

# Far Hills Residence

CASE STUDY | RESIDENTIAL

FAR HILLS, NJ

## ➔ Challenge

Integrate every electronic system in a 17,000 square foot home and its five acres of property, allowing simplified independent control by a large number of family members and guests.

## ➔ Solution

Install an advanced integrated system based on Crestron control and Crestron DigitalMedia™ technology.



“

There's nothing that anyone sees, no DVD players, no visible speakers—everything blends beautifully with the decor.”

— **Michael Class**  
*ClassCraft Audio Video*

## The Most Powerful Technology

*Fully automated home manages climate, lighting, and security while simplifying audio and video entertainment*

What's the most powerful tool in home automation today?

According to Michael Class, President of ClassCraft Audio Video of Middlesex, NJ, it's Crestron technology.

Class and his team recently used the unique capabilities Crestron provides in a very large, elegant house in Far Hills, New Jersey – a residence that well illustrates the concept of a fully automated home.

"With a house this large and with so many subsystems, Crestron technology was the only way to go," he explains. "No matter what we're trying to control now and no matter what technology might be added to the property in the future, Crestron gives us the tools we need to integrate and automate them."

## A complex, yet easy-to-use system

Far Hills is a small, exclusive community located just 40 miles west of New York City. The 17,000 square-foot home consists of three buildings on five acres. It includes the main house, a cabana, and a large garage with a guestroom suite above it.

Class says the automation system starts at the property line, where driveway sensors trigger the security system to alert family members that a visitor has arrived. In the evening, the lighting system is triggered as well to illuminate a path to the house and the front door.



“Crestron technology also enabled us to set up security, lights, heating, and cooling to the family’s preferences,” Class explains. “They rarely have to adjust them.”

“When the family does want to interact with the technology, for example, to choose a movie or a piece of music – we put the controls right at their fingertips.” There are 18 wall-mounted six-inch Crestron touch screens, a 20" HD touch display, 16 wireless remotes, and the Crestron app for the iPad® and iPhone® installed on family members’ mobile devices.

The entertainment system is extensive. Family members and guests can watch TV in 16 different areas of the house, including three theaters. A Crestron Sonnex® Multiroom Audio Distribution System has 28 zones, covering every room plus a pool and bocce courts outside. “One of the design challenges we faced was that this family throws many big parties where they use different spaces in the home independently,” Class explains. “With this system, the guests can choose their own audio and video, or the homeowner can do so from his phone as he walks the property. So, for example, the guys might be in the bar watching a game while the kids are in the theater watching cartoons. Everyone loves it.”

When someone selects a video source, the TV or projector and related systems automatically turn on, the shades lower and the lighting adjusts. “Everything is always exactly how the user wants it,” Class

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— **Michael Class**

*ClassCraft Audio Video*

says. “Crestron technology also allowed us to build intelligence into the entertainment system to manage the cable boxes and other sources and serve them to different displays. It ensures that no one disrupts anyone else’s viewing experience within the house.

The music room features a piano with an Apple AirPlay® audio pickup built-in. “Anyone can sit down at the piano, select it as a source on the Crestron touch screen, and then send the music they play to any or all of the audio zones. It’s a nice way for the family to have live entertainment for everyone.”



The home also includes two dozen heating and cooling zones, with independent control for every room. “The Crestron climate interface is great,” Class says. “It allows us to warm or cool certain areas at specific times of the day, but also turn down the system for those parts of the property not occupied to save energy.”

ClassCraft also integrated control of water temperature, lighting, and water effects in the swimming pool, greatly simplifying their use.

A security and surveillance system includes 24 cameras plus gate and driveway sensors, and intrusion and fire alarms. Family members can display the live video feed from security cameras on any TV, their iPad® and iPhone® screens, or on the Crestron touch screens installed throughout the home. They can also control the pan/tilt/zoom cameras from these same devices.

ClassCraft designed a gating system interface with Crestron technology that uses a daily timer. While the gates are normally open during the day, they close automatically in the evening and can be opened and closed as desired by family members. When a visitor arrives, all of the Crestron devices automatically switch to the live video feed from the gate and driveway cameras. “That means a great deal in providing the family members with a sense of security,” Class adds.

The Crestron system also controls and automates 550 loads of lighting throughout the property. Family members can turn lights on or off for the entire house,



each floor or room, or they can rely on the system’s timers and occupancy sensors. “The lights are automated according to the day and time and triggered by how the property is accessed,” Class says. “But the homeowners can still have full control over all lighting if needed.”

## Designing the systems

According to Class, building a system this large and complex would be a daunting task with anything less than Crestron technology.

“One of the great things about the Crestron systems is that they are based mainly on IP control,” Class explains. “For example, DigitalMedia allowed us to run a single CAT5 or CAT6 cable to every display and wall plate. We also used fiber optics for the longer runs within the house and between the main house, cabana, and guest house. And DM® gives us the ability



to attach the Crestron infiNET EX® Wireless Gateway, which makes it easy to connect our thermostats, lighting gear, and wireless handheld remotes.”

Class says that Crestron technology enabled the team to centrally locate equipment where they could protect it, and it eliminated the need to install components throughout the house. “There’s nothing that anyone sees; no DVD players, flush-mounted speakers— everything blends beautifully with the decor.”

When the family is away, the fact that the system is IP-based enables them to check on the home, let guests or workers inside, and set up lights and other systems from anywhere in the world.

Class also appreciates the help he receives from Crestron regional reps, engineers, and tech support to design and support these systems. “Given the nature of our business and our need to combine so many different technologies, I need an automation company that I can depend on. That’s why Crestron is my partner.”

The homeowner, too, is extremely pleased with the new systems, so much so that he’s already planning additions.



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