



There's home
automation and there's
C-Bus home control.

Life Is On



by Schneider Electric



There are 'smart' homes and then there is the imaginative and interactive home of Christchurch couple Wayne and Aimee – where home control meets giant transformers, a tree house and a submarine themed home theatre room

Christchurch homeowner Wayne is a big fan of home automation. Ten years ago he installed PDL by Schneider Electric's C-Bus Home Automation system to automatically switch and adjust lighting as well as audio in the lounge of his property. Back then, at the push of one button Wayne was able to turn on the TV, his surround sound, and dim the lights.

At the time, Wayne's first foray into automation was almost considered a Star Trek moment. But it turned out to be just the beginning, and he decided to expand on his existing system by building a new home entertainment area with a bit of wow factor.

"I didn't want to have to wander around the house switching stuff on and off. So... we automated a bunch of switching that made things effortless." – Wayne, home owner

Dreaming big

Wayne, an engineer who co-owns an aluminium joinery business, originally envisaged a big screen mounted in a faux rock wall. Looking to test his ideas, he got together with long-time friend and special effects artist Dean Johnstone - the owner of Dream It Limited and a former chief signwriter for Peter Jackson's King Kong film. Dean also made the mammoth bones for the movie 10,000 BC.

But after a few beers with Dean, Wayne's initial entertainment room idea took on a whole new direction - as a submarine wreck themed theatre room on a deserted island.

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Wayne and Aimee's submarine-themed home theatre features a periscope, sonar ping, and torpedoes, which in the right light appear to be leaking plutonium.

"We wanted a point of difference. At the time the house was modern, new, but quite sterile. The submarine is just another whole world," said Wayne.

Submarine wreck themed theatre room

The 9 metre by 6m home theatre seats around 20 people inside the hull of a decaying submarine. Not just for the kids, the submarine also has a themed bar constructed of materials suggesting they were scavenged from an ocean beach.

The submarine interior is fashioned from materials which have been laminated and treated, creating the impression of the steel being ripped apart when the submarine ran aground. It's this amazing attention to detail that really showcases the effort that has gone into this space.

But Wayne wanted to take it to another level, to make the space come alive. He decided to add dramatic effects that he could pre-programme and control.

Automating a Submarine

Inside the submarine, Wayne and Aimee use a remote to activate simple pre-programmed commands that orchestrate approximately 60 switchings controlling DVD players, SKY TV, sound effects, the bar fridge, heating and ventilation. They can activate a sonar 'ping' and spotlights that illuminate the point of impact where rocks have penetrated the submarine's main body. Accompanying sounds of waves spilling through the wreck add realism to the pending doom of being caught in a stricken submarine.

"Everything we've done is different – I hate copying," said Wayne. "We wanted to introduce the element of surprise and wow factor. But with that, the technology has got to be easy to use when you're entertaining 20 people and you've got a few drinks on board."



A 'break-glass' fire switch plunges the room into total darkness and activates a smoke machine and emergency alarm, simulating a fire emergency. Hundreds of LED lights are programmed to change sequence every four minutes, adding flashes of surrealism to the whole experience.

The submarine-themed room is the centrepiece of Wayne and partner Aimee's modern two storied home, showcasing just what's possible when imagination meets clever automation. And all of this was created for fun and family enjoyment.

"We did it mostly for our family. The kids have grown up with this stuff, and they love it. I just love seeing them and their friends in there having fun." Wayne

Classic cars, transformers and aliens

More recently, Wayne and Aimee rebuilt a new building after the 2011 earthquake, a 350 sqm showroom and car workshop, which houses a fleet of six classic cars and a retro garage-themed bar, complete with dilapidated petrol bowser. It's the ultimate venue for Wayne and Aimee to host friends and fellow motorsport enthusiasts for the Bathurst 1,000 race.

Four eight-foot replicas of movie icons the Alien, the Predator, and Transformers stand sentinel in the bar and showroom. Crafted from car and motorbike parts and each weighing in at 500kg, these monsters are wired into the C-Bus system, which sequences animation, including LED eyes, a laser gun and other lighting effects, providing a new focal point at different stages of the evening.



C-Bus home control switch



Hi-tech security

Security is an important feature of Wayne and Aimee's home. More than simply protecting what they've worked so hard to create, smart security also keeps a lid on insurance premiums. C-Bus technology plays a key role, connecting a recently installed gate sensor with CCTV. A unique iPhone ringtone alerts Wayne and Aimee to vehicles waiting at their gated entrance. Answering the call streams live video of the waiting vehicle to a nominated mobile phone. If it's someone they're expecting then a simple touch-screen command opens the electric gate, allowing the vehicle to drive on to the property. Wayne and Aimee can close the gate remotely, too. The setup is especially useful for granting site access to tradespeople (and closing the gate behind them when they depart) when the family is away on holiday. There's no messing about with passwords.

"We're not trying to be big brother. But when you've got so many people working on the property it's good to see what's going on and who's on site," said Wayne.

Endless possibilities

Wayne is already plotting the next extension to the project. Drawing on inspiration from the way smartphones have redefined the way we live to push home automation in surprising directions.

Over the years Wayne has extended C-Bus controls to outdoor lighting, windows, house lock-up, underfloor heating, gas fires and even some basic lighting control in the kids' treehouse.

The bar, submarine, garage and even the tree house are unique environments and C-Bus offered a solution that would allow Wayne and Aimee to programme these spaces in a distinctive way. This installation has been expanded upon over 10 years, thanks to thought from the engineers, and now focus shifts to the future, with plans to expand and evolve this amazing site. This technology opens doors to new possibilities and a framework that ensures homeowners can run wild with their imagination.



C-Bus unifies, simplifies, and automates your home technology.

C-Bus Home Control makes technology in your home easy by providing seamless control of music, home theatre, lighting, air conditioning, sprinklers, curtains, blinds, and security systems – the list is virtually endless. It brings a new level of functionality and connectivity throughout the home.

Call Schneider Electric Customer Care on 0800 652 999 for a list of your local C-Bus Approved Installers, or visit our website.



Here are some examples of what you can do:

Lighting and Scene Control

Home theatre scene, romantic scene, party scene... free yourself from constantly having to tune lights with the pre-set scenes.

Home Theatre

Simply press the remote control for pre-set scenes. Lights are tuned; curtains are closed automatically to block out exterior or natural light; TV, stereo system and projection screens are all set with one touch.

Multi-room Audio

Your favourite music travels with you into every corner of your home. Your favourite music travels with you into every corner of your home.

Air-conditioning

Maintain the most comfortable and energy-efficient temperature at all times.

Security and Safety

A security system connected with surveillance camera and alarms will be activated if there is any intrusion, with a priority email alert sent automatically.

Scheduling

Discourage potential intruders while you are away by turning lights and AV equipment on or off according to your pre-set schedule.



Why do you need to upgrade to C-Bus?

Now...

With C-Bus...

Manual control via mechanical switching



Out-of-home remote control via your mobile phone, tablet or other wireless devices.

Text-oriented user interface



User-friendly consistent graphic user interface with self-explanatory icons and jargon-free language installed across different control devices

Limited to dedicated control devices only, such as remote controller and wall mount unit



More control device options, such as mobile phone, computer, web tablet, Microsoft™ Media Centre, etc.

Must wait at home for your installer to solve any system problems



Timely customer service allows you to coordinate your installer's service call via the secured remote access without even stepping into your home.

Are you ready for a C-Bus experience?

C-Bus is a home automation system. The system can be interfaced with sensors, home security systems, AV products and other electrical items to manage and automate a broad range of functions.

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