

## SERENE HOMES GOES BEYOND THE SMART HOME BY BUILDING CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

“There’s no denying the connected home is here to stay. We believe we’ve found a way to expose its capabilities and conveniences to the masses in an affordable way, while also setting it up for future success.”

*Shawn Griffith, President, Premier Electronics*





**When new Texas real estate developer Serene Homes was preparing for its Fort Worth inauguration, it needed to find a way to differentiate itself from competitors in a healthy local housing market. To Serene—a company that by name is dedicated to providing serenity for its residents—connected-home technology had become strong and sustainable enough to serve as its key differentiator, ultimately creating one of the first “smart” communities of its kind.**



### **The Situation:**

Serene Homes, a Texas real estate developer, was looking for ways to stand out as it prepared to inaugurate its new Hills of Windridge development just outside of Fort Worth. In today’s housing industry, hardwood floors, energy efficiency, granite countertops, and other amenities have become the norm rather than the exception. On top of that, Serene is competing in the crowded Texas housing market, where an abundance of land means development is constantly happening. Whereas some areas in the U.S. are still experiencing slow recovery in the wake of the 2006-2007 real estate bubble, housing in the Fort Worth metro has remained strong.

“We needed a cost-effective way to future-proof the development,” said Arek Meyer, Vice President of Sales, Serene Homes. “Our original incentive was to provide added worth and entice a wide group of consumers—while staying within our budget.”

Serene Homes didn’t intend to build a connected community—and perhaps pioneer a next-generation security trend—when Premier Electronics approached them with an idea. In the end, Serene would embark on equipping each of its 1,200 homes with smart home technology, highlighting possibilities that reach far beyond the four corners of a single plot.



## The Solution:

By working closely with Premier Electronics and Honeywell, Serene decided to include a home automation and security system within each of its Hills of Windridge homes. The builder strategically chose to showcase a built-in Honeywell Tuxedo Touch™ home controller, an exterior Honeywell Total Connect® IP camera, one Z-Wave® enabled door lock, a Honeywell Z-Wave thermostat, and two Z-Wave enabled light switches in each home—all while staying within their budget. The devices operate together via Honeywell Total Connect Remote Services, which enables wireless control of the system from anywhere using an all-in-one mobile app.

The system is universally compatible, meaning it works on any smartphone that prospective homeowners likely already own. Once a contract is complete, each homeowner is scheduled for a training session with Premier representatives to get acquainted with the technology and learn how it can sync up with their personal devices. During that appointment, Premier teaches new homeowners best practices using a hands-on approach, catering to varying degrees of knowledge.

“Our goal is to educate homeowners and give them the confidence to make informed decisions in an area that’s still pretty cutting-edge,” said Premier Electronics co-owner—and former NFL linebacker for the Dallas Cowboys—Bradie James.

In addition, the system upgrades automatically, which means the homeowner doesn’t have to go through the trouble of installing or re-routing equipment to accommodate new technological developments. Because the system communicates with Honeywell servers, new firmware is automatically pushed out, similar to the upgrades that frequently pop up on apps. Minimal maintenance is required, and homeowners will always have the latest system version.

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## The Benefits:

In Serene's case—which is just beginning construction for its first wave of homeowners—it's still early to know the full impact of 1,200 connected homes operating as one community, versus individual connected homes scattered throughout a regular neighborhood.

One early observation is that it's attracting certain populations. Serene seems to be drawing an initial cluster of residents who are modern "global citizens," meaning they travel for business or holiday, and might often be away from their homes. This is likely due to Smart Home technology, since residents can easily monitor and control what's going on in their homes from anywhere in the world.

For example, the end-to-end solution provided by Honeywell Total Connect® allow homeowners to receive direct email alerts notifying an important delivery or arrival/departure, and also control things like lighting, locks and temperature control remotely. Residents can also receive news and weather notifications to stay informed at all times. Combined, these features provide homeowners with the flexibility and peace-of-mind to go anywhere, anytime.

The community is also perfect for families and others seeking a secure neighborhood. The surveillance cameras allow parents to verify important events, such as a child getting home safely from school, or the care of an elderly family member. Furthermore, since cameras will be installed in every home, an entire network of surveillance devices work together to elevate awareness and create a virtually gated community.

"We were able to install the right products at the right cost," said Meyer. "Beyond that, once homeowners start to move into the development, I think they're going to come up with tons of new ways to use the technology together, and that's worth everything."



## The Products:

- Honeywell Total Connect Remote Services
- Tuxedo Touch™ Home Controller
- Honeywell Total Connect IP Cameras
- Z-Wave® Door Lock, Light Switches and Thermostats

### For more information:

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