

install: futronix



finding enlightenment

SOME PROPERTIES ARE SO WELL DESIGNED INSIDE AND OUT THAT FINDING A WAY TO IMPROVE ON THEM CAN BE AN ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TASK. FORTUNATELY, SAYS BEN PALMER, THE OWNERS OF THIS HOUSE HAD FUTRONIX...

When it comes to adding advanced lighting to a striking and contemporary-styled penthouse duplex apartment you have to make sure that you use an equally sophisticated lighting control system. So when it came to this specific apartment, there was only one choice: futronix.

The stunningly cool décor demands stunning cool lighting, so it was vital to marry up style and technology, area by area. So the first aspect of any advanced lighting installation is to tour the property and pick up on the style cues.

The lower level entrance door opens onto a marble-floored hallway, inset with four tall niche windows and a hallway to two lower floor bedrooms and a bathroom. Contemporary paintings and sculptures line the hallway, giving a foretaste of the numerous lifelike figures and large canvases displayed throughout the residence.

Ups and downs

A stone-flagged dining room continues the minimalist aesthetics, with clean-lined furnishings and glassware, vertical windows and more artworks. Then, behind the staircase with solid wood treads curves upwards to a spacious living room with exposed 'industrial girder' ceiling, fireplace with stainless flue, comfortable lounge seating and a large wall-mounted plasma TV with in-built speakers. Wrap-around window-walls showcase urban skyline views and give access to an extensive outdoor deck area with 'tent' awning, sculptures and water features-ideal for relaxation or entertainment. And, finally, the master bedroom with en suite and a guest bathroom are also on the upper floor.

So, where to start with such a project? Well, the owners realised from the outset that intelligent lighting and automation control systems were integral to the realisation of their personal vision for this superb high-rise duplex. So, taking professional advice, installation and commissioning by their selected Futronix installer began, area by area...

Elements of control

To control lighting, ancillary equipment, security systems and water features throughout the house, a total of six Futronix Enviroscene 805 racks were specified and installed. Together, these panels provide 48 programmable lighting circuits. System monitoring, programming and control, meanwhile, was confined to a central location in the owner's home/office via a PC linked to the system.



The whole-house Enviroscene-based system installed controls all external lighting for the front and rear entrance areas, as well as interior lighting in the lobby and hallways, dining room, kitchen area, stairwell, and lounge/entertainment

area. The two Enviroscene units controlling lighting and water feature pumps for the upper level outdoor deck area were able to be installed in an exterior IP-rated enclosure housing pumping and heating systems, thanks to the Enviroscene's aircraft-grade stainless steel chassis.



The low down

On the lower level, the entrance hallway is lit by recessed downlights, controlled by multi-location switches at each end of the hallway. At the inner end of the hallway a wall-mounted Home-Icon Touch Screen controller - with full colour TFT display and interactive graphics depicting the residence and its systems - provides whole-house control from one location.

In keeping with the stylish simplicity of décor and furniture the dining area is illuminated by several halogen spotlights recessed in the uncluttered ceiling, while halogen recessed downlights highlight the large painting and artworks.

In the kitchen, illumination includes a mixture of halogen and low-voltage task lighting over the island-range, sinks and counters requiring bright lighting, plus fluorescent lighting concealed under the overhead cabinets.

So, even with multiple lights and circuits available, the Enviroscene system can easily provide lighting 'scenes' for any required purpose, giving the owners complete flexibility.



Up, up and away

The upper level entertainment lounge features spotlights recessed into the ceiling, plus side table lamps and standard lamps. But it's in the bedroom where things get really interesting! In addition to the main Envirosene units, a Futronix P800 dimmer with three remote switch panels was installed. With all dimming and control functions built into the one module, along with an integral timer and 20 programmable scene setting, each of these dimmers provides the same scene-dimming capability as the main Envirosene systems in the rest of the house, making setting the 'mood' in the bedroom as simple as pressing a button!

On the safety front, security lighting was integrated with the landscape lighting and can be dimmed along with the pre-programmed garden lighting scenes or can be manually switched to operate from the standard PIR security system. Other external lighting includes a row of downlights along the underside of the awning and over the glass window wall on the upper deck, with additional low-voltage lighting linked into the system. Several all-weather floodlights - also linked to the main system - provided general exterior lighting and water feature lighting, while exterior walkways and

paths feature LED lights installed at regular intervals, all linked through an external PIR system.

The finished article

A dramatic entrance to the home and a cool feel to the hallways was one of the main design specifications, and it was emphatically achieved through the use of translucent glass panels inset into the ceiling at the lower hallway and stairwell, then backlit by fluorescent tubes dimmed using the Futronix 0-10v ballast controller option. Add to this low-voltage dichroic lamp downlights inset in the stairwell ceiling to illuminate the stair treads and the clear glass balustrade panels and you're left with an entrance that's truly inviting and sets the scene for the rest of this remarkable home.

Indeed, take a tour through the home and the final effect is nothing less than clean and uncluttered, combining urban sophistication and a welcoming ambiance. Smart architectural lighting has rarely been so well realised, and the owners, more than satisfied with the result of this illuminating installation, now have a house that oozes pure 21st century style.

Contact

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