



The master bedroom in Sonia Query and Gilbert Rousseau's home has motorized shades in the windows, pre-set lights in the room, and includes a remote-controlled television as well as a remote-controlled gas fireplace near the foot of the bed. A walk-in closet is directly behind the bed, and can be accessed from either side. PHOTOS (4): COURTESY OF SONIA QUERY

## REST EASY

Making the most of home automation

URSULA LEONOWICZ

Like most people, Sonia Query doesn't like being greeted by harsh, bright lights when she first wakes up, which is why she programmed a "Morning" setting on the lighting portion of her Control4 home automation system.

Now, at the simple touch of a button, Query has access to perfect lighting no matter what time of day it is.

"It's like having an iPhone; you don't realize how much you use it anymore because you get so used to it," she said. "When I come in the kitchen and press the Morning button, the lights are exactly the way I want them and I only have to press one button, instead of three or four."

Query is part of a growing trend of homeowners who are moving toward digital integration for everything from lighting and audio-visual purposes to home security, and while home automation has grown in popularity over the past few years — as evidenced by the number of smart-home gift ideas that are being promoted for the holidays — Query was early to the game, first wiring part of the home she shares with her husband, Gilbert Rousseau, of Rousseau Sports, more than 10 years ago.

"We've had the Control4 system since 2006, approximately, when we installed new televisions in the basement and living room upstairs. We had a Bose sound system at the time, but we weren't satisfied with it, so we decided to try Control4," explained Query, who heard about the system from a neighbour.

"We weren't using the home automation functions; it was only for the television. But when we did the renovations, we decided to integrate lighting and video cameras — for security."

Homesync, a company that integrates smart technology like Con-



The Control4 door lock, seen from the outside of Julian Bach's condo. Below, the wall-mounted touch screen inside the condo which shows the functions at Bach's disposal.



rol4 into homes and condos, is the company Query contacted to wire the entire house for lighting, sound and security, as well as motorized shades.

Founded in 2009 by Joseph Kade, who started his career as an automation engineer before spending 14 years leading technical teams in military communications systems, Homesync sources many of its employees from the Armed Forces — including Dean Winters.

"Since its founding, Homesync has wired thousands of high-end homes and condos — either when they're first being built or during renovations," Winters said. "Everything gets wired back to a rack



"When I come in the kitchen and press the Morning button, the lights are exactly the way I want them," says Sonia Query, whose home has included smart technology like the Control4 system since 2006.

where all of the equipment lives, through the walls, so it's easier to do when it's still under construction. You can map everything out and get exactly what you want instead of working around all kinds of constraints, after the fact."

One of Homesync's most widely used services is intelligent security, which also happens to be one of Query's favourite home automation functions.

"I have three cameras outside which I can check remotely and I can also tell if a light has been turned on in the house, or if a television is on, so I know when my husband has arrived home and turned on the TV," she said. "Or if someone is coming over to repair something and the person calls me to say they're at my place, I can let them in remotely."

Julian Bach, who bought his condo at Lowney sur Ville in Griffin-

town three years ago, decided to contact Homesync as soon as he made the purchase.

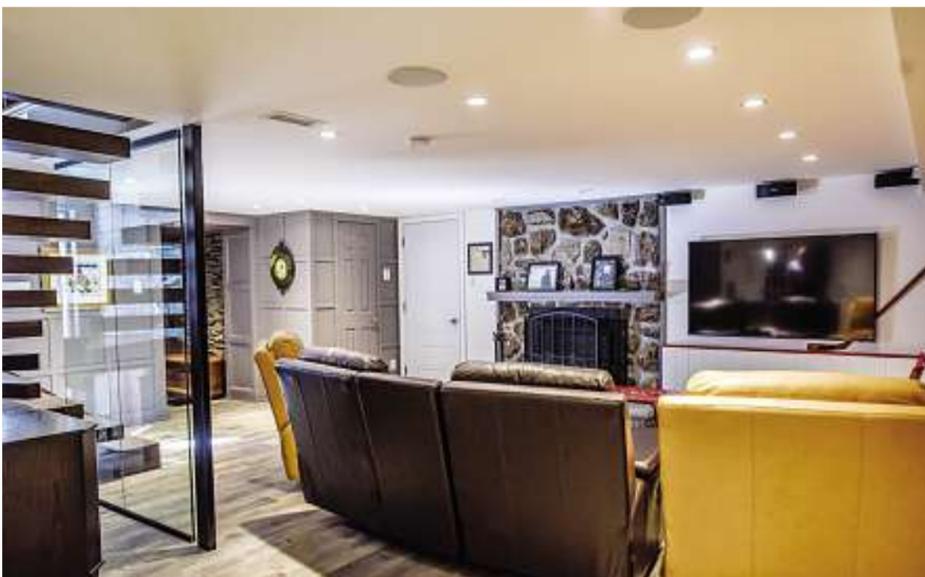
"At the beginning, it started because I had wires everywhere in my old condo, because of the speaker system, so I started looking into it and the speakers got me to the shades in a way," said Bach, who uses Control4 for sound, security and motorized blinds, which are ideal for his corner unit with floor-to-ceiling windows.

"Blinds, in general, are really expensive and I thought it was worth it to pay just a bit more to have a nice, clean finish. You're already in a limited space, so you don't want anything sticking out that doesn't

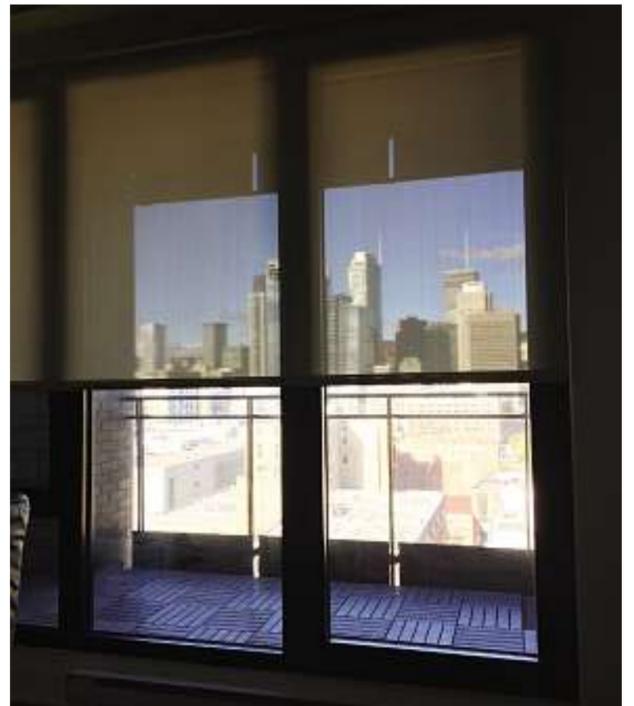
need to be."

Bach's shades can be controlled with a mobile application, be it on an iPhone or Android, as well as with a remote control. In the summer, when it's nice out, he sets them to rise five minutes before he does, eliminating the need for an alarm clock.

"Because the system is connected to the internet, you can set it up for sunrise, sunset, whatever you want," Winters noted. "A big thing for us is no wires — the esthetics of it — and universal remote control. So whether he's watching Bell, Apple TV or his PlayStation, he has one remote that controls everything."



Sonia Query's basement includes a home theatre system that's part of the home automation system, with speakers installed in the ceiling. When the doorbell rings, the TV or stereo goes quiet long enough for the doorbell to be heard. A wine cellar and smoking room are adjacent to this man-cave/home theatre area in the basement.



Julian Bach uses the Control4 system to operate, among other things, the motorized blinds in his Lowney sur Ville condo in Griffintown. URSULA LEONOWICZ PHOTOS (3), SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE