. For more than 60 years, movies and TV have been showing us home automation at its best (and worst). Most of these depictions are portrayals of what were, at the time, only imaginary technologies. My, how times have changed!

What was once possible only in the fevered imaginings of Hollywood screenwriters can now be an everyday reality with automation. With that in mind, we thought it would be fun to take a look back at home technology in film and television, and see how the representations of yesteryear compare with today's realities.

ELECTRIC DREAMS (1984)



Quirky romantic comedy serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of purchasing home automation from a company other than Control4. When mild-mannered Miles Harding invests in a new computer that promises to make his life easier, the mischievous machine instead takes over his apartment, steals his girlfriend, and ruins his life. Don't let this happen to you!

Need a home automation system you can trust? Control4 will do everything you want it to, without putting the moves on your significant other.

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Comfort, convenience... and all that jazz

A crumbling New Orleans
home is revived with vintage
style and new smarts

Project installation
by Ray Gilliam

The home, built in
1836, sits on a quieter
block of Bourbon
Street; the action is
just a few blocks away.

PHOTOS BY JIM STONE

The spirit of the Crescent City, the heart of New Orleans, is an essence of timelessness. The color, cuisine, and culture of this vibrant town are rooted neither in the past nor the future, but on a time-space continuum all its own. This chronologically ambiguous ambience is nowhere more apparent than in the heart of the city: the French Quarter. Here in the town's oldest neighborhood, late 18th-century buildings preside over cobblestone streets, alive year-round with the sounds of music and revelry.



As fortunate as it is to own property in this half-square mile area of town (known locally as simply “The Quarter”), improving the vintage homes with modern amenities is a major challenge. Strict preservation regulations have been established to preserve the neighborhood’s distinct character. In other words, improving an old home here in The Big Easy is anything but easy. But one new homeowner in the ‘hood was ready for the challenge...and his know-how and determination paid off with a regal residence you’ve gotta see to believe.

Ray Gilliam is no stranger to technology. His fascination with gadgets dates back to his days in the military, when he would tinker with 8-track players and other bygone gizmos. Fast-forward to today—as a successful broker in the financial services industry, Ray sports his smart-home installer hat primarily—or make that *entirely*—for fun. Fortune has smiled upon Ray, who now owns several properties in such desirable locales as Costa Rica, Utah’s red rock desert, and Michigan’s gorgeous Upper Peninsula. For some time, Ray had been in the market for a home in New Orleans—the proximity to his hometown, Houston, Texas, made it the perfect spot for a vacation home for him and his extended family. When a house became available on the world-famous Bourbon Street—the heart of the French Quarter—Ray knew he had found his new property and project. “There’s so much history

The dirt floors and crumbling walls have been completely restored and jazzed up with automated lighting, climate, and security.

The homeowners can prep their vacation home remotely, firing up the air conditioning and turning on lights before they arrive with their furry family.



Keypads save long trips through the 6,000-square-foot house to turn off lights.

here, so much street art, antique dealers,” Ray notes. “It’s about as close to a European feel as you’re gonna get.” But even a seasoned tech-tinkerer like Ray had his hands full with the renovation of this historic home.

Mention “Bourbon Street” and one immediately conjures images of cacophonous revelry, late-night alcohol mishaps, and rowdiness. But that 24-hour party action is limited to a 6- or 7-block stretch of Bourbon Street. Ray’s home is several blocks away from Ground Zero, and is surrounded by other residences (several with Hollywood celebrity owners). It’s a prime location—close to the craziness but not right in the middle of it. It’s an easy stroll to Lafitte’s Blacksmith Shop Bar, the oldest bar in the United States. But, “it’s very quiet. You don’t have all the tourism here,” Ray notes.

The 6,000-square-foot house was built in 1836. Originally, it housed a baker and his family. On the ground floor was the bakery; resident and servant’s quarters occupied the 2nd and 3rd floors. And when Ray became the owner, he had quite the challenge in front of him. (“Fixer upper” hardly begins

to cover this one!) “The whole thing was dirt floors, and just about to fall over,” Ray says. Even though the property was seriously dilapidated, zoning regulations restricted Ray from tearing the house down unless it was 75 percent destroyed. But Ray wasn’t interested in starting from scratch anyway. “You want to keep the history of the house. This house has its own beauty. Our main goal was to keep the beauty that was already here, and just to give it a facelift.”

So Ray got to work, installing new floors, new steel trusses, and rebuilding everything he could. Working within the challenging preservation restrictions, Ray rebuilt the home from the ground up. “It’s a new house,” Ray notes with pride.

Two years later, the work was done, and the original beauty of the home was revealed: exposed brick walls and ceiling beams extend throughout the house. The interior is decorated in earthy shades of cool greens and grays. A classic French Quarter front façade is now complete with a vibrant coral color and wrought iron railings. “We wanted to keep the roots of the house intact,

and I think we’ve done that,” Ray notes with pride. The old-soul charm captured the imagination of the owners, and the home became a television star itself when *Top Chef* shot its eleventh season here in 2014.

And as a self-acknowledged, tech-friendly man, Ray was certain automation would be essential to this renovated rebuild. “I believe in the smart home theory,” he states. Although he has worked with several systems, Ray knew Control4 was the perfect pairing to this project. “Other systems just weren’t the answer to retrofitting an old home,” he says. “Control4 was the fit...period.” Another selling point for Control4? Its ability to play nice with other systems. “Who else could you have gone to, to get the complete home control?” Ray poses. “You just don’t have that wrapped up in one package with anyone else.”

The home is now powered by the 800 and 250 series Control4 controllers, which oversee audio and video distribution, security, HVAC, lighting, motion sensors and glass breakage sensors. Ray designed the system himself, working with antiquated

and asinine old electrical systems (“It was a mess beforehand”) and the rigid regulations of the Vieux Carre Commission, the government body that protects and preserves the integrity of the French Quarter. Homeowners have to clear even the smallest details, such as color schemes, with the organization.

The home now features seven thermostats, which makes controlling the climate in this vast residence a snap. “Without automation, if you wanted to change the temperature, you’d have to go down three floors and walk through three sections of this house. Here I can sit in a chair and change the thermostats in seconds.”

Lighting is a big player in the system. The automation system now controls the entire all LED-lighting system, which sports some 170 switches. As the sun goes down, lights come on automatically at different levels to set evening ambience. It’s a vast improvement from the old days of vacation-home lighting, when owners would simply have to leave some lights on until they returned for another stay. “Your first job when you got back was to see how many lights you need to replace,” Ray laughs.



From the master bedroom, Ray can adjust the settings on any of the home’s seven thermostats.



The flavor and flair of New Orleans permeates the interior design, which incorporates modern amenities like 100% LED lighting.

Now, he no longer has to cross dark rooms to turn on the light. The difference, to quote a famous jazz tune, is like night and day. “It’s almost like putting power windows and power steering in a car—it just makes your life so much easier and your access so much better.”

Ray’s family loves the new system, too. They can tap into the system on their iPad and change the TV channel. And now, Ray says, “If the kids are watching TV and they’re laughing, I can flip my TV over to see what they’re laughing about.”

Because this isn’t his primary residence, Ray takes advantage of the remote features to control the home from afar. Even if Ray can’t make it to Mardi Gras in person, he can watch the parades go by on the home’s security cameras. If his kids leave lights on in the house when they depart, Ray can flip them off from his phone. “It’s a lot of convenience you get from just a little bit of electronics,” he says.

And so, like a jazzy rhapsody, Ray’s composition is complete. “I’m very pleased with the product,” he notes. The system makes living in the Big Easy—easy! “It’s just the flexibility and ease and comfort in your house that makes things a lot better.” ■

Control4 Dealer Jordan Erdman of The J Edison Group and A.J. discussing areas in the home where Control4 products and features would be most beneficial.



PHOTOS BY ROSEMARY KOSIN

Technology + Design

This article was originally posted on ArchDigest.com on September 29, 2015. Written by: A.J. Paron-Wildes, Author, Interior Designer & Mother to Devin.

As an interior designer I have dedicated my life to creating optimal environments for individuals with autism. Raising an autistic child can be a challenge; I know, my son Devin was diagnosed at age three. Through my research, my writing, and my work, I recognize that design cannot cure a child, but the right designed environment can eliminate unnecessary roadblocks.

When I design, I rely heavily on my senses to create a space. But for children with autism, extreme sensitivities to light, color, shape, and sound alter their perception. We don't experience a space the same way. Once I understood this difference, I adjusted my design approach and tried to identify principles in design that could alleviate sensory sensitivities.

In 2013, I wrote "Interior Design for Autism," a series of three e-books published by Wiley. Having worked on projects all over the country, from autism research centers and medical clinics to therapy centers and individual homes, I have made a real push to educate other designers and architects on how they can best design a building that will enhance the experience for an individual with autism.

Many strides have been made in this field of building, but more can be done. Looking to smart technology and new home automation innovations is one way to move forward.

As a mother of an autistic child, you hope for a cure, but "getting better" is the realistic goal

Project installation
The J Edison Group

Coordinating for a Cause



Author, interior designer A.J. Paron-Wildes, with her son Devin

Devin's area takes up an entire floor of the house, including a room that nurtures his creativity, *left*. Devin's own amazing artwork, *right*.



for most. That's where we live, on the constant path to getting better. My son is now 20. He lives a pretty active life and has become so much better than when he was younger, but he would still be considered developmentally impaired.

We moved into a new home three years ago that is perfect for Devin because it has a lot of space. He has his own floor with his bedroom and a creative room, and he is very far away from his noisy seven-year-old sister, Ava.

We are at the stage where Devin is demanding independence, which is understandable for any 20-year-old. He wants the ability to stay home when we go out. The problem is that he is still a vulnerable adult, and leaving him alone at home has

risks. He may forget to close a door or may open windows with the air conditioning running. Those are inconveniences. Devin has also let strangers in our home and tends to run outside when the power fails, which can have disastrous consequences. He gets frustrated, but we need to be sure he is safe.

We also need to be confident that he can understand the relationship between the house systems and controls—the air conditioner, the gas stove, the toaster oven, smoke alarms, etc. Would he realize that it's time to get out if there is a fire? Will he remember to turn off the toaster oven after making nachos, his favorite snack?

Every morning Devin takes a bus to his transition program at our

local high school, and sometimes my husband or I need to leave before he does. How can I ensure that he's on the bus, the lights are off, and the front door is locked? Completing tasks to 100% can be an ongoing issue for individuals with autism. They tend to lose focus and attention, needing a prompt or a reminder to finish a task.

A home automation system from Control4 can give us the solutions and assurances we need. Devin loves technology. He may not be able to work a regular thermostat, but if the control is all digital, he can master that. Alarm clocks frighten Devin because the noise is very jarring. With Control4, he can set his shades to open at a specific time and create a soothing wake-up experience.



Control4 certified technicians from The J Edison Group preparing for the home installation, *top*. Push notifications alert A.J. and her husband, Pete, when Devin arrives home from school, uses the stove or oven, and other activities, *bottom*.

This is one example of how Devin can learn a skill without our help.

Control4 also allows Devin the independence to easily alter his environment when he needs to. Giving Devin control increases his self-esteem and, in turn, encourages him to try new skills, which results in increased independence—all because Control4 sets the stage for successful outcomes to an action.

Because kids with autism tend to seek time alone, sometimes Devin squirrels away for restorative time and we don't know where he is. Having cameras and intercom systems to locate him and others in the house will be a nice feature to alleviate stress while still promoting independence—he can have alone time when he needs it

and we can know where he is.

We do have a lot of people coming and going through our home to care for Devin—from personal-care assistants to medical nurses to music therapists. Although we have been fortunate to have amazing people take care of our son, other families have not been so lucky. And because some individuals with autism are unable to communicate, it can be difficult for their families to know when they have hired an inferior caregiver. Having covert cameras to monitor care can give peace of mind that things are happening as they should.

The goal for any individual with autism is to function as fluidly as possible in the real world. By gaining independence and responsibility

in our own home, we know Devin will continue to advance. One day he may want to move out, and I know that could be a real possibility with Control4 integrated into his home or apartment. Technology can be a successful tool for the future in designing environments that increase autistic individuals' capabilities.

Our dream is to expand Devin's independence every day so that in two years he can attend a college with a special-needs program and live on campus there. By using Control4 in our home, we can start having Devin practice skills to get him to that level of independence and create the confidence in him to live outside our house.

We are thrilled to find a solution that helps Devin become more independent. By adding cameras, sensors, and controls, all connected and powered by Control4, we can monitor our son with our smartphones no matter where we are.

Control4 provides solutions to the biggest challenges we face with our autistic son, and I am confident the entire family will benefit from the home automation system. ■



Family room at the Paron-Wildes house with discreet placement of Control4 Touch Screens that allow instant access to a variety of features throughout the house, including sound, monitoring, and lighting.



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BITS & PIECES

For big laughs and little-did-you-knows



200 million

of you are using Google Photos each month.

Google has delivered more than **1.6 billion** animations, collages and movies, among other things.

You've collectively freed up **13.7 petabytes** (that's one billion megabytes) of storage on your devices.

It would take **424 years** to swipe through that many photos!

Google has also applied **2 trillion** labels, and **24 billion** of those have been for...selfies.

The Cyber Effect



The average computer user blinks seven times a minute. The normal rate is twenty times per minute.



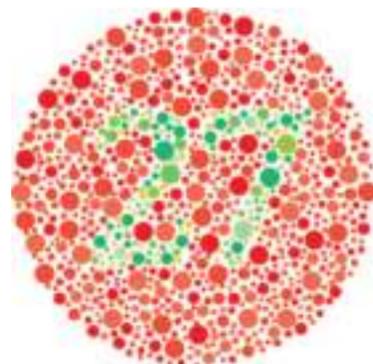
On an average workday, a typist's fingers travel about 12.6 miles.



In general, people tend to read as much as 10% slower from a screen than from paper.



Facebook has a blue color scheme because the creator, Mark Zuckerberg, cannot see the colors red & green.



Artificial Tweetener

Twitter reported in 2014 that 23 million of its users were automated. That's a heck of a lot of bots.

There are bots that sort pixels, suggest Marxist startup ideas, or behave more like teens than teens.

In 2013, a fake tweet temporarily wiped out US\$130 billion of the stock market.

Some of Twitter's most influential tweeters come from beyond the grave! Roger Ebert, Paul Walker, Michael Jackson, and—with 45,000 followers—Albert Einstein!



Virtual Touch

A virtual reality suit has been created that allows the user to feel physical sensations in cyber space. Each section of the suit has a small motor in it, not unlike the one that makes a mobile phone vibrate to signal incoming messages.



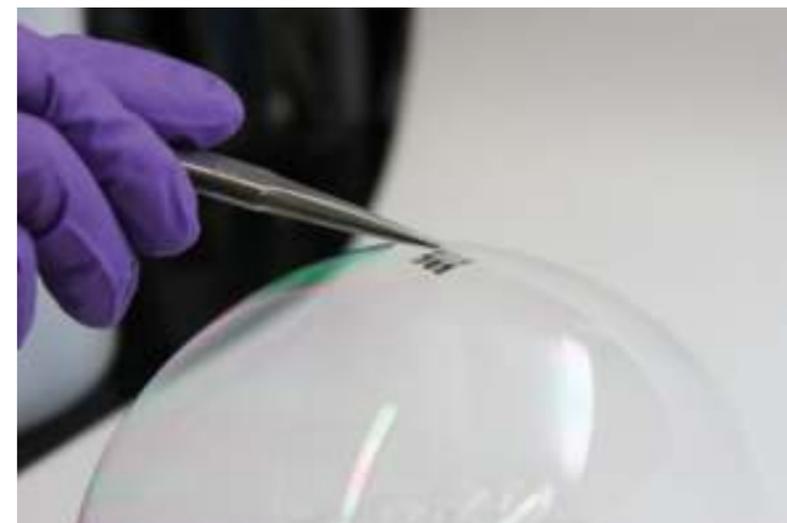
The Wisdom of the Bots

Meet Crystal, your new communication coach. No, she's not human. She's an online program that uses people's public profiles to size up their personalities and advise you how to best speak with them. Want to ask for a raise? She'll tell you how to word it.



VIRGIN GALACTIC

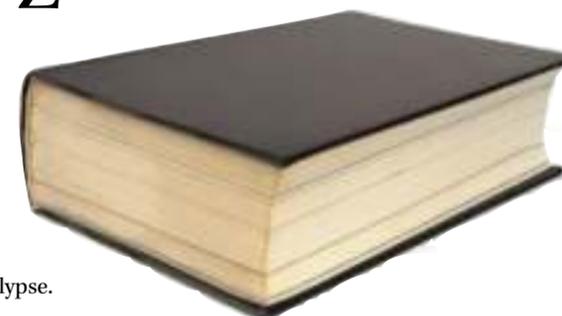
The airline rolled out its new space vehicle Unity on February 19, 2016 at a big ceremony in the Mojave Desert. Sir Richard Branson was there, of course, as was Han Solo himself, Harrison Ford. No telling when the commercial enterprise will begin its trips, but more than 700 tickets have already been sold at \$250,000 a pop!



Researchers at MIT have created the thinnest, lightest solar cells ever made. They're one-fiftieth the thickness of human hair and light enough to rest on the surface of a soap bubble without popping it. They produce up to 6 watts of power per gram.

Defcon Z

In an unclassified document titled "CONOP 8888," officials from U.S. Strategic Command have created a large-scale training template based on what to do in case of a zombie apocalypse.



This unit can dewrinkle, treat and fold most items of laundry.

FoldiMate, a company that first launched an unsuccessful campaign on Kickstarter, has announced it will start accepting pre-orders for their robotic clothes folding machine in 2017.





Sand Castle

A vacation home comes to life on command

If this Laguna Beach house were any closer to the Pacific ocean, it would be in it. But even with its killer location, nobody lives here full time. Instead, the stunning two-story home, perched right on the water's edge in sunny southern California, serves as a vacation home for its owners, friends and family. And even though it's not a primary residence, it makes the most of automation,

so every guest who stays here feels as glamorous as the views. The beachfront property went through a major remodel, and while automation was always part of the owner's plans, it was pretty bare bones at the beginning. "When we first got in on the remodel, it was just going to be to add some music, put a TV here or there," says system installer Steve Stary of Brilliant AV. But once the owner



Vacationers can turn on the AC, open the garage, unlock the door, disarm the alarm system, and turn on lights before they arrive.

Project installation
Brilliant AV

PHOTOS BY JIM STONE

Every window covering can be raised with the touch of a button at the front gate when the homeowners arrive after being away.

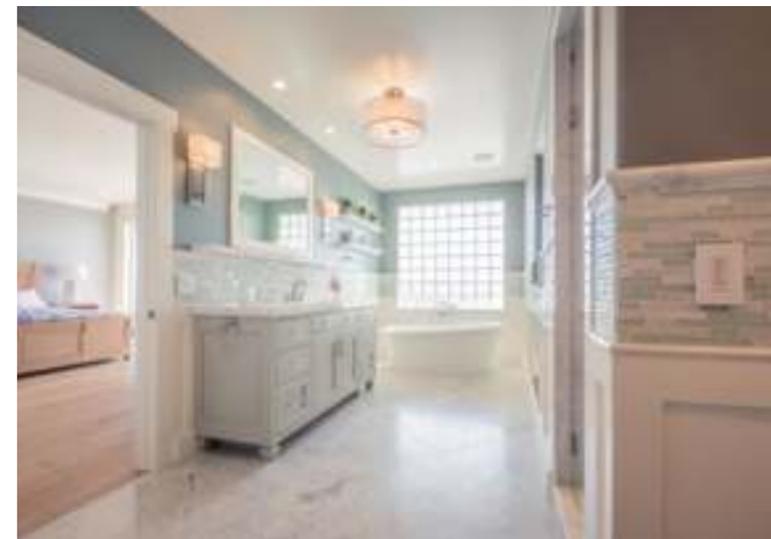


learned more about the potential of automation, he decided to add more. “He ended up saying, ‘go for it.’” Steve notes. Sweeter words are never spoken to custom installers.

In addition to audio and video zones and interfaces, the system now incorporates lighting, shades, alarms, and thermostat control. For the owners, the upgrade brings with it all of the improvements of living large: turning on music or the TV in various rooms, setting scenes, and dimming lights. If the owner is down on the beach when guests arrive, he’ll hear the doorbell through the outdoor rock speakers—and can unlock his front door remotely and tell his friends to come on down to the water. It’s a pretty



The music playing on the sun deck can be sent to wireless speakers down on the beach.



snazzy system, but, surprisingly, some of the coolest features are used only when the owner is miles and miles away from it. “Even though the client isn’t here all the time, he wants his property to be used by friends and family,” says Steve. “Being able to control the house remotely is really kind of a cool feature for him.” The Control4-powered system makes it easy for the owner to prepare the house for visitors from afar—he can turn on the lights, fire up the music, and turn on the AC. When guests are ready to enter the house, the owner can open the garage door, disarm the alarm system and even unlock the front door remotely. Normally, when nobody’s home, the shades are



down, protecting the furniture and floors from the intense coastal sun. "But when you walk in this door, you don't want to have anything impede your view," Steve notes. The owner can also lift the shades remotely, and his guests get to see the sea as soon as they step into the house.

So...is the owner happy he gave his installer carte blanche? "So far, he's ecstatic," Steve says with a smile. "He's been blown away at one new feature after the other when he learns about them." Sounds like a rave review—and a prime example of how smartening up a second home can be well worth the effort. ■

No matter where guests are in the house, they can unlock the front door for friends by pushing a button on their phone.



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HOW THE WEST WAS WON

A newbie installer smartens up a top floor in Texas

If the mention of Texas evokes images of cowboys, dusty plains, and cacti, it's time to upgrade your imagery. And nothing will fast-forward your focus on the Lone Star State as quickly as a tour of this posh penthouse in San Antonio.

Occupying the three floors atop the Grand Hyatt Hotel alongside the famous downtown river walk, the private residence is perched in one of the premiere areas of town. It's 7,000 square feet of WOW—bright colors, major views, and slick décor—a far cry from the rustic roots of the region. But this beauty isn't just nice to look at; it's a fully automated dwelling that's ready for a party at any hour.

Owner Richard Wells is no stranger to automation. When building his ranch

Project installation by
Dailey and Wells Communications

PHOTOS BY JIM STONE

The three-story penthouse sits atop the revered River Walk district, overlooking the San Antonio river.



This property is primed to party, and features a sleek bar accented by LED lighting.



A local designer created the bold interior look, described by the owner as "aquatic modern."



home 10 years ago, he was encouraged to include a Control4 system in the build. He was so impressed with the results, he has become a full-on fan. "I have enjoyed it so much. It has been totally flawless," Richard notes. After experiencing the benefits of automation in his ranch home, Richard knew he wanted to incorporate the systems into his work—designing and installing communication systems for governments around the country. His company, Dailey and Wells Communications, is an "electronic contractor" for clients like the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) in San Francisco. Richard knew his clients would benefit greatly from adding automation.

Richard was eager to dive in, but before incorporating them into beefier jobs for his company, his plan was to

practice installing automation on a few smaller-scale projects, like his very own. "I decided to cut my teeth on some of my own properties first," Richard says. So, he automated his corporate headquarters in San Antonio. It was a success, but Richard wanted to do one more pet project by himself—and that's where this penthouse project comes into play.

When Richard purchased the pad, it was absolutely ordinary—white walls and nothing special. Richard upgraded absolutely everything, adding private hot tubs and spacious patios. Then, he hired a local designer to produce a bold interior look and feel. The designer (who wishes to remain anonymous) went all out, using vivacious colors, curvy glass, and loud patterns, all of which somehow come together in a harmonious blend.



The penthouse owner calls his automation system The Ultimate Chinese Menu: "everything looks tempting. There are too many good options."

"I call it aquatic modern," Richard laughs. But while it looks amazing, the built-in automation steals the show.

Having already lived with automation at his ranch home and his company office, Richard knew a space of this size could truly take advantage of all things automation. "Home automation in a place like this is almost a must," he says. The Control4 system controls myriad elements, including shades, lighting, and climate. "It has about every bell and whistle you'd want," Richard notes. There are four entertainment centers on the system, eight televisions and eight surround-

sound systems. LED lighting throughout the unit is on the system, including the blue highlights built into the bar. Richard is especially glad he decided to include the doorbell on the system, because now he gets a text when someone rings the doorbell and he's there. Automation has added a lot of convenience and has made a ton of clutter disappear. Richard replaced 77 remotes with one Control4 remote. "I had all these different remotes, for the TVs, the cable boxes, Amazon, Apple TV, the sound system, the fans," Richard explains. "I was able to reduce all of that down

to one portable. And it works! It's totally reliable."

Not surprisingly and more than anything, this penthouse was built for entertaining, which automation supports in many ways. "Welcome" sensors detect when guests enter a room and automatically turn on lights and start music. Even before Richard arrives, he can trigger the three in-house ice-makers remotely to start cranking out ice for a party. People operate the system using SR-260 handheld remotes, 7-inch touch screens, or their iPhones. Richard's personal favorite feature? Having his beloved McIntosh sound system

included in the automation. Now, he can adjust specific settings like the audio equalizer via Control4. "You just push a button and, boom, it sets it all up for you."

After living with the system for a few months, Richard was ready to tweak some settings to better match his home habits. Conveniently enough, these changes could all be done remotely. "The dealer doesn't have to come out at all," remarks Richard.

Richard says everyone who experiences the system is blown away. In fact, he's sent many a friend off to the local dealer to look into systems for their own places



Scene settings in the bedroom automatically prepare the room for an evening movie, and then open the room the next morning.



after experiencing automation in his “lounge in the clouds.” Not a bad install from a relative newbie. “It was easy, just really easy,” Richard notes.

To date, Richard has installed automation into three properties. He’s installed about 700 devices, and yet, Richard hasn’t had one failure. “It’s incredible stuff, absolutely incredible,” he notes. And now Richard’s truly ready to offer automation to his civic clients—putting shades, lights, and security on the governmental systems he installs. “It just shows you how much faith I have in these systems,” Richard notes. “It’s absolutely phenomenal.”

Clearly, no rodeo required for the technology ride of one’s life. ■

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A racing simulator room is automated so the lights dim and window shades close at the beginning of the race.

LIFE IN THE FAST LANE

*Generously excerpted from story that previously appeared on www.electronichouse.com.
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While some are nervous or intimidated to get on the technology train, others rush towards it, recognizing that it's not a train at all. It's a racecar. Traveling at the dizzying speeds of computer development can bring one to either stagger away disoriented or to buckle in, exhilarated and adrenaline-charged.

Welcome to Las Vegas.
A homeowner here not only embraces cutting-edge technology as the racecar that it is, but he also has a thing for...well, racecars. His secluded 13,000 square-foot



Project Installation by Lifetronic



Red details set off the cutting-edge electronic systems in the racing simulation room.

Santa Barbara-style estate is tricked out with 30 Control4 touch screens, a mix of mounted and portable.

Lifetronic Systems, out of Westport, CT, designed and installed the “smart” in this smart home. They took it a step further by creating an instructional video so any guest can quickly learn how to use the system from any touch screen in the house.

This tech-savvy homeowner uses Control4 to govern everything from lights, music, and temperature to windows, drapes, and home security. The video intercom at the front door sends what it sees to any screen in the house, including the outside cabana. But the grand prix of technological innovation in this home has to be the racing simulator room.

An Italian company called

Allinsports built the high-tech simulator, which puts you in the driver’s seat of pro track cars as you race through gorgeous vistas and navigate hairpin turns at full speed. The room is programmed in such a way that the race doesn’t begin before the lights dim and the shades lower, helping the driver focus attention on the “road” ahead.

This room, one developmental step away from an actual holodeck, also holds the heart and soul of the whole house’s automation. Three 42-space racks are decked out in their racing finest, matching the hot rod colors dominating the room—black, yellow, and red. These racks are packed with hard-working equipment, so cold air is blown in and hot air is exhausted out. Much

like (need we say it?) a car engine.

What else does this home have under the hood?

Aside from this total geek-out of technology at its finest, the rest of the house wears its bells and whistles more subtly. The bedroom mirrors are actually TVs by Seura. Several works of art reveal themselves to be flat-panel Vutec Artscreen televisions. Speakers are hidden in the ceilings. Out in the cabana, speakers are hidden in the bushes. Automated Polar shades protect from the sun while at the same time stealing nothing from the glorious mountain view. Automated gas lamps provide a quaint, grounded touch without the quaint, grounded hassle. A panelized lighting system has been integrated with the Control4 automation.

PHOTOS BY SHAY VELLICH



The lounge features a 65-inch Vutec Artscreen TV and full 7.2 surround sound with in-ceiling speakers, *top*. In the majority of rooms, high-tech gadgetry is just under the surface, subtly worked into the decor, *bottom*.





The outdoor cabana, with bar, 55" Seura Storm television, and 7.2 Surround Sound, top. Another outdoor room, complete with hidden speakers, automated lights, and full-strength WiFi, bottom.



Everything can be controlled from anywhere on the grounds thanks to a WiFi system that Lifetronic has reinforced with key access points around the house and yard.

And speaking of the yard, the outdoor cabana is equipped with a 55" Seura Storm outdoor TV and 7.2 surround sound, including a sound bar speaker, four Episode Landscape Series satellite ceiling speakers, and two powerful in-ground subwoofers. Four Clark Synthesis Aquasonic underwater speakers keep the music going when you dive into the 75'x25' pool.

Home automation, like technology in general, is developing at a rapid pace. And this Las Vegas homeowner has chosen to get behind the wheel and keep up. To ride a trend is to go with the flow, but to drive one... now *that* takes expert control. ■

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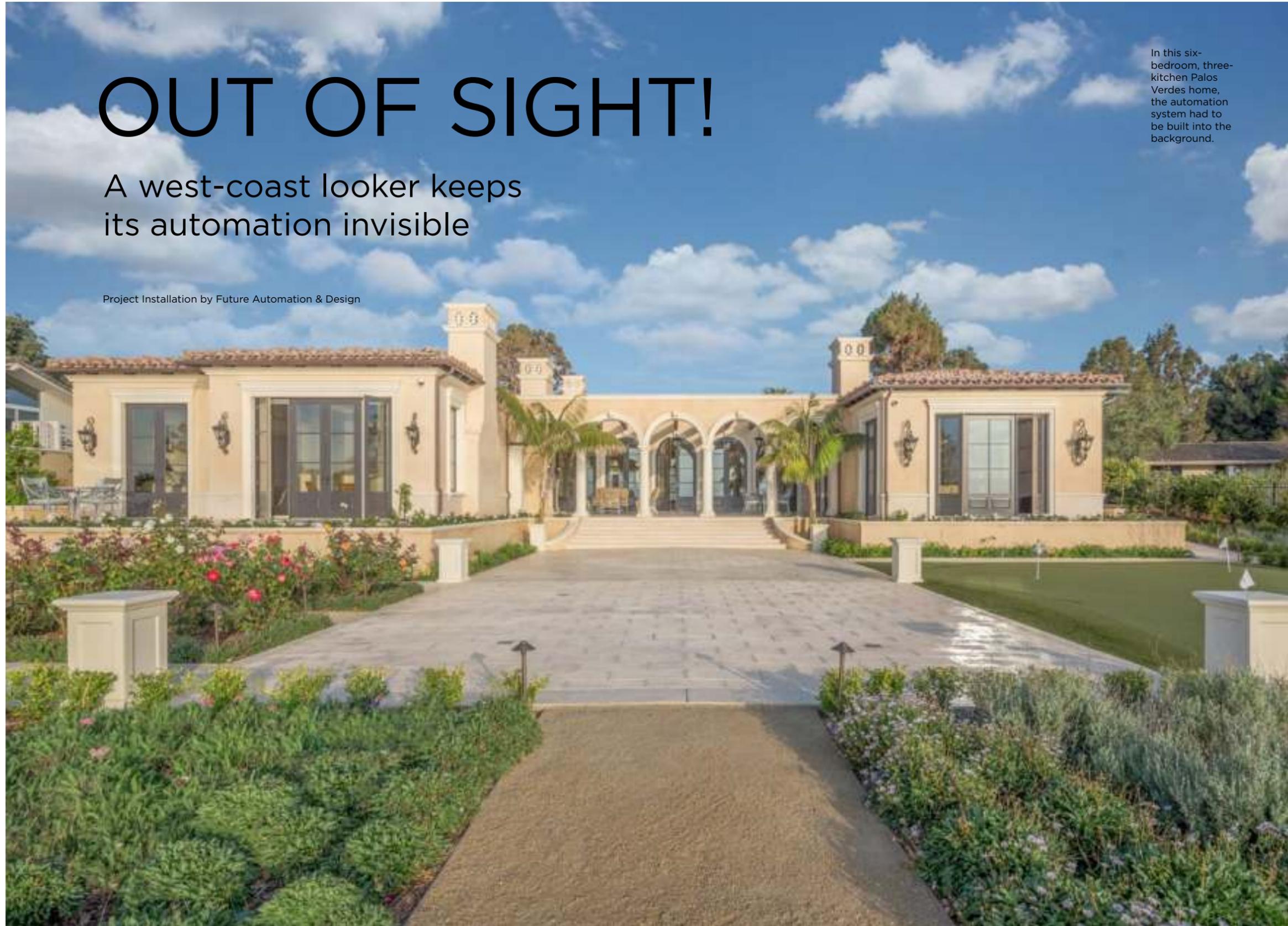
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OUT OF SIGHT!

A west-coast looker keeps its automation invisible

Project Installation by Future Automation & Design

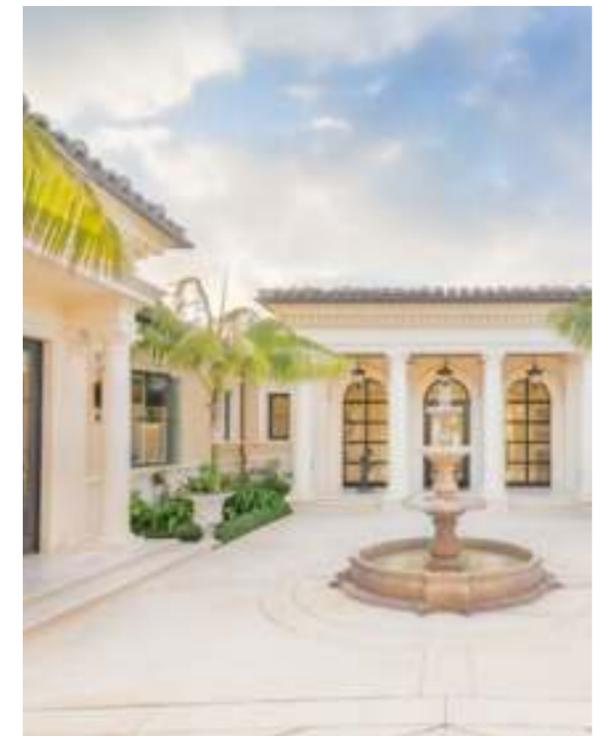
In this six-bedroom, three-kitchen Palos Verdes home, the automation system had to be built into the background.



Some jobs are most successful when they are the least noticed—video editing, wedding planning, and ironing—to name a few. Now we can add home automation to the list. Many modern homeowners considering automation want their systems to work behind the scenes, allowing the home itself to be the focus of attention. For an eye-popping example, check out this magnificent coastal home in Palos Verdes Estates, just south of Los Angeles. It's a feast for the senses—and you wouldn't know by looking at it, but it's loaded with automation, too.

Homeowners Masih Hakimpour and Marzi Daneshvar are no strangers to technology; they own an IT consulting firm. When they set out designing their brand-new 12,000-square-foot home, they knew automation would be a part of the plan. "In a large house, it's impossible to live without automation," says Marzi. But Marzi knew that whatever system they chose had to be severely subtle. "I'm very picky," she admits.

After comparing several systems and installation companies, the owners opted for a Control4 system through experienced installer Future Automation & Design. "We knew Control4





Clean lines define the interior design in every room, including the ultra-swanky billiards/recreation den.

would be able to satisfy our needs,” Marzi continues. Knowing they wanted to integrate lighting, music, and security on one platform was a major draw to the Control4 brand name. And the owners had heard multiple horror stories from friends and neighbors having trouble with their systems; installers often had to make many on-site visits to fix glitches—a situation these owners were anxious to avoid.

Patrick Coleman, Future’s owner and lead system designer/programmer, knew that Control4 was the way to go. Not only would it be more reliable than other systems, it would be less expensive, too. “For the budget they had on a house this size, the money they were saving could be put into other things,” Patrick notes.

So, Patrick collaborated with the owners, their architect, and multiple interior designers to design the dream house. “It was a collaboration between everybody,” Patrick says. “It definitely kept us busy.”

Two years later, the project was complete. Patrick and his team built a system as grand and elegant as the home it controls. A Control4 system oversees 42 zones of audio, including three surround-sound zones. “Anywhere you go on this property, you have great audio,” Patrick is happy to say. Lighting, security, and climate are all integrated, both inside and outside the home. The system sports T3 touch screens, door stations, and distributed video.

A plush home theater features a high-end projector and 7.2 surround sound. Because the house has limited cell service, Patrick knew a robust WiFi network was a must.

The owners use various lighting scenes to set the mood, whether it’s a dinner party or movie night. Some lighting scenes are also tied to particular playlists to create certain types of ambiance. The owners use “All On/All Off” functions to easily turn the house on or off with one button press.

But as mighty as the system is, most of the control is done behind the scenes. Speakers blend seamlessly into walls or are cleverly camouflaged in ceilings with very thin bevels. The front door station and automated door locks exactly match the surrounding hardware in look and feel. Every variable was carefully considered, from paint color to where a touch screen would line up on a wall.

For Patrick and his team, installing a nearly invisible system was a challenge. “A lot of thought went into where every touch screen and keypad went,” Patrick continues. “Everything had to be clean and very minimalistic.” Because the home has limited to no attic space, the installers had to be extra specific in where they dropped wires. And when the interior designer altered her design, Patrick would have to adjust his team’s plan, as well. Instead of installing clunky light switches and dimmers everywhere, Patrick opted



The home theater features cinema seats from Salamander Designs, a projector, and 7.2 surround sound. The speakers are built into the walls and hidden from view behind silk screens.

PHOTOS BY JIM STONE

for centralized lighting throughout the property. "For a house of this size and this many lights, you would have had a lot of wall acne," he jokes.

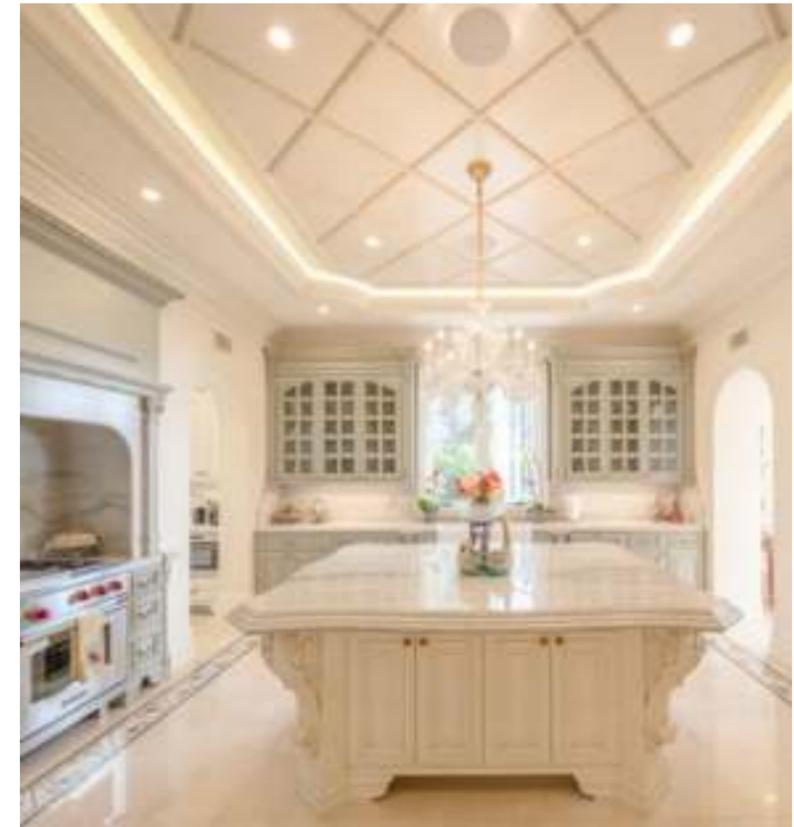
Even outside, the technology hides, unseen, allowing the sweeping vistas of the Pacific Ocean to steal the show. Speakers disguised as rocks allow the homeowners, who are heavy-duty Pandora users, to listen to their favorite channels anywhere, inside or out.

Another surprise favorite feature is the door station. Because the front door is separated from the actual house by a courtyard, it's a long walk to answer a doorbell. Now, the owners can see who's at their front entrance without leaving whatever room they're in. "If you're in your pajamas and slippers, you don't always want to walk all the way to the front door," Patrick notes with a smile.

Patrick and his team are happy with the results—and so are the homeowners. "We're very pleased,"



In the living room, speakers were painted to precisely match the wall color. Meanwhile, two separate panelized lighting systems allow for stunning, switch-free rooms like the master kitchen.



A door station system gives owners the option to skip the long walk through the open courtyard and pool area, just to see who is at the front door.



Marzi says. Marzi loves that if she's home alone, she can see the security camera images on any TV, and if she sees something suspicious, she can turn on all the lights in the house (and have loud music come on, too!). Both homeowners use remote access to prep their home when they're returning from vacation. "As soon as we land at the airport, we turn on the heating system, the pool, and the lights," Marzi notes. Patrick is pleased with his happy clients. "They love the fact that they can light up the whole house with music with just one touch," he remarks. Homeowner Marzi agrees. "We love it. Everything worked out for the best."



And so, artful automation once again graciously does the heavy lifting, allowing the beauty and elegance of the home itself to collect all the fanfare. It may be less noticed than the aesthetics, but for those who use the system, it's the secret star of the show. ■



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THE HOUSE IN HADLEY WOOD

Living the Life of Riley in London's Miram House

Oliver Benson talks the way he drives: fast. Behind the wheel of an Aston Martin DB9—"It's not mine," he says mysteriously—he's deftly navigating the streets of Hadley Wood, an affluent neighborhood in the north of London, while telling you about your destination: a brand-new, ultra-luxurious boutique condominium named Miram House. This is your first encounter with Benson, and you like his enthusiasm; the 32-year-old Londoner is the Operations Director of Aonyx, a company specializing

in high-end audiovisual and home automation. Aonyx is a Platinum-level Control4 Dealer, which gives them major bragging rights in home automation circles. They were hired by elite developers Artemi & Gibbs to design the ultimate automation solution for Miram House, and Benson personally oversaw the Control4 system installation and integration. He is obviously proud of his work on the project, which explains why he's driving so fast: he's excited to show it to you. You, of course, are excited to see it.

"Let me tell you what sets Miram



Miram is Latin for amazing, which is the perfect word to describe this palatial six-unit condominium featuring Control4 automation solutions inside and out.

Project Installation by Aonyx



Every lavish living room is fully automated with Control4.

House apart,” Benson says as he downshifts, double-clutching through an uphill turn. “Artemi & Gibbs are not like ordinary developers. The driving force behind this project was never to make money—it was to build the absolute best flats possible, the most luxurious. That’s why we were so thrilled to work with them. Usually we have to operate within the constraints of a budget.” The V12 engine roars its disdain for the word *budget*. “But on Miram House, the developers’ goal was to achieve nothing less than perfection, and money was no object. That gave us the freedom to install what we thought was the best possible solution, as opposed to the most cost-effective.”

The Aston Martin glides off the road and up to a pair of wrought-iron gates. “Here’s a perfect example,” Benson says, throwing the car into park and climbing out, motioning for you to do the same. “Look at

this!” He points to the chrome steel entry panel adorning one of the gates’ brick pillars. The panel’s finish is so glossy, so mirror-like, that you can see yourself perfectly reflected in its surface, along with Benson, the Aston Martin, and the dusky sky behind you. “That’s a Siedle entry panel, custom manufactured in Germany. Top of the line. It’s a tricky and expensive manufacturing process to get this high gloss finish, but the developers insisted on it. The audio/video intercom and communal CCTV are fully integrated into the residents’ Control4 systems. It’s absolutely fantastic!”

Back in the Aston Martin, you pass through the gates and Miram House fills your vision: a glorious Georgian mansion fronted by majestic neoclassical columns. Red bricks and creamy masonry give way to dozens of windows on the face of the four-story structure, all of them glowing with light, even the dormer high above the front door. Benson parks



Cooking in these ultra-modern kitchens is never a chore, especially with Control4 on hand to manage the music, lighting, and even the appliances.



the Aston Martin in the driveway, and as you approach the front entrance, the door magically swings open to greet you. In the lobby, a stunning chandelier scintillates overhead, illuminating the warm smile of the concierge, who is wearing a dark blue sport coat tastefully embroidered with the Miram House logo. Knowing Benson by sight, he gives a genteel nod as the two of you move to the private elevator, the lift door opening as you approach. The elevator cab boasts the most richly appointed interior you have ever seen in a lift.

On the way up to the penthouse, Benson launches into full tour guide mode. “The interior designers of Miram House are Simpson & Voyle; they’re well known for their elegant aesthetic and meticulous attention to detail. When Artemi & Gibbs hired them, they told Simpson & Voyle the same thing they told us: to spare no expense in creating six exceptional flats that truly represent the pinnacle of luxury. So, every little detail is over the top. Even the door handles are inlaid with crocodile skin!” You



reach the top floor and the lift door retracts to reveal the penthouse reception hall, a central foyer surrounded by doors which open onto every major room in the flat.

Benson leads you into the living room, which is absolutely gorgeous, and bordered by floor-to-ceiling windows that look out across a perfectly manicured garden and all-weather tennis court to the sprawling vista of the Hadley Wood Golf Course. While you stare enraptured, Benson produces his iPhone and pulls up the Control4 app. “Anything you can control, we’ve got controllable through Control4: security, CCTV, central heating, and air conditioning, lighting, and shade control. Every window has blinds or curtains, and some of them are made of smart glass—all automated with Control4. Audiovisual-wise, every flat features a Leaf 4K switch that delivers Ultra HD video and hi-res audio to every room, plus each living room sports a state-of-the-art home cinema with a 55-inch 4K display, 5.1 surround sound, and invisible Amina speakers.”





Benson carries on, but you lapse into a fantasy in which you yourself live in this unbelievable penthouse flat. Driving home after a hard day's work, as you near Miram House, your smartphone alerts the Control4 system of your approach. The wrought-iron gates open automatically just seconds before you pilot your Maserati across the threshold. You motor through the driveway and down into the parking garage, which is improbably posh. Instead of concrete, the floor is covered with speckled auto-showroom resin; instead of fluorescent lights, sleek bespoke fixtures radiate a soft glow that makes every Mercedes and Jaguar look like a work of art. Happy to be home, you stroll toward the elevator. Its door senses the key-fob in your pocket and rolls back to invite you

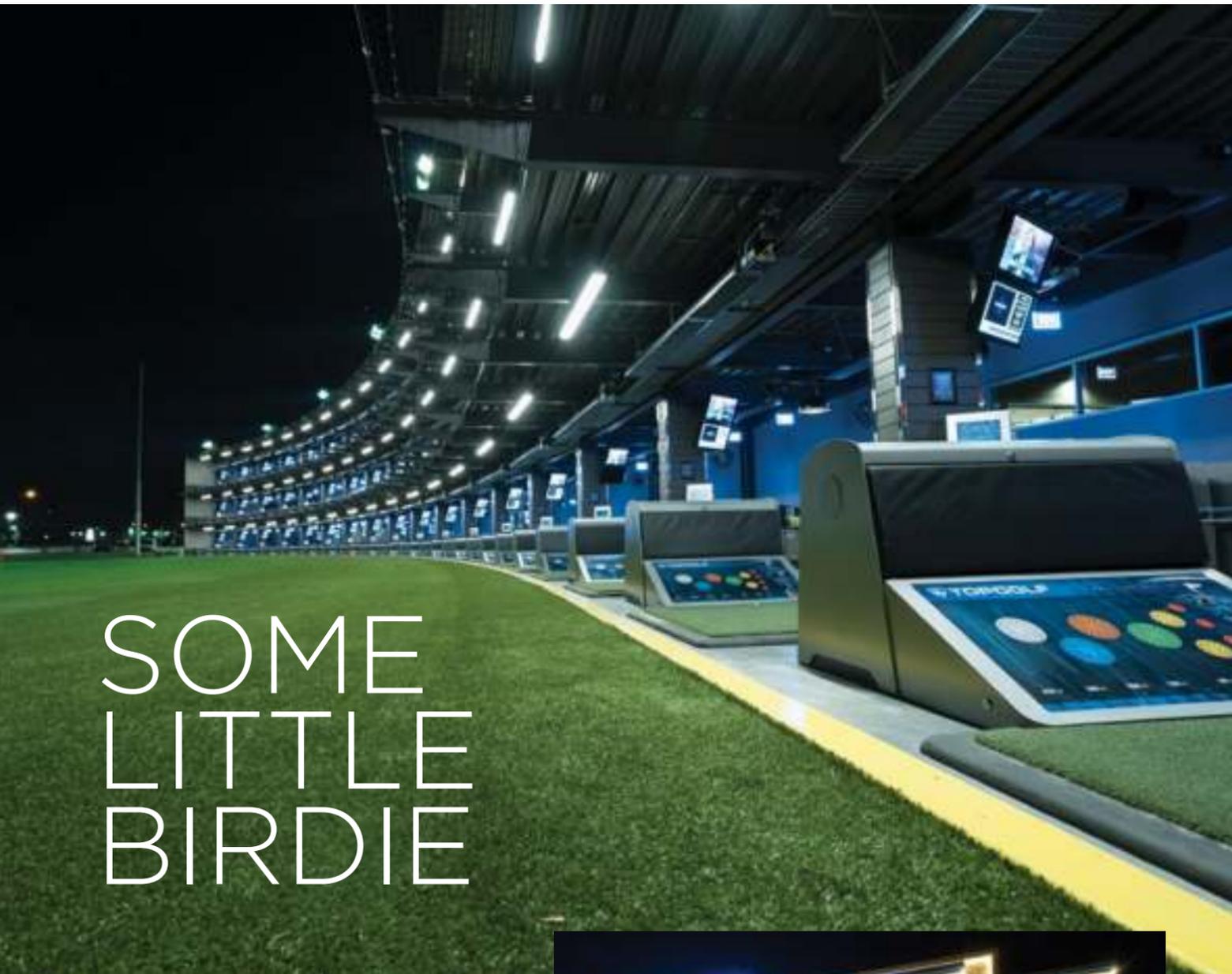
The penthouse boasts a terrace with stunning views of the garden and private tennis court



Every dazzling chandelier—inside and out—can be controlled, dimmed, and programmed via Control4.

in, then closes gently behind you. Knowing that you are destined for the penthouse, the elevator takes you there automatically; you don't have to push a button (in fact there are none to push). The lift door retracts to reveal that Control4 has already set the lights, shades, climate control, audio, video, and fireplace to your custom "welcome home" scene pre-set, exactly the way you like it. You pass through the living room and step onto the terrace, admiring a perfect sunset beyond the sumptuous golf course. A tumbler of 18-year-old Scotch magically appears in your hand and you raise it in a silent toast to the Good Life... "Any questions?" Benson's query snaps you back to reality, where you remember that you couldn't possibly afford this place and don't know anyone who could. He told you earlier

that Miram House has only just been completed, so the penthouse doesn't have an owner yet. You wonder who the lucky buyer will be, so you ask Benson. "Well, the training grounds for two North London football teams—Spurs and Arsenal—are not far away, so I think Artemi & Gibbs are probably targeting the ultra-rich footballer market." Of course! Miram House features exactly the kind of luxury condo that professional soccer players favor: a turnkey dwelling which represents the quintessence of comfort and the apogee of opulence. But that doesn't mean Miram House is an address for footballers only; any member of the leisure class with an eye for exquisite design, a taste for premium home automation, and a yen for the sporting life would be delighted to live here. Anyone for tennis? ■



SOME LITTLE BIRDIE



PHOTOS BY LANE PETERS

Fully equipped with 100+ speakers, 260 TVs, and 42 miles of wire, this facility in Midvale, Utah is the 27th Topgolf to swing through the U.S. It's "like a digital driving range," says a Yelp review. Bringing together sport, food, drink and technology for a jolly good time, Topgolf is making its mark in the entertainment space with microchipped balls that keep players' scores, and, if you hit the targets just right at night, light shows and choreographed music dazzle onlookers. A Control4 system runs everything behind the scenes along with a SAVI interface that makes managing the system one-touch simple. Topgolf. Top-notch. When's tee time?

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Control4



SmartCode™
916



SmartCode™
914



SmartCode™
912 Lever



SmartCode™
910 Traditional



SmartCode™
910 Contemporary

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