



Image Paul Brandon

When it comes to home automation, a job well done is a job unseen. If you don't notice it, and don't need to interact with it, that's the measure of success, according to Automation Associates founder Brendon Reid.

Intuitive simplicity

IT WAS BRENDON and his team who masterminded the automation at Bunker House — the 2025 Home of the Year. So intricately has this incredibly complex system been detailed that every element goes entirely unnoticed. Incorporating underfloor heating, interior and exterior lighting, fans, louvres, the Wi-Fi and network, alarm system, and cameras, as well as an air recirculation system, locking system, and power conditioning system, it is comprehensive and ahead of its time.

The house is completely intuitive, so much so that all it takes is a quick tap on an app when its occupants are heading to stay in it and the house will go into 'warm' mode. Louvres will open, underfloor heating and towel rails will turn on, and air will be circulated — all before anyone actually sets foot inside. On the approach of anyone, sensors will pick up activity and act accordingly. In the case of an unwanted visitor, lights will illuminate the property and send a clear, silent message.


"This client was particular in terms of not wanting to see anything; he didn't want light switches or panels, and wall-mounted touchscreens were off the table," Brendon explains.

It's a brief that fits perfectly with the essence of home automation, and exactly what Automation Associates specialises in: simplification.

This project spanned many years from concept to completion of construction, and the result was worth the wait. Step inside and the calm darkness is consuming. There is just enough light to illuminate the space comfortably — and no distractions from the cave-like sense the space evokes. The focus is on the wild coastline beyond, which is framed with a linear window running the length of the western face.

"Changing light levels is done from the subtle yet stunning Basalte keypads; the Vantage touch screen is hidden in a cupboard out of sight; along with the app, these control the entire house — there is zero wall clutter.

"When an automated house is doing its job well, mundane tasks like switching off lights or turning on the towel rail are a thing of the past. The system will take cues from the homeowner and learn from them."

Automation Associates has been supplying state-of-the-art automation systems for residential and commercial projects for 30 years. Operating nationwide, with 35 staff located around New Zealand, it has won multiple international awards, including the prestigious Global CEDIA accolade of Best Automated House for a recent project in Northland. 

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