

EVER PRESENT, NEVER THERE

A recent home cinema job in Oslo was so low key, that sometimes it disappears completely. But Bang & Olufsen project designer Stian Holmen made sure its ease of use and functionality grabbed all the attention



■ The home cinema disappears completely when not in use

Oslo is the oldest of the Scandinavian capitals with a history dating back 1,000 years. Many homes in this nucleus of Norway are historic, if not as old. The technology in one of those period pieces, however, is bang up to date. That's if you can see it.

Glide across the polished



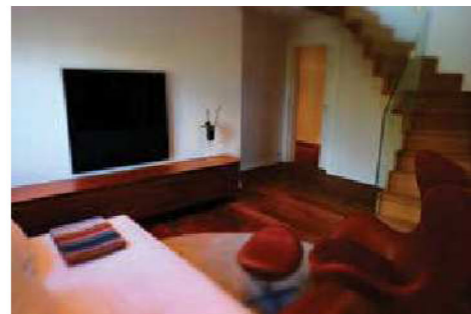
wooden floor of the sitting room that forms the heart of this home and its latest custom installation is hidden, totally. The home

cinema appears as if by magic only at the push of a button, yet is all controlling, integrating lights, curtains and, of course, the large screen stowed away in the ceiling. When not in use, there is only a 65IN flat-panel TV on the wall.

Bang & Olufsen project designer Stian Holmen was approached by homeowners embarking on a major redesign and renovation. Restoring period fittings is tricky; trickier still is blending a hyper-modern multi-zone AV distribution network that enables family members to walk into any one of the 11 rooms originally scheduled for upgrading and watch videos, listen to music or view security camera feeds from any source.

All this Stian and his team had to do with immaculate attention to detail. The installation had to preserve the home's historic architecture and maintain an ultra-low profile to blend in with the new decor. It also had to meet the varying demands of a family that included children with tastes and ways of using technology that differed wildly from grown ups.

Bang & Olufsen, Oslo Vest (Norway) met the challenge by specifying advanced Atлона distribution products to form the backbone of the installation. This Atлона



■ Kit had to maintain an ultra-low profile to blend in with the decor

system seamlessly integrates and complements the Bang & Olufsen displays, audio systems and other technology throughout the home, which offers fantastic views across Oslo.

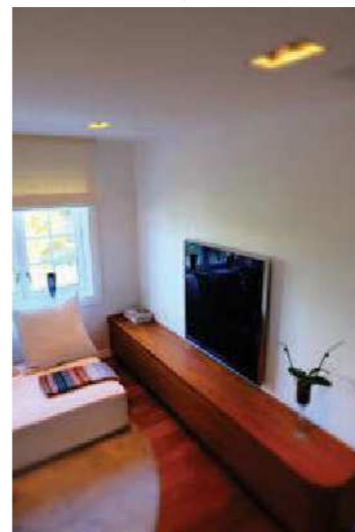
"This was an existing B&O customer who wandered into the store," says Stian, who carried out a comprehensive site survey before designing the project. "It was a complete refurbishment with a new installation. The system 'grew' during the process, with more rooms being added as the project progressed. In the end it included a total of 18 rooms consisting of TV and sound zones."

The home cinema was to have both a motorised screen and a lift for the projector concealed in the ceiling - no problem shoe horning such equipment into a modern home. But this home's fine, classic Scandinavian design threw up challenges. Its antique - and unique - construction of brick walls created major issues such as running cabling out to all zones in the house.

Installing a modern AV system required a solution that could switch and distribute all sources to all B&O displays and components across very long distances. It was a project that demanded easy-to-install category (CAT) cabling to minimise installation impact while accommodating all the uncompressed HD, AV, control and power required.

The project also called for intricate construction skills and AV technology of a pedigree no less impressive than that of Oslo's finest architecture: "We are exclusively a B&O dealer for the quality and system integration Bang & Olufsen products provide. Atлона meanwhile was the natural choice for HDMI distribution in such a large installation. It functions perfectly."

Bang & Olufsen delivered in no small part because it too boasts an enviable history. The Denmark company founded in 1925 by Peter Bang and Svend Olufsen has



EssentialCASE STUDY

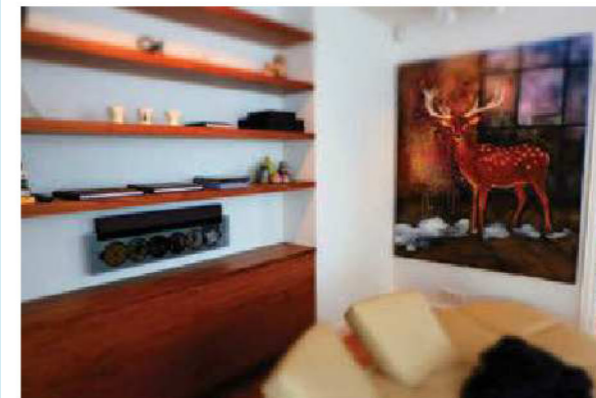


■ About 3,000 meters of Cat 7 cables were used to snake around brick walls

become an iconic international AV symbol, its products sold in more than 100 countries. B&O installers however cannot dwell in the past, regardless of the historical context. Its reputation stands or falls on what it does now.

"Most of the interior was stripped down and cabling was laid in collaboration with an electrician," says Stian. "We used about 3,000 meters of Cat 7 cables from B&O. The customer had a lot of the furniture custom-made for the home so the system had to blend in. Not only was the AV system required to distribute content from any source to any display in any combination in the home.

"It also needed to route several sources to multiple displays simultaneously. In addition, the system had to integrate security cameras and legacy analogue devices - a tall order for a single switching device. Inputs including audio, video, control interfacing and security monitoring equipment had to be seamlessly available to users at the touch of a



■ Technology echoes the pared down, clean-lined designer decoration

button, anywhere in the house."

Stian's colleague at Bang & Olufsen, Kjell Hasle, echoes the difficulty of blending 21st century technology into homes

from decades, if not centuries, past: "We were working around solid walls of brick and had to implement very long cable runs to circumvent the historic architecture restrictions. We also had to deliver a very easy-to-use and high-quality HD video system throughout the home.

"We had to match the elegant B&O displays and components being installed with the elegance of the home decorations, furniture and fittings. We immediately brought in Atлона. Providing all these capabilities on a single platform is not a trivial challenge. In the past, we've been forced to design hybrid systems to accommodate these types of requirements."

This home was different, most of the equipment was fitted into three adjacent



equipment racks, which also included a monitor station. Utilizing the AT-PRO2HD1616M gave 16 input zones and 16 output zones at a distance of up to 328ft. With this system they were able to integrate both the home entertainment and camera technology into one system for complete integration.

Equipment included control panels in remote locations to offer more capabilities and control from any point. The AT-PRO2HD1616M integrated interfaces allow for the control of any connected device. The technology also allowed EDID information from the display devices to be copied into the unit to allow for faster switching and a more comprehensive digital handshake between devices.

Compact receiver units for the AT-PRO2HD1616M enabled Bang & Olufsen to hide all connection equipment behind the displays to give an aesthetic, modern look to display locations while providing full HD audio and video to each display. Connecting displays into the control system enabled those displays to be adjusted from any of the control stations in the home.

"The whole system - from home entertainment equipment to the camera monitor kit - was integrated into each other using Atлона's equipment. Bang & Olufsen provided everything requested using a single infrastructure with the Atлона kit. Providing an entire system solution is what Bang & Olufsen and Atлона are able to effectively deliver for our clients."

Stian adds: "One of the most challenging aspects of the installation included dividing the system in two to accommodate the children in the house. As in most households parents and children don't listen to same music or watch the same programs. In this house, the children have separate decoders for their TVs and a separate sound system and Airplay arrangements."

Parents and children can differ from time to time, but so can clients and installer teams. The latter's favourite part of the installation is its hidden, now-you-see-me-now-you-don't nature. For the client however, top of the list is overall quality and ease of use: "It is simple to control the whole house including lighting, KNX, curtains, internal CCTV and the B&O/ Atлона entertainment system."

ESSENTIAL KIT LIST

- Atлона AT-PRO2HD1616M 16x16 HDMI to HDBaseT Matrix Switcher
- Atлона AT-PRO2HDREC HDBaseT to HDMI Receivers
- Nine B&O TVs/Displays
- 11 Rooms with B&O Sound System/Audio Components

More information: Bang & Olufsen www.bang-olufsen.com

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