

The Blair House Security System Project

This active family needed a no-fuss house to meet their needs at all times. To insure everything would work consistently, whole house surge suppression with a counterpoise was installed, as well as a conductive floor in the control room. There are motion sensors in halls, flex sensors under stairs, and a driveway sensor that safely illuminates the way as someone approaches. There is also some scene lighting programmed for various rooms. Driveway and doorbell sensors alert the residents to visitors so the cameras can immediately be viewed on television, projector screen, computer monitors, or Élan touch screens. In fact, when these particular sensors are triggered, the camera views automatically come up on the Élan touch screens, and on the main television screen, if on, as a picture in picture (PIP). Vital to the clients is the ability to monitor the refrigerators and freezers for any failure. House temperature and humidity sensors display on the Omnistats. The set points, however, depend on the outdoor sensor readings, "armed, vacation, or disarmed" security status, and the clients' temperaments. In-wall and mobile touch screens enable manual changes. (And the portable screens can go from room to room, interchangeably, using all the macros to adjust lighting, to access cameras, and to arm or disarm security.) In addition, the automation can be accessed and altered remotely by phone, by Internet, and by the media center PC through the home LAN. All systems are interconnected at two OnQ control panels located in the main control room under the stairs. All wires from contacts, sensors, and other devices are individualized so each has its own name. If one of the teens tries to sneak out a window, a feminine "voice" announces on one of several in-ceiling speakers which window or door has opened. The security system also controls the fireplaces, and ensures they are turned off when the system is armed for "away." However, in an emergency, the same "voice" states where a fire may be located. One example of this security system's programming is: If the outdoor motion detector in the backyard is tripped, the "voice" announces on an outdoor speaker "You have been detected--Leave immediately." A two-minute countdown begins internally. In the event the sensor is triggered 4 more times during this countdown, the alarm triggers and announces "Burglary! Burglary! The police have been notified!" An automated call is made to the home owner. If there are no more triggers, the system resets. In the Theater, the home automation security system monitors five sensors: the Theater door; its doorway (by flex sensor under the threshold); the motion detector in the hall outside the Theater; the amplifier status; and the projector status. For safety, the lights come on when entering. As the driveway /doorbell sensors are triggered, the programmed alert is heard through the rear speakers. The playback device automatically pauses so the cameras can be accessed on-screen to view door or driveway. If the projector is off, people exiting the room will have a lighted path.

Family safety, security, and comfort were all taken into consideration when programming the software for the automated security system. Specific temperatures, specific alerts, and specific announcements the clients wanted were put directly into the system so their personal needs and wants could be anticipated. What makes it so great for the family is so much worry about various house systems has been removed. Now no one has to think ahead to what can possibly go wrong--it's already done! The integrator worked directly with the client/builder and his wife to decide what they all wanted and needed the house

to be (i.e. safe, secure, efficient, energy saving, and easy). The clients lived in the house for a few weeks, then later asked for changes in their initial choices for programming. (The integrator came back several times to change programming code.) With several people living under one roof, each person has been able to address their individual preferences with the three types of touch screens, and all that is programmed into them: personal security and comfort has been assured. And as for the aesthetic quality of the security system: *The in wall touch screens are inset and framed into wood as part of furniture *The sensors and various detectors are either hidden in the home's framework, or if out in the open, painted with the same paint as the wall to which it is attached. Nothing sticks out, or calls for unwelcome attention. To any visitor, this home looks like a well-appointed family dwelling with all the creature comforts. It's when people move around they become aware of the hidden treasures this house holds! This is why the builder and integrator have shown this house several times to prospective clients, and "sold" them on similar accoutrements. To that end, this showcase home is exactly what both builder (as well as his family) and integrator sought to achieve.