



BEST ENGINEERED HOME SOLUTION

PARAGON
TECHNOLOGY GROUP,
ASPEN, CO

This one-of-a-kind property perched high on a mountaintop above Aspen just may be the perfect vacation and retirement home.

With an incredible location and heavenly panoramic views, the outdoor fun starts with a backyard ski deck dropping down a neighborhood trail into a world-class ski resort. For indoor comfort and entertainment, add six guest rooms, a billiards parlor, exercise room, three more decks overlooking the Rockies, and an ultra-innovative home theater.

"I don't mind telling you that this client

made us a little nervous at some meetings," says Justin Rounsefell, system designer at Aspen-based Paragon Technology Group, which designed and installed the AV and home automation systems. "He's so discriminating and so knowledgeable. He looked at every little detail with a magnifying glass."

The homeowner is a retired audio industry executive who happens to know a few things about high-performance audio/video systems and home theater design. Needless to say, he demanded a mind-blowing system of

the highest quality — and Paragon delivered.

"Yes, he challenged all of us, and we learned from him as well," says David Raife, Paragon's owner and president. "But in the end, the coolest part of the project was the client himself. He brought out our very best work."

"The homeowner wants to stay anonymous," Rounsefell says, "but I can tell you he was really into it and had been an engineer early in his career. He wanted us to show him all kinds of calculations about predicted SPL [sound pressure levels] and

things like that. But because he understood what we were doing, he was actually a very good client to work with."

"One of his tougher requirements," says Raife, "was to deliver high performance and complete integration with tremendous economic value. It's hard to do all of that in one package." No homeowner has unlimited funds, but this client understood where to spend and where to cut corners.

In certain areas — the home theater, family room, and master bedroom — the homeowner held to the very highest standards. For secondary systems, he understood the need for more value-orientated components. For example, he originally asked for touchpanels in every room, but then agreed to simple wall panels and handheld remote controls in much of the house.

Raife and Rounsefell describe the theater in one word: "incredible." Starting with acoustics and sound features, the room has 7.1 surround sound using JBL flagship K2 speakers. "We also installed acoustical wall treatments and a wave ceiling, and then brought in a lighting designer to create backlighting behind it."

"The wave ceiling is built from RPG FlutterFree, a furniture-grade hardwood molding shaped to diffuse sound reflections. "It keeps energy in the room and helps with the surround field experience in the back of the room," Rounsefell explains. "And, for the front speakers, it actually prevents direct reflections, which improves clarity."

For video, a Marantz VP11S1L DLP projector was selected, partly because it cooled more readily than other projectors at the home's high altitude. Paragon sealed the projector in a control room at the back of the theater and housed the equipment racks for all the audio, video, and home automation there as well.

The racks themselves became a focal point, with their face sides prominently displayed in the hall leading from the guest bedrooms to the theater and the rest of the house. "Most of the systems we do have several racks in their own room where nobody really sees them," Raife says. "Our guys still take pride in them, but in this case the client does too, and they're beautiful front and back."

The equipment in these racks is top quality. Paragon installed a high-performance video and audio server, Crestron

CNX-BIPAD8 CAT5 audio distribution processor and CNX-PVID8X3 video distribution processor, a Crestron control system for AV, thermostat, lighting, and shade con-



trols, and an interface to a GE Interlogics security system. The media server provides mass storage of DVDs and other media on a hard drive, so you can play them back directly to multiple zones. The house has 12 TVs plus 28 audio zones, one for each of its 25 rooms plus three outdoor areas. The integrated Crestron processor enables every TV and audio device access to every

video and audio source.

To provide additional flexibility and convenient whole-house control remotely, Paragon implemented Crestron XPanel. A

unique browser-based technology, XPanel allows the homeowner access to complete system control from any Internet-connected PC. Better still, XPanel Web pages are easily programmed to mirror the touchpanel screens at home, giving the owner a familiar interface to operate from.

Despite the sophistication of the systems, this homeowner asked for simple,

straightforward controls. "Because he was integrating every single system that he could, he needed a manageable interface," adds Marty, the programmer for the project. Paragon had the same concern.

"We've been dedicated to Crestron as our only control company for six years now," Marty explains. "Crestron does a much better job of creating a manufacturer and dealer relationship. They're a one-stop shop in terms of lighting, climate control, amplification, and audio sources. You don't have to worry about different code and firmware versions, communication conflicts, and programming or installation issues. There's a consistency from start to finish. That means our techs are always familiar with the products they're dealing with. The design, programming, and installation are faster, easier, and more profitable.

"When he moved in he was completely blown away. Every little wire, every little detail was neat and perfect — and it is the smaller details that make these type of installations better. All of the systems in the home are awesome. We take a lot of pride in our work and we get a lot of repeat business, but this one raised the bar."

Paragon is a builder of high-end residential AV systems for over 20 years. "This project was one of the most difficult we've ever done," says Raife, "but it was probably the most fun. Because this homeowner's standards were exceptionally high, we were all striving for perfection." ■