

## CASE STUDY EXTENDING HOME LIFE BEYOND FOUR WALLS WITH OUTDOOR SHADES

DRAPER AT HOME PROVIDES IDEAL OUTDOOR LIVING SPACES



*For many homeowners, the ideal outdoor space isn't just a patio or a porch — it's extra room that allows homeowners to blur the line between indoors and out, creating flexible living spaces that feel just as comfortable and controllable as the rest of the home.*

Two Indiana projects completed by Draper At Home dealer Custom Blinds Indy, each with its own architectural style and setting, provide prime examples of what is possible: large sliding glass doors, covered outdoor rooms, and motorized exterior shading that transform open-air spaces into everyday living environments.

### **One Goal, Two Homes: Outdoor Rooms That Work Like the Inside**

Both central Indiana homeowners came to Custom Blinds Indy with the same request — extend the home. In Avon, a poolside living area with an outdoor kitchen, fireplace, and seating was designed to function almost year-round. In Zionsville's Holiday Farms community, a golf-course-facing porch was meant to disappear visually when open, then close seamlessly when shade, privacy, or protection was needed.

In both cases, oversized sliding glass doors were the architectural centerpiece. When opened, they eliminated the boundary between interior and exterior, allowing residents and guests to move freely between spaces without stepping through a traditional doorway. The challenge was maintaining that openness while still controlling sun, insects, weather, and privacy.

### **The Role of Motorized ZIP Shades**

To solve that challenge, both homes incorporated Draper FlexShade® ZIP systems. The ZIP design secures the fabric within side channels, keeping shades stable in wind and eliminating gaps that allow light, bugs, or weather through.

“Outdoor shades require support so the fabric doesn't blow in the wind. A side support cable system is one way to tackle the problem, but it leaves gaps on each side of the fabric,” said Draper At Home Residential Market Director Clint Childress. “Direct sun, rain, insects, small birds, and small animals can get through those gaps. The FlexShade ZIP fabric is retained inside side channels, so there are no gaps.”



This page: Private Residence — Zionsville, IN with Mermet E-Screen 5% fabric in Charcoal.



This page: Private Residence – Avon, IN with Phifer SheerWeave 2600 10% fabric in Charcoal.

In Avon, this meant the homeowners could run the air conditioning inside while still hearing birds, enjoying the pool view, and relaxing without mosquitoes. In Zionsville, it allowed a shaded, private retreat that still preserved expansive views of the golf course when desired.

### Technology That Feels Natural

What truly elevated both projects was integration. These weren't outdoor shades controlled by a wall switch alone — they were part of a broader smart-home ecosystem.

In Avon, the homeowners opted for voice control through Amazon Alexa, allowing the shades to drop automatically during the hottest part of the day or with a simple spoken command. That same ease carried over to the Zionsville project, where smart control took on a more personal meaning.

During the design process, the homeowner had one specific request: he wanted his son to be able to control the shades with his voice — just like in the movies. Inspired by scenes where entire homes respond instantly to spoken commands, the system was configured so his son could say, “Alexa, close the shades,” and watch the outdoor room transform.

It wasn't just about showing off technology, though. **It was about accessibility, delight, and making the space intuitive for everyone in the family.**



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### Designed to Disappear

Aesthetic subtlety was another shared priority. In both homes, the shades were hidden within architectural pockets and header details so that when raised, they were essentially invisible. Fabrics were chosen to complement each home's exterior palette: in Avon's pool environment, Charcoal, but with a 10% openness factor; Charcoal with a 5% openness factor in Zionsville for more contrast and privacy. The result: outdoor rooms that look finished and intentional, whether the shades are deployed or tucked away.

### More Time Outside, More of the Year

Taken together, these two Indiana projects show how motorized exterior shading can do more than block sun. It can change how a home is used. By combining thoughtful architectural design, durable ZIP shade systems, and intuitive control, both families gained living space they now use daily, from early-morning coffee to evening entertaining.

In the end, the success of both projects comes down to one shared idea: when outdoor spaces work as seamlessly as indoor ones, homeowners don't have to choose between inside and out. **They can have both.**



ZIP Detail



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