

Imperial Imparts Impressive Integration



WINNER AT A GLANCE

Company Name: Imperial Security Systems Inc.

Owner: Lou Foro

Location: Watervliet, N.Y.

Years in Business: 19

Number of Employees: 5

Number of Accounts: 2,200

Market Breakdown: Commercial: burglary (30 percent); access control (25 percent); CCTV (25 percent); fire (20 percent). Residential: integrated systems (80 percent); burglary and fire (20 percent)

Imperial Security Systems — which was founded in Watervliet, N.Y. (just outside Albany), in 1986 by Lou Foro — is a small but ambitious firm with a customer base split evenly between commercial and residential accounts.

Imperial Security is adept and experienced in designing cutting-edge home systems — so much so that it was also a runner-up for *SSI's* Integrated Residential Installation of the Year Award in 2004 before claiming the top prize this year. In fact, 80 percent of its residential market revenues are due to integrated system installations.

That's why the owner of a new luxury home sitting atop some 20 acres of land in Loudonville, N.Y., contracted with Imperial for a security/video/audio system to be installed in the upscale residence. The company was able to finish what it started, as what began as a prewire in

2003 concluded with a complete systems installation in 2004 that topped \$44,000.

When all the dust had settled, Imperial Security had integrated the 7,000-square-foot residence with intrusion detection, fire, carbon monoxide, water-level, access control, CCTV, central vacuum, telephone/intercom, home theater, whole-house audio and structured cabling systems.

15-Year Relationship with Client Continues to Grow

It was largely Imperial's history with the homeowner — having wired their first house around 15 years ago — and well-established local reputation that led to the company's hiring. These were end users who were accustomed to living with a security system and did not want to be without one.



1. Imperial Security Systems technician T.J. Strock works on the wiring for one of five Russound impedance-matching volume controls deployed in the Loudonville, N.Y., residential installation. Among the speakers controlled by the devices are four pairs of Jamo in-ceiling models that are part of the whole-house audio system.

2. The custom, luxury home — which must withstand cold winters in upstate New York — is valued at approximately \$1.5 million and is 7,000 square feet in size with five bedrooms and a master suite. In addition to the value of the home and its contents, its secluded location made comprehensive security a necessity.

3. The home's primary theater system is located in the family room, where a 50-inch Pioneer plasma screen was installed over the fireplace. An additional home theater system was set up in the master suite, while the exercise room and kitchen feature Sharp LCD televisions.

4. Imperial Security Systems President/Owner Lou Foro (*center*) reviews the project's plans with Technical Coordinator Dan Prout (*left*) and Strock. The company prewired the home with structured cabling in 2003 and installed the various systems in 2004.

5. Prout fine-tunes the alarm control panel's auxiliary power supply. The intrusion detection system includes contacts on all doors and windows, five interior motion sensors and five alarm screens. Remotes control the system as well as some basic access control functions.

"These people knew exactly what they wanted as far as the level of security," explains Foro. "I let them know what was available to accomplish what they were looking for. They are very security conscious, plus the house is set back off the beaten path."

The house is comprised of five bedrooms plus a master suite. Above a three-car garage sits a huge recreation/playroom for the children. The first floor includes a large kitchen, breakfast nook, laundry room, dining

room, formal living room, den and a three-season room. A glass fireplace that can be viewed from all sides separates the kitchen and family room.

Security Includes Access, Burglary, Fire and CCTV Systems

As far as security goes, Imperial installed access control, burglar and fire alarms, and CCTV systems.

The access aspect was simple, but useful, as the company programmed the couple's Honeywell Security remote

controls to open the garage doors as well as control the alarm system. The telephone system was also set up to buzz open an electric gate installed on the garage's pedestrian entrance.

Speaking of the garage, Imperial also installed a Cartell driveway alarm, which is useful because of the home's set back position from the road. A probe was buried on the side of the driveway so when a car enters, an annunciator alerts the family and the front lights illuminate.

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6. This is one of three Honeywell touchscreen keypads used to control various systems throughout the home.



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7. The installation included perimeter lighting that activates when an alarm is tripped as well as four cameras mounted around the exterior. There is also a driveway alert system that lets the homeowners know when a vehicle is approaching the house.

8. Technical Coordinator Dan Prout prepares one of the structured wiring drops Imperial Security Systems had previously run throughout the home for connection. The premises were wired for a dozen phone outlets and a half-dozen data jacks.



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The rest of the intrusion alarm system incorporates a combination of perimeter and interior detection devices. Honeywell Security press-and-fit switches were installed on the doors and windows, while five of the bedroom window screens were wired to facilitate security without compromising fresh air. Everything throughout the home is controlled via multiple Honeywell Security touchscreen keypads.

“The alarm was also programmed to activate outdoor lighting when an alarm is tripped,” adds Foro. “There are two voice speakers within the home that sound when the alarm is violated. The basement windows are secured with GE control barrier bars, while the interior also has five ADEMCO PIRs. The system is monitored through landlines with radio back-up utilizing ADEMCO contact ID format.”

On the fire/life-safety side of the project, the home was outfitted with nine System Sensor photoelectric smoke detectors that are interfaced so that if one is triggered, they all sound. At the same time, voice speakers announce a fire and to leave the premises.

“The voice speaker is very important,” continues Foro. “This leaves no doubt as to the danger at hand. The family needs to be able to distinguish whether the house is on fire or there has been a break-in. A standard siren does not ac-

complish this. In addition, when the fire alarm is triggered, the panel is programmed to activate lighting by the exits to help the family get out safely.”

Imperial also equipped the home with three Ultraguard carbon monoxide detectors and three natural gas detectors. These addressed the end user’s concerns about the gas fireplace and laundry room. Additional environmental controls were included as well — such as a sump pump alarm to monitor the water level and a low temperature sensor to notify the homeowner when away from the location.

Finally, the video surveillance aspect of the system includes four outdoor color cameras with infrared diodes to facilitate day/night recording on a Dedicated Micros DVR, which is networked with the client’s home computer network.

“This [networked video] gives them the ability to view their home from anywhere in the world,” elaborates Foro. “We also wired the cameras to be viewable from any television in the home. For example, when their driveway alarm activates, they can flip the TV channel — or use any one of four computers — to view the approaching vehicle.”

2 Home Theaters, Central Vacuum Pace the Many Amenities

Beyond security, Imperial also equipped the Loudonville residence

with entertainment systems such as home theater and whole-house audio, as well as convenience systems such as computer/phone networking and central vacuum.

The main theater consists of a Pioneer 50-inch plasma TV; Jamo and JBL speakers; Denon multizone amplifiers, DVD player and CD changer; a Scientific Atlanta cable box; and a Sony VCR. The system is operated with a home theater master remote linked to a Xantech infrared emitter that carries signals from the wall to the components, which are tucked away in a closet.

Two Sharp LCD TVs were installed in the kitchen and workout room. They work independently of the theater system, or can view the same programming.

“We wired the system so it can be viewed simultaneously in these rooms. That way, if you are watching a movie in the theater, and decide to work out, or even to start dinner, you do not have to pause the movie,” states Foro.

Four pairs of Jamo in-ceiling speakers were installed around the house with matching Russound impedance volume controls. In addition, a pair of Niles Audio outdoor speakers were installed on the deck.

The master bedroom has a separate theater and plasma screen to

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accommodate a sitting area at one end of the room. This system is comprised of a 42-inch Hitachi plasma, three in-wall speakers, a digital cable box, and Denon amplifier and DVD player.

For the computer and communications systems, Imperial wired the home for 12 phone and six data

jacks using Cat-5 cable. Greyfox structured cable housing, hub and cable modem, as well as a Linksys router were used to hook it all together.

Finally, the central vacuum system includes nine inlets with built-in electric and one dustpan for the kitchen. The garage has an additional inlet. A deluxe accessory kit with

beater bar was added as well as a car-cleaning kit for the garage.

Temperamental Touchscreens Are Only Installation Snag

Although the extent of this project may seem rather involved to some, it's just another in a long line of similar projects for the skilled team at Imperial. That's probably why, apart from some issues with the touchscreens — which were quickly remedied by the manufacturer — this installation went off with nary a technical hitch.

According to Foro, however, sometimes the trickiest part is interfacing with the whims of the customer.

"The hardest part of this job was getting the husband and wife to agree!" he says. "Theater and plasma TVs tend to be a 'guy thing,' while central vac and security tend to be a 'woman thing.'"

Fortunately for Imperial, it usually works to the company's advantage.

Foro continues: "The discussion usually goes: 'Well if you are spending \$20,000 on a theater, I should be able to get a central vacuum!' That's what happened here. So what started out to be basic security, central vac and music job turned out to be pretty elaborate."

The location was actually broken into during the construction phase, prompting Imperial to install a temporary wireless system until the permanent one could be activated. There have been no further incidents since the family began occupying the property, although the driveway alarm sees a lot of action.

"They constantly have cars pulling up their long driveway," says Foro. "The problem is they have to drive all the way up to the house to turn around. That's why we are considering adding a flashing light on the side of the driveway to stop them in their tracks, and get them to back out."

It's such customer service and ingenuity that is a hallmark of Imperial Security Systems and figures to help it keep the Loudonville residence owners happy customers for at least another 15 years. →

Loudonville, N.Y., Residence Equipment List

SECURITY/CCTV/ACCESS/FIRE/ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS

Quantity	Manufacturer	Description
1	ChannelPlus	Video modulator
1	Dedicated Micros	EC04 4-channel 80GB DVR
5	GE	Barrier Bars
1	Honeywell	Vista I28BP control panel
1	Honeywell	Digital low-temperature alarm
1	Honeywell	BD receiver
2	Honeywell	5804BD remote controls
2	Honeywell	Flush-mount speakers
3	Honeywell	6270 touch-screen keypads
5	Honeywell	Aurora PIRs
5	Honeywell	Zone expanders
45	Honeywell	Press-fit window switches
1	N/A	Sump pump alarm
2	N/A	Natural gas alarms
5	N/A	Security screens
5	N/A	Door contact switches
1	NAPCO	Voice driver
1	Provideo	Indoor covert motion detector camera
4	Provideo	Outdoor day/night cameras
1	SafetyNet	Radio
9	System Sensor	Smoke detectors
3	Ultraguard	CO detectors
3	X-10	Light modules



AUDIO/VIDEO SYSTEMS

Quantity	Manufacturer	Description
1	Denon	3803 Digital Dolby amplifier
1	Denon	CD changer
1	Denon	3803 multizone amplifier
3	Denon	DVD players
1	Hitachi	42-inch plasma TV (in master bedroom)
2	Jamo	Rear-flush surround speaker pairs
3	Jamo	Flush-mount 515K4 speaker pairs
4	Jamo	6.5A ceiling speaker pairs
1	JBL Pro	Subwoofer
1	Niles Audio	OS6 outdoor speaker pair
1	Pioneer	Pure Vision 50-inch HD plasma TV (home theater)
5	Russound	Impedence-matching volume controls
1	Sharp	Aquos 15-inch LCD TV (in kitchen)
1	Sharp	Aquos 20-inch LCD TV (in exercise room)
1	Sony	VCR
1	Xantech	Infrared emitter system

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT: 2005 INSTALLATIONS OF THE YEAR

Runner-ups Are Much More Than Mere Also-rans

Although they did not win the top prize, the other finalists for *Security Sales & Integration's* Integrated Commercial/Industrial and Integrated Residential Installation of the Year awards are winning examples of extraordinary craftsmanship and skill.

Sonitrol of Berwyn, Pa., — also a finalist in the SAMMY (Sales & Marketing) Awards category of Best Sales Brochure: Commercial/Industrial — came close to taking home honors for Integrated Commercial/Industrial Installation of the Year for its work with the Moore Justice Center in Viera, Fla.

The project included integrating new interior and exterior CCTV systems, a duress signaling system and a facility-wide access control system with existing systems. Installation designer Ralph Miller, foreman Jason Adams and their staff are to be commended for an outstanding job that resulted in Brevard County (where the facility is located) incorporating Sonitrol's audio monitoring in buildings countywide.

Submitted by President and founder Marty McMillan, Westbury, N.Y.-based Intelli-Tec's work at one of General Electric's corporate buildings in New York was noticed by the judges, who nominated it as the other finalist for Integrated Commercial/Industrial Installation of the Year.

The company delivered an access system that utilizes optical turnstiles to control the throughput of the more than 3,000 building tenants and hundreds of daily visitors. The system includes customized LCD monitors and proximity card readers, and integrates with digital video via a single software platform. The project, which included upgrades of existing equipment, was valued at more than \$275,000.

On the residential side, Houston's Trestar Security Inc. went all the way to the Central American nation of Belize to wow judges with a whopper of a wireless installation. Due to its hurricane-proofed walls, hardwiring the 19,000-square-foot, beachfront property was prohibitive if not impossible.

Trestar President Carlos Ramirez, Vice President Mixsy Ramirez and Operations Manager Jon Horton designed a solution that included a 250-zone alarm control panel and another 132-zone panel; three hardwired touchpads; one repeater; an exterior horn/speaker; three interior sirens/speakers; three wireless handheld touchpads; and 323 other wireless devices (sensors, glass-breaks, motion detectors, etc.).

Structured wiring and equipment for intrusion detection, access control, CCTV and perimeter security systems in a \$20 million, California home garnered Carson, Calif.-based X-tech Security the other finalist nod for Integrated Residential Installation of the Year.

The 32,000-square-foot residence, which was also outfitted with home automation features, included, among other items, more than 100 window and door contracts; 45 heat and smoke detectors; and 28 access control keypads. Principals on the 18-month-long project were X-tech President Mike Brown and Operations Manager Dean Custer.

Congratulations to all the finalists for excellence in integrated installations!



(From top to bottom) Sonitrol (Moore Justice Center in Viera, Fla.), Intelli-Tec Security Services (GE's Park Avenue building), Trestar Security (Belize estate) and X-tech Security (Western U.S. mansion) received special honorary notice in *Security Sales & Integration's* 4th annual Integrated Installation of the Year Awards.

