



Exterior blinds aren't just functional—they add to the look of the home.

- Exterior Solar Shading was their request for a new home, Draper delivered the aesthetics they wanted.

When a young German couple approached a Pennsylvania architect to design their new home, they already knew what they wanted.

“We’d work and massage the thoughts through drawings and modeling to arrive at the designs and aesthetics all were happy with,” explained Matt Forsythe of Archer & Buchanan Architecture in West Chester, Pennsylvania, who added that this process included window treatments.

“They expressed their desire for exterior solar shading due to familiarity and usefulness they have with it on their homes abroad.”

Forsythe said his main concerns were finding the right solution that provided enough visual transparency from the house outward, while providing privacy and protection from the sun.

“Frequent high winds in this area were also a concern, so we needed a product that would withstand the weather and maintain functionality,” Forsythe recalled. “We also needed a system that looked intentional and not something that looked like a glommed on after-thought.”

Dealer Nuance Shading worked with Draper’s Solar Control Solutions consultant, Richard Wilson, Forsythe, and the builder—Norcini Construction—on the project. Nuance’s Christopher Cafiero pointed out that exterior blinds are the most energy-efficient product on the market and were the best solution for this beautiful home. Due to the client’s specific needs, exterior Omega Venetian Blinds were recommended.

“They control the sun and heat coming into the space, as opposed to allowing it to enter through the glass to then be blocked by an interior window treatment,” Cafiero said, pointing out that stopping the solar energy before it gets to the glazing is a much more efficient way of reducing heat gain. “Also, the light manipulation of a venetian blind as opposed to a roller shade is unparalleled.”

Another reason for going with Omega Venetian Blinds was the concern over weather damage.

The control system incorporates a wind sensor to ensure that the blinds retract if the wind speed is too high. Cafiero noted,

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CASE STUDY: EXTERIOR BLINDS BRING FLAIR, SOLAR PROTECTION



The Omega Blinds provide precise solar control, in addition to privacy. The blinds tied into the lighting controls via dry contacts.

“They’re also recommended to be retracted under snow and ice conditions and are housed within a sizable pocket. We seal the penetrations to ensure water doesn’t get into the pocket as an extra precaution.”

In the end, Forsythe was convinced that Draper’s Omega Blinds were the way to go.

“Draper had the venetian blade with the right height/depth and perforation to meet the aforementioned goals,” Forsythe said. “The anchoring and tethering details met the design aesthetic, as well as giving us confidence they would hold up to our weather here in Pennsylvania. The flexibility of sizing and housing details allowed us to give the exterior Venetian system a built-in, intentional feel. The RAL color selections helped us find the ‘just-right’ color.”

“The architect and design team take most of the credit for a beautiful project,” added Cafiero. “They had a vision and we made it come to fruition. Working closely with Draper and the builder, we made sure that the product would integrate into the building design and work as intended. Many times, an architect or client assumes anything is achievable and that’s not always the case. It’s our duty to steer them into the right direction and make sure that we can deliver a product that is within tolerances and still an acceptable design for the client.”

Another plus for the Omega Blinds was their ability to tie into the lighting controls from another manufacturer using dry contacts. In addition, while the project doesn’t currently utilize sun tracking, it is compatible should the homeowners ever want to upgrade.

As with any job, Forsythe said, there were small hiccups as the project moved forward. But in the end, everything came together just as planned.

“The homeowners are extremely pleased. They’ve told us as much and are happily going about making this house ‘a home’,” Forsythe said. “As with almost all projects, something inevitably comes up that requires total teamwork to resolve. This project was no exception. However, the flexibility and efforts poured into it by owner, builder, and architect, we think...really paid off. The outcome, a unique home tailored to the living needs of the owner that looks great, fits well within its neighborhood, and is well-constructed to endure the tests of time.”

To learn more about on Draper’s Venetian Blinds, visit draperinc.com/windowshades/productdetail.aspx?detail=237.

For more information about Archer & Buchanan Architecture, LTD., go to archerbuchanan.com.

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