

FEATURED

Pushing the Boundaries

Florida Integrator Designs Automation Systems for the World's First MetaReal Mansion

By Don Kreski

Imagine a home that exists simultaneously in the real world and the metaverse, one where you can seamlessly move from one version of reality to the other, entertaining friends and business associates in person or as avatars.

Such a home would solve many challenges related to space and time. How do you get together with friends who are scattered around the country or around the world? How do you meet socially with business associates from Europe, Asia, and Africa?

And how do you socialize virtually without — let's be honest here — the two-dimensional dreariness of one more video call?

"It's just another step in an evolution that has been going on for many years now," said Gabe Sierra, director of operations for luxury home builder Sierra Development and founder of meta real estate developer MetaResidence One. "The Sandbox, as a virtual world and a gaming platform, allows us to build immersive experiences that people around the world can visit and enjoy."

Yet like any property, this MetaReal house needs lights, shades, audio, video, heating and air conditioning systems, and some way to control and automate them. That's where Crestron, integrator Think Simple, and the Bodhi building management platform come together.

Real and MetaReal

Sierra says the MetaReal house is the culmination of a lifetime of experiences.



"My dad's been a general contractor for 30 years," he noted. "I've spent my entire life on jobsites."

After finishing a degree in construction management, he worked at three large construction companies before rejoining his father's firm. Along the way, he developed a strong connection to the virtual world through his interests in video games, cryptocurrency, and NFT art.

"My original idea was to offer a home through an online auction, with a single click on the Ethereum blockchain." To that end, he teamed up with ONE Sotheby's International Realty.

"Long term, this type of purchase will simplify real estate transactions, in the same way that crypto gives you more control of your money," Sierra said.

In today's reality, there were a number of legal issues that the team had to work out, but with that accomplished, the buyer and future owners will have the right to resell the home using the same simple process.

As the idea grew, Sierra realized that the real

value was more than the transaction — that someone interested in buying a house on the blockchain would be very interested in having a metaverse experience as part of his or her home.

"And because it's the first of its kind, it will be a landmark and a part of history," he explained.

"So, you, if you're the buyer, will have an asset with millions of eyes on it, and you will be able to leverage those eyes in any number of ways beyond

simply hosting events. You'll get a fully built-out experience that you can market and change as you wish, and you'll have a real-world asset that backs up everything you do."

Both homes are under construction right now, with an auction planned for March or April of 2023.

A Home on Many Levels

One part of Sierra's vision is to build a physical home that's above and beyond the ordinary.

The real-world house, designed by architect Mark Reardon of Palmetto Bay, FL, will be an 11,000-square foot single-level mansion with seven bedrooms, nine baths, contemporary oak-paneled kitchen, family and entertainment areas, plus an outdoor pool, garden, and spa. It will be located in the Village of Pinecrest, just south of Miami and close to Biscayne Bay.

The metaverse house, designed by Voxel Architects, will include an exact duplicate of the physical home plus several additional spaces, including a multi-level nightclub in the basement. (There will be other spaces that Sierra has not yet revealed.)



Gabe Sierra, director of operations for luxury home builder Sierra Development and founder of meta real estate developer MetaResidence One, has created a virtual "MetaReal" house and an accompanying real-world, 11,000-square foot single-level mansion house south of Miami. Both homes are under construction right now, with an auction planned for March or April of 2023.

A fun feature is a Lamborghini customized by Ocean Auto Club of Coral Gables, FL, that exists in both the real world and the metaverse. If bidding reaches a certain price level, Sierra says, he will include it with the house.

Unique Features

Sierra says that it was his determination to build the best possible experience that led him to Crestron, and through them, to Think Simple.

"I'm building a house for someone who is very interested in technology, and so I need the very best technology for that house," he offered. "That's where Crestron and Think Simple will take us."

Will Gilbert, partner at Think Simple explained that his company is "designing a home that will include a complete Crestron automation system, including whole-house

audio, multi-room video, climate control, and Crestron lighting and shading."

Crucially, the home will include the Bodhi building management platform, which will allow simplified real-time monitoring and scheduling of the home's Crestron systems and, through them, nearly all of the technology installed in the home via a simple, browser-based interface. Bodhi also offers some unique features of its own, such as leak and flood detection, which is a real value in a semi-tropical climate where mold can be a major issue.

One of Bodhi's most powerful benefits is its predictive maintenance feature, which will compare real-time data from the home's HVAC, lighting, and audio/video systems with their manufacturers' specifications and actual performance over time.

For example, if Bodhi sees a rise in the current

drawn by the HVAC system, it will send a notification to the HVAC contractor and open a service ticket. It also gives the technology integrator, and other contractors with proper authorization, the ability to remotely monitor and control the home's various systems in real time.

"In this way, Bodhi dramatically improves the reliability of the home's systems, and with that our ability to satisfy the homeowner," Gilbert explained. "It's truly a win-win for the homeowner and the technology integrator."

That, Gilbert concluded, is the challenge and the joy of the integration business. "Sometimes you have to push the boundaries to achieve something extraordinary," he said.

Pushing boundaries is what the MetaReal house is all about. 🏠