



WhatHouse? Awards 2015 Best
Luxury House – Laurel Grove by
Q Developments, where technology
plays a big role

Sure-lock homes

...and the adventure of the empty house. **BRIDGET CORDY** explores how smart technology and remote connection is making new homes more secure than ever



NEW HOMES TECHNOLOGY



ABOVE LEFT Ross Wilkins, business development manager-specification, Comelit Group
ABOVE Comelit 3one6 video entry system
RIGHT Phil Cotton, design director of Finite Solutions
RIGHT The RTI KX-7 wall-mounted touch panel from Invision UK
BELOW LEFT Maxi high-end door entry monitor from Comelit
BELOW RIGHT Justin Lewins, specification sales manager at Invision UK
THIS PIC WyreStorm specialises in video distribution and control systems



At the swipe of a touchscreen, today's technology can help keep homes secure. The audio/visual gadgets and gizmos add the gloss but it's sophisticated security that offers the luxury of peace of mind.

"We can now integrate the intruder alarm with the heating and lighting control," says Ross Wilkins, business development manager – specification, Comelit Group. "You use the app, or a fob that you tap onto the alarm, to unset the alarm, turn the lights on and turn the music on, so it's full home integration now."

Reducing "wall acne" as Wilkins calls it, Comelit introduced the Multi-user Gateway, an apartment entryphone system that negates the usual panel in apartment hallways. "It allows everyone to take the [entry] call direct onto their phone or tablet so, from a cost perspective, the developers are buying one piece of kit to make the video entry call and then it's going through to licensed apps on people's handsets.

"It can also be set up for when you're at the office and want to take that full video call. There's a massive amount of functionality and we don't require a server for our VIP door entry so there's no single point of failure."

Quality of product, reliability and warranties are essential (with tech-savvy installers security cleared and able to work to the build schedule), as Adrian Ickeringill, EMEA general manager of WyreStorm, highlights: "The whole thing has to be a long-term partnership with housebuilders, including fitting out the show home and taking care of all the service and backup calls."

WyreStorm specialises in video distribution and control systems and has recently introduced the Enado system, which includes provision for remote access via smartphones and tablets. "Linked to CCTVs, it enables you to see any of the connected cameras at the property, so you can see who's there and can then just remotely adjust cameras. We then take that output and feed it onto all screens in the property as well as to your smartphone devices.

"Our Enado system works with your own device so there's no ongoing licences," says Ickeringill. "It's very simple to control and could even unlock the front door for you. It's easy to implement a one- or two-room solution and upgrade later."



To help navigate almost limitless possibilities, WyreStorm suggests bronze, silver and gold option packages. Advance pre-wiring also enables upgrades at a later date.

"At the design-wiring stage there's a lot you can do," says Phil Cotton, design director of Finite Solutions, which designs and installs systems to integrate smart solutions. "You really need the right number of the right cables in the right places. Our skill and experience helps people make good decisions because the most expensive cable is the one you don't put in.

"Beyond the Internet of Things one of the buzzwords is the 'connected



home', where your devices are connected to you via tablet or phone but you remain in control. There's a rejection of over-automation as it should enhance life and make it easy. People still want to be in control, not for it to control them."

When it comes to security, Cotton advocates pre-wiring for solid internet connection, especially with security. "We also advise a recording device in the house in a secret location in case you're burgled, as webcams have their limitations as they don't necessarily record."

Justin Lewins, specification sales manager of Invision UK, agrees that



THIS PIC AND BELOW Samsung SmartThings – starter kit and SmartCam

BELOW MIDDLE Phillip Pini, head of residential development at Crestron

BELOW RIGHT Crestron connects all devices on a single platform, not just heating and lighting



“There is a rejection of over-automation as it should enhance life and make it easy. People still want to be in control, not for it to control them”

hard wiring is fundamental to optimise security. “There’s a perception that you don’t need to wire as you can do so much over Wi-Fi but it’s not the most robust solution. Star-wiring back to the hub will be the most robust.

Lewins’ role is to make developers and architects aware of the options as well as the limitations to make sure systems don’t compete or clash with one another, particularly security alarms. “We have a catalogue that pretty much covers all areas so it’s a full home solution up to high-end delivery and some quite affordable solutions for apartment schemes in the city.

“A whole new market is building. It’s less based on product and more on services so we stand at an interesting point in time.”

With innovative products hitting the market continuously, Lewins highlights the Nest system, owned by Google: “Nest has a lot of built-in logic, which can learn your routines and alert you when things go awry.”

Nest cameras sensing motion outside can turn on interior lights as if someone’s at home, the smoke and carbon monoxide sensor self-tests, and the company is working with Yale to introduce a keyless front door lock.

For a straight-out-the-box system, Samsung has introduced SmartThings, which can be fitted without additional wiring. “We’re really seeing growth in the ability to connect,” says Paul Scott, senior product manager for Samsung SmartThings, which is working with some 200 device partners and has chosen the UK to launch SmartThings.

“Even 10 years ago you couldn’t have dreamed of the way the internet has changed our lives through collaborative innovation on a massive scale,” says Scott. “This is an open platform that will continually develop, as our main focus is more collaborative to add value. By 2020, some 25 billion things are forecast to be connected so it’s a huge opportunity for housebuilding.

“SmartThings is the easiest way to turn a home into a smart home. It’s all battery powered and takes 15 minutes to set up so housebuilders can provide one piece of kit with no messy wiring. It’s a real solution to provide peace of mind and housebuilders can have a head start for a relatively low cost.”

The startup set includes a multi-sensor, which allows the owner to check remotely that the home is safe and secure, or even whether the garage door is shut.

At the other end of the scale, Crestron provides solutions for commercial, government and other organisations including Westminster Abbey. “We design for specific requirements; the military, for example, won’t use copper cables, requiring fibre cables instead, which are more secure,” explains Phillip Pini, head of residential development at Crestron.

“With the Internet of Things on the wireless network, it’s not totally secure. It’s only as good as the network so people need to be aware and be smart.”

To demonstrate the Crestron portfolio, the company has a show room in Chelsea. The focus is on keeping things straightforward for clients, such as the ‘goodnight’ system preset, which, among other actions, ensures every lock is secured.

“Less is more with our products, we’re obsessed with minimalism,” says Pini. “It’s about keeping it clean with simple systems, superior products and service. We connect all the devices on a single platform, not just heating and lighting, and can talk to any piece of kit. We also have a good network of Crestron Integrators, it’s paramount all services are put together properly.” ▶

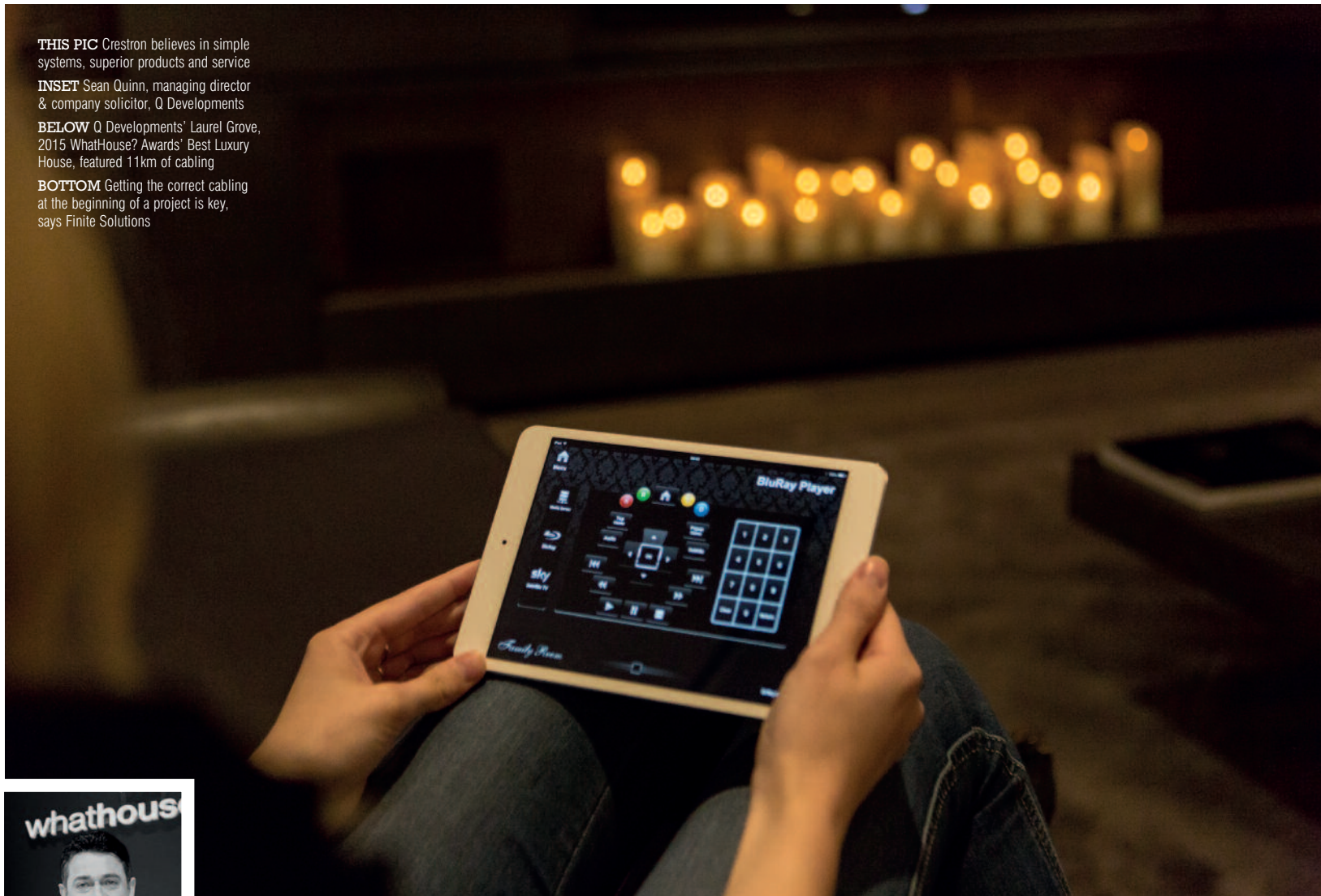
NEW HOMES TECHNOLOGY

THIS PIC Crestron believes in simple systems, superior products and service

INSET Sean Quinn, managing director & company solicitor, Q Developments

BELOW Q Developments' Laurel Grove, 2015 WhatHouse? Awards' Best Luxury House, featured 11km of cabling

BOTTOM Getting the correct cabling at the beginning of a project is key, says Finite Solutions



Q Developments, which won double gold for Best House and Best Luxury House at the What House? Awards, insists that its smart systems are both user-friendly and top quality.

"We're on the cusp of getting too complicated," says Sean Quinn, managing director. "Intelligent systems have got to allow for grandma to put the lights on. Wall panels are still required so it's an alternative option, but with touchscreens it's simple to use. A master switch makes it so easy to prepare for viewings, both before and after."

"But the price of complicated M&E has gone up astronomically and is possibly now the biggest cost package, at about £700,000 for the fancy, top of the range," says Quinn, whose buyers often bring their own technology experts.

"People want both security and the toys, so we give them the tools and our experts give them a tour to take them through everything and they can then upgrade; it's win, win."

Infrastructure at Q Developments' award-winning luxury house, Laurel Grove, featured some 11km of hard-wiring, with security including CCTV but stopping short of central locking or keyless entry.

"We use the highest quality locks and alarm systems and because of Secured by Design in building regs, new houses are so much more secure from the concept stage. You always have to think as the customer and people feel more comfortable double-locking and setting the alarm." [sh](#)

CONTACTS

Comelit
<http://pro.comelitgroup.com/uk>

Crestron
www.crestron.com

Finite Solutions
www.finitesolutions.co.uk

Invision UK
invisionuk.com

Q Developments
www.qdevelopments.com

Samsung
www.smartthings.com/uk

Wyrestorm
www.wyrestorm.com