Crestron
Pyng App and Hub

BY JOHN SCIACCA

Admit it, when you hear "Crestron" you likely think about a powerful, do anything, open-ended control platform that requires a significant amount of programming time likely measured in days and performed by someone with years of advanced training. In fact, CSPs (Crestron Service Providers) make their livings by traveling around programming and integrating Crestron systems for other companies.

SHADES

Control individual shades or group shades for convenient control of a room.

When Crestron contacted me to see if I'd be interested in reviewing the company's latest product I said, "Sure, but you'll also need to send a programmer to set it up." My Crestron contact chuckled and said, "We'll see about that."

Imagine a Crestron system that you can set up without ever needing to open a laptop. A Crestron system that you configure practically as fast as you can walk around a home. A Crestron system that allows your clients to easily create and edit their own lighting scenes and schedule events for lighting, shades, climate, and door locks at sunset. And a system that can still live in the infinitely customizable world of traditional "big" Crestron jobs.

What you're imagining is Pyng.

The heart and brains of Pyng is a two-part system of app and Hub. The free app is used both for control and configuration and is currently limited to iOS (iPhone allows control only not configuration) though Crestron says they "have plans but haven't announced a date" for Android. The Hub, which is a white box about the same size as four-stacked CD jewel cases that connects to a home's network via LAN/PoE, blasts out a

powerful–150-foot indoor–infiNET EX wireless mesh network signal to communicate with a variety of standard Crestron devices, like lighting dimmers and switches, keypads, shades, thermostats, door locks and occupancy sensors. A separate Crestron Connect device can communicate over the network with a variety of security systems via bi-directional RS-232. (Currently only Honeywell Vista panels are supported, but Crestron expects to add others shortly.)

A single Pyng Hub/gateway accommodates up to 50 devices, with the system supporting a maximum of 200. In my 2,000-square-foot house, I installed 19 lighting controls, two shades, a thermostat, two door locks, some keypads and occupancy sensors, with plenty of headroom even on the internal gateway.

Once the Hub is connected and married to the app, you start the five-step process of configuring the system in the app. First up is "Build Your House," a simple process involving adding all of the rooms where devices will be located. This is followed by pairing devices, where you tap-tap-tap-hold each device and associate it to a room and name it something like "Bedroom Downlights."

Step three is grouping shades, allowing multiple shades to operate together based on factors like facing direction or fabric type.

Crestron Pyng brings high-end automation downstream to attract a new level of clients
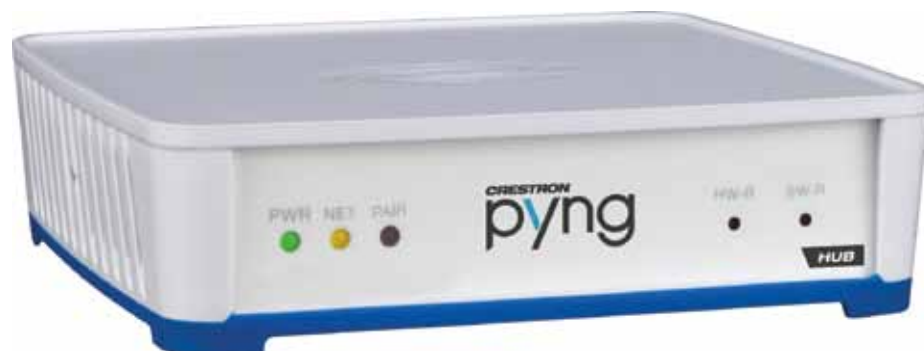
855.263.8754
crestron.com

Kudos ✔

Exceptionally fast and simple set up; empowers users to tweak system; brings Crestron to a new price point

Concerns

Currently limited to infiNET EX devices; a standalone Pyng system lacks Crestron's traditional customization ✕

Product Specs

▸ Compatible with Crestron infiNET EX devices including lighting, keypads, HVAC, occupancy sensors, door locks, and shading

▸ Pyng Connect interfaces with security systems via RS-232

▸ Handles up to 200 devices, up to 50 on a single Hub/gateway

▸ Hub features LAN/PoE, Cresnet, Micro SD card slot and 24-volt power

▸ Remotely accessible via Crestron cloud service

Step four is configuring lighting and shade scenes. The system automatically populates each room–and the entire home–with All On/Open and All Off/Close for lights and shades. New scenes are easily added, with lighting loads adjusting brightness level (if a dimmer) along with a fade on/off times up to 10 minutes.

The final step is "Customize & Schedule" where you have three options: Customize Actions & Events, Schedule Events, and Schedule Climate Control. This is where keypad buttons are labeled and configured, occupancy sensors are assigned to lights, astronomic and time-of-day events are created, and HVAC events and temps are set. Once completed, the keypad button engraving file can be ordered directly from the app.

From start to finish, the entire configuration process took me about an hour. One hour. For my first time on a housewide Crestron automation system. In fact, Pyng is so fast that I was able to integrate newly installed roller shades literally before the installer was able to climb down from the ladder. (Unrelated to Pyng, the Crestron shades are startlingly quiet, producing barely a rustle of fabric moving.)

The brilliance of the app is that it gives almost all of this configuration power to the end user as well, letting them adjust or add lighting scenes and scheduled events without requiring a truck roll. In fact, using the myCrestron cloud service, homeowners can access and make changes to their system from anywhere in the internet-connected world. Dealers can also create a "Golden Project" restore point in case a homeowner gets overly zealous with adjusting and tweaks the system until it's broken. Dealers can also pull diagnostic logs from the system to analyze why something did or didn't happen. I had an issue where a shade suddenly started rolling up that I couldn't figure out. I checked the logs and found that a book

had been set on top of a tabletop keypad in another room, triggering the event.

Don't worry if you think that Pyng is a limited sandbox or doesn't allow the infinite programming tweaks you love, because it can be placed on the vast sandy beaches that are traditional, "big" Crestron jobs. Using traditional Crestron design tools, a programmer can quickly integrate Pyng into his touchscreen projects. Thus when any changes are made to the project in Pyng–either by the homeowner or dealer– they are immediately updated to the rest of the system without any additional programming or downloading. Further, any 3-Series Crestron processor can be triggered from Pyng–like have a goodnight keypad press turning off the audio system–or send commands to Pyng–such as when "Play Movie" is pressed the Watch Movie lighting and shade scene is engaged.

Pyng is a game changer for Crestron, bringing high-end automation downstream to attract a new level of clients. It will also get dealers in and out of jobs faster, letting them finish and move on to the next job. It also empowers homeowners to customize their own systems.