

# HD Living

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# At Home with Design

EDG builds the ultimate playground.

>> by NATALIE HOPE MCDONALD



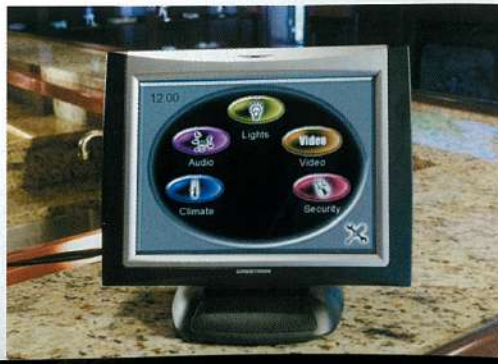
**BOB GULLO'S THE FIRST TO ADMIT IT. "THIS WAS A PRETTY CHALLENGING PROJECT," SAYS THE PRESIDENT OF ELECTRONICS DESIGN GROUP (EDG).** When EDG embarked on a year-and-a-half-long installation job at a single-family home in Northern New Jersey, they took the notion of working with a client to a new level. Literally.

"The biggest challenge was trying to keep certain systems functioning in the house while the client was living there," says Gullo. Under most circumstances, our technicians either work on new construction or empty basements and additions, sparing them from having to maintain standard utilities. But in this unusual case, the featured home was already undergoing a total renovation,

including an addition. The family was involved every step of the way.

"The project really utilized every technology possibility we have," says Gullo, from a private theater and gaming space to lighting controls and security cameras. With teenage children still living at home, both parents wanted to take advantage of time together.

EDG streamed music throughout the house and outdoor pool area, where a separate cabana was also newly built. The family wanted to be able to watch TV and movies by the pool, so EDG installed a large, 50-inch Runco TV and outdoor Sonance sound system. "There are more than a dozen loudspeakers outside," says Gullo, "including subwoofers."





A dedicated home theater was built to resemble the traditional style of the main level where it's located. "It has lush millwork," says Gullo. "And acoustical fabric panels were specially designed for the room," which seats up to eight people.

EDG also created a unique way for everyone in the family to take advantage of the gaming room, which features a sports bar and 84-inch Orian plasma TV. "Four 42-inch flat screens were used to make the larger TV," says Gullo. The glass was cut so that the four panels could connect and create one large image.

"The best part is one image can be projected on four panels or four separate images," he says. "Or you can even divide each panel in two. If you want to have a sports game on, you could have one image on the whole screen or two games in one smaller screen." In total, the family can conceivably watch four different programs simultaneously on this massive TV system.

The unique TV isn't the only flat screen in the L-shaped room. "We also have a [Runco] flat-screen behind the bar," says Gullo, "and two other wall-mounted screens. Whether you're playing pool, no matter where you are, you have access to video."

Having so many televisions throughout the house meant EDG would have to install a large video server by Kaleidescape where the family could load their entire DVD collection. "You get video on demand anywhere in the house," says Gullo. Thanks to Direct TV and a half dozen TiVos, even if Dad recorded the Sopranos in the bedroom, he and Mom can still watch it in the home theater.

"The kids love the movie theater," says Gullo. "They tell me they use the systems everyday. It's a part of their lives now. They literally have access to everything at their fingertips in any room of the house." ■





## Labor of Love

EDG's two decades in the spotlight.

>> by NATALIE HOPE MCDONALD

**PISCATAWAY, NJ, IS AN UNASSUMING COMMUNITY FAMOUS AMONG TRAVELERS FOR ITS GREEK DINERS AND PROXIMITY TO NEW YORK CITY.** But 20 years ago, Bob Gullo decided it would also be an ideal spot to launch Electronics Design Group (EDG). "It was all quite primitive 20 years ago," says Gullo, president of EDG. "There were few manufacturers making application-specific products, so we had to improvise."

Fast forward. Gullo's sitting in a main conference room at EDG where he can now demonstrate every single residential and commercial technology available to his clients. "We can show how we integrate lighting, temperature, security cameras," he says, as well as the entertainment systems that are among the most popular

for the residential clients that make up 90 percent of his business.

Within EDG's showroom are specialized examples of how enthusiasts can fully integrate their homes, including TVs behind motorized artwork, high-definition broadcasts, streaming audio as well as video, lighting, temperature and security controls. "It's really a simple formula," says Gullo. "It's about understanding our clients' expectations. Our goal is to exceed their expectations — every time."

While Gullo says more clients today have a better understanding of technology compared to 20 years ago, he still spends a lot of time educating people about the best options for their living spaces. "We go through a discovery process," he says. "Entertainment is still the biggest driver. Clients are interested in having music systems that





are available in any room of the house." He also says building media rooms and intimate screening rooms and home theaters make up the bulk of EDG's projects these days.

Many installers make great efforts to showcase the technology. Gullo says he takes this lesson one step further by introducing clients to the back office. "We show rack building and testing," he says, including the engineering and mechanical drafting that goes into each project. "We show them actual projects being built for other clients," says Gullo. "The client gets to see what it takes behind the scenes."

This frank approach has led to 14 national awards from CEDIA in recent years. EDG has also been awarded Dealer of the Year from both CEDIA and CEA. The custom installer was also honored by CEA for "Luxury Home of the Year," which recognized best integration of a system up to half a million dollars. EDG's award-winning project included a 16-zone, multi-room audio system, lighting controls, media systems, screening room, HVAC controls and Crestron touch panels throughout the entire home for off-site access. ■

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