

# HD Living

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# Award-winning Integration

Complex install completes smoothly with constant communication.

THE BUSINESSMAN CAME TO ELECTRONICS DESIGN GROUP HALF-SED ON HIRING THE PISCATAWAY, N.J.-BASED INTEGRATOR TO INSTALL TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS IN HIS NEW, YET-TO-BE-BUILT 13,000-SQUARE-FOOT HOME.

The prospective client had seen EDG's handiwork during a party at a neighbor's house. "He had an opportunity to hear direct from his neighbor what his neighbor's family liked about having a lighting control system, a Crestron integrated control system and a home theater," says EDG Senior Systems Consultant Joe McNeill.

The businessman, his wife and three children wanted a good home theater system in the great room and a dedicated, high-performance theater room for watching football, plus high-quality audio and video distributed throughout the house.

It was paramount that the home's tech systems, particularly its security and lighting control, help the family enjoy living in the house, which sits on 40 beautiful, but isolated, acres in the New Jersey countryside.

But first EDG had to win the job. "The deciding factor," says McNeill, "was the client's neighbors vouching that we deliver on everything we say we would." At McNeill's recommendation, the client also toured EDG's 20,000-square-foot headquarters, including its engineering and programming departments, conference room, demonstration theater and the production and rack-building area where EDG pre-builds and tests systems before they are installed.

Ultimately, EDG won the right to work on the home, which took nearly two-and-a-half years to complete. In a project that cost nearly \$400,000, EDG integrated control of the home's entertainment systems, security system, lighting (including landscape lights automatically synched with an astronomical time clock), pool and spa, gate control, telecom intercom and computer networking systems.

The husband and wife can also control the home's systems, including its security and security cameras, lighting and gates,





from their computers and even remotely via the Internet.

EDG previously worked with the client's architect—PAI Architect, LLC—and its builder affiliate—Porraro Associates, Inc.—on other projects. Constant communication between the architect, builder and technology integrators like EDG is a necessity in a complex project. "They know what we want," the design/build firm's principal designer, Matt Porraro, says of EDG.

EDG worked with the Porraro companies to ensure the technology systems did not interfere with the home's design, where every window was positioned to view a specific part of the property.

EDG's AutoCAD plans also were incorporated into PAI Architect's advanced 3-D computer rendering programs to give the family a 360-degree, photorealistic view of their new home as it was being designed.

The home's lower-level, dedicated theater, designed by PAI Architects and outfitted by EDG, featured an eight-seat tiered theater, plus a four-seat bar, 117-inch screen and a Runco DLP projector.

EDG also integrated an entertainment system, plus home control and telephony systems, into "The Barn," a recreational outbuilding that houses an indoor basketball court, a kitchen and eating area and a lounge area.

After completing the installation, EDG spent roughly 10 hours over a week's time teaching the family how to use the theater, the great room entertainment system and all the control systems. The family learned quickly, McNeill reports. "It's just easy to operate.

The project garnered EDG a gold "Best Integrated Home" technical design award during the Custom Electronics Design & Installation Association's 2007 Electronic Lifestyles Awards. More important, the family loves living in their new home, both Porraro and EDG report.

"Our job is to blend the technology into the background and let the clients enjoy it," EDG's McNeill says. ■

# Success Through Service

Electronics Design Group



FROM A TECHNICAL STANDPOINT, THERE'S NO JOB SO CHALLENGING THAT ELECTRONICS DESIGN GROUP CAN'T FINISH. CONTENDS ITS FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT BOB GULLO.

But for Gullo, technical expertise is not enough.

"Our goal is to be the go-to company for the architect or construction manager who needs a company of our caliber," says Gullo. "We achieve that through execution, being able to execute the job at the highest level, provide a positive experience for everybody we work with. That's what we strive for every day."

For Gullo, it's a given that clients will be happy with a system. "My bigger concern is, 'Were we successful during the course of the project? Did we do everything we said we were going to do? Did we deliver on time; coordinate properly with all the other trades

on the property. Did we execute the process properly?'"

It's clear that Gullo expects all answers to be in the affirmative.

Gullo is proud of his company's strengths: a full engineering staff, a full programming department and a highly skilled installation department. "It's a deep very skilled organization with very thorough processes," he says. "Few companies have the kind of depth that we have."

From its founding in 1987, EDG always has been a service-oriented firm. Having worked for a commercial audio/video firm, Gullo wanted to bring installation services to the residential sector. In the beginning, he admitted, EDG's work "wasn't very high tech—mostly adding speakers to different rooms of the house and outside. We installed projectors and screens, but the quality of the equipment and our technical skills were nowhere near what it is today."



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The company added new technical skills as high-end a/v and home control technologies evolved, but a crucial test came in the mid 1990s when EDG pursued a very large, very extensive residential project in the New Jersey home of a high-tech CEO.

"It pushed the limits of technology at that time," Gullo said.

That multi-year, seven-figure project forced EDG to deepen its engineering, installation and project management skills. "Once we tackled that, we could tackle anything," says Gullo. "It improved our skill sets in every way."

EDG's current technology offerings include home theater systems, multi-room audio, boardrooms, lighting controls, home system integration, telephone and intercom systems, plus advanced wiring systems.

EDG also is preparing to offer residential VOIP telephony and also enterprise-level computer networks (Cisco business-class technology, networked-attached storage drives, back-up systems)

for residences. EDG's goal: to bring the reliability of an office environment into client's homes.

In addition, the company is creating a new division to tackle retrofit projects in a market where the housing stock can date from the 1700s to the present day. New wireless technology is enabling EDG to offer more options to clients seeking to update or add audio, video and home control systems in their existing homes. The company's projects typically are located within a 100-mile radius from its headquarters, although it also works on local clients' vacation homes, in Lake Placid, N.Y., or Martha's Vineyard, for example.

EDG's dedicated service department provides 24-hour/7-day a week service for clients. A GPS fleet management system supports efficient dispatching of technicians.

"The bottom line is we are a service business," says Gullo. "Every day I remind my people that that's the business we're in." ■