

2026 TREND REPORT

# Living with Light

New Research on Lighting, Window Treatments & Controls





# A Message from Lutron

For more than 60 years, Lutron Electronics has been at the forefront of design and innovation. From the first electronic dimmer for residential use to intuitive lighting management systems for entire buildings, our inventions embrace the idea of comfort, control, and enhancing the human environment. To foster continued growth, it is critical that we continue to evaluate how the residential design industry is evolving.

Three years ago, we embarked on our first-ever lighting trend report, leveraging data and insights that proved U.S. homeowners consider lighting one of the most important design choices for their home. Today, we revisit this key topic with renewed research, exploring the full range of lighting control, across both artificial and natural sources. Our research is supported by independent surveys conducted by Harris Poll of both high-end homeowners and residential architects and designers; our own sales and product data; and reflections from top A&D leaders with influence in the market.

We hope you are inspired by the insights and conclusions shared within!

*“At Lutron, our focus is to help people live beautifully with light. Today’s homes are being designed with an emphasis on comfort, tranquility, and flexibility. People want their lighting to add warmth, depth, and personality to blend a room together thoughtfully and purposefully. And designers appreciate that manufacturers like Lutron design products with both aesthetic appeal and practical performance. As we look to the future, demand for customization and personalization will be key, driven by a desire for interiors to be more emotional, layered, and lived-in atmospheres.”*

— **Melissa Andresko**, Chief Corporate Brand Ambassador



Harris Insights & Analytics LLC, A Stagwell Company

*The 2026 Trend Report was informed by a custom survey commissioned by Lutron Electronics in partnership with The Harris Poll, a leading global market research firm. The study gauged trends and preferences for lighting, shades, and controls among high-net-worth homeowners and residential interior home design professionals. This survey was conducted online within the United States from September 24 – September 28, 2025 and queried 511 randomly selected affluent American homeowners and 254 interior designers and architects. Results for high-net-worth homeowners were weighted to US Census on key demographics to be representative of US high-net-worth homeowners. The margin of error for this group is  $\pm 4.3$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Residential interior designers and architects were sampled, and results reflect those surveyed. For complete survey methodology, please contact [lutron@sharpthink.com](mailto:lutron@sharpthink.com).*



*To complement the survey results, Lutron conducted an internal analysis of order data spanning multiple business divisions over an 18-month period. This review surfaced supplemental insights that track specification and purchasing patterns across lighting, shades and controls across US residential markets.*

# Shifts in the A&D Industry

By Cecilia Ramos

Senior Director of Architectural Markets

I am privileged to serve a unique role within Lutron, in which I am the voice of the A&D community both internally and externally. I love hearing directly from designers, architects, and the creative community about the evolution of their understanding and use of light in space and as a design tool. And, in tandem, bringing those insights to the Lutron team to inform product priorities, messaging, and training.



The key industry shifts I've seen in the past year (that you'll also see backed up in the data from this report) include:

- Designers are embracing *architectural lighting in historic, traditional, and contemporary homes* now. While architectural lighting has often been viewed as a modern vernacular, designers are finding new ways to use alongside decorative lighting to pull the look of a room together and have more layers. When architectural lighting is done right, you don't notice the fixture source; just the illuminated objects, walls, materials that the light touches. These become the visual focus of a room alongside decorative fixtures that add sparkle.
- Designers are realizing that static light does not feel natural and are *becoming champions for dynamic light*. We are not accustomed to being in a single color temperature light throughout the course of the day. In nature, the sun is warm and dim in the morning, cool and bright midday and sumptuous, rich, and golden by night. It's a missed opportunity not to think about light as a medium to create distinct ambiances for different times of day.
- Designers are treating *light as a design medium*, as a way to elevate and differentiate their projects. They welcome collaborations with lighting designers and other experts in the field including lighting manufacturers to realize their visions.
- Designers are now thinking of *window treatments as both design elements and necessities for elevated functionality* in a space. While window treatments should look great, they should also help the performance of the space and the comfort of the homeowner. They are important tools for privacy, security, comfort, and the protection of art and materials within.
- Designers are embracing *the motorization of window treatments*. Five-star hotels now use this technology as an amenity and almost all control their guestroom drapery and shades through a single button press. Once a luxury consumer experiences this luxury outside, they want to bring it into their homes.
- The tools with which designers use to control the connection between light and nature need to be ever more sophisticated and indeed *future-proof*. For technology to be an amenity, it needs to be human, easy to use and *beautiful*.

You'll also find direct quotes and insights from some of our esteemed Lutron Design Ambassadors throughout the report. We're ever grateful for their collaboration and insights

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# Light Is Central to the Home



Ketra D2 Downlight - Entryway

**94%** of residential interior designers and architects indicate that their clients believe lighting design is highly important

**67%** of affluent homeowners believe lighting design is highly important to a home

**52%** of residential interior designers and architects believe the right lighting design can elevate even the most modest interiors, and **47%** believe the wrong lighting design can devalue even the highest-end architecture and finishes

*"We're moving away from choosing lighting just for style or trend and toward creating experiences with light through spaces that reflect who we are and how we want to feel. The best lighting doesn't compete with a space—it completes it."*

— Julee Ireland, Julee Ireland Design Studio



Julee Ireland



# Lighting Influences Mood and Well-Being



Triathlon Select Smart Shades - Family Room

**50%** of affluent homeowners prioritize ambience and **44%** believe effective lighting has wellness benefits

**66%** of affluent homeowners believe interiors should reflect their lifestyle

**54%** of residential interior designers and architects believe there's a growing appreciation among clients for the way lighting contributes to a space's ambience

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*"The desire for a deep connection to nature and wellness is not a trend — it's here to stay. Wellness and comfort are now just as integral to design as the color, texture, and materials that define our spaces. Technology is changing the way we live, work, and feel—making it possible to design environments that are as functional as they are beautiful, supporting happier, healthier living. For example, Lutron Ketra's full-spectrum lighting precisely mimics natural daylight and moves with us throughout the day and night. It's not only beautiful, but good for us — technology with intention and heart."*

— **Julee Ireland**, Julee Ireland Design Studio



# Lighting Influences Mood and Well-Being (cont.)

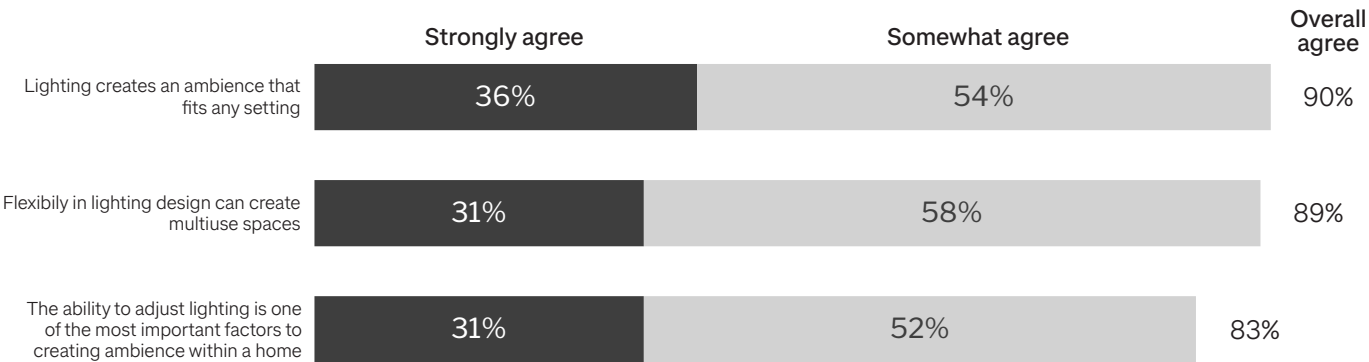
*“Layered, human-centric lighting remains the gold standard: a mix of ambient, task, and accent light that shifts with mood and time of day. Sculptural fixtures add an artistic layer, while dimmable systems support functionality of every space throughout different uses.”*

— Huma Sulaiman, Huma Sulaiman Design



Rania Natural White Tape Light - Living Room

## Attitudes around lighting and ambience





# Now Is the Time for Tunable Light



*“Lighting—especially full-spectrum lighting—and controls should be a first thought, not an afterthought. You can always change paint or hardware, but **your lighting system is part of the home’s architecture—it’s just as important as your framing.**”*

— Julee Ireland, Julee Ireland Design Studio

*“Lighting-design strategy should come early on. Decide which fixtures dim, which change tone, and how scenes will behave before drywall goes up is key for a fluid process. Without that planning, you end up with beautiful fixtures but a clumsy experience.”*

— Huma Sulaiman, Huma Sulaiman Design



# Now Is the Time for Tunable Light (cont.)

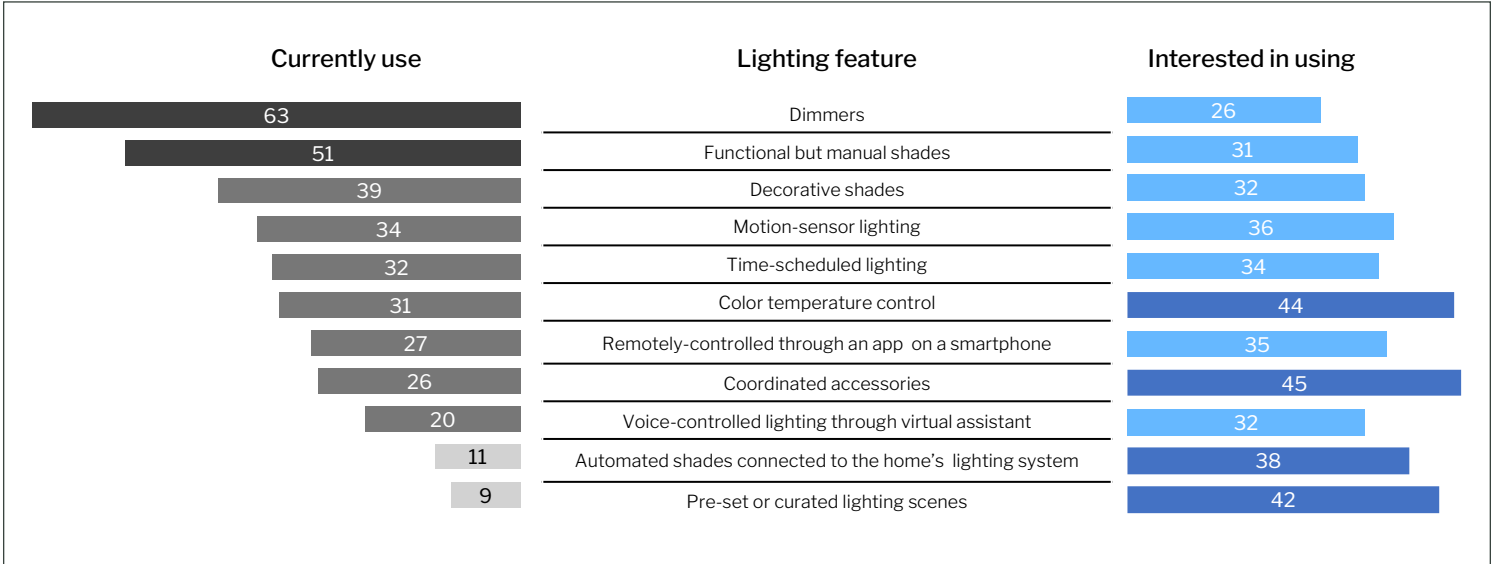


Lumaris Tunable White Tape Light - Under Cabinet

**60%** of affluent homeowners adjust lighting based on the time of day and/or their mood

**42%** of affluent homeowners are interested in preset/curated lighting scenes, but only **9%** currently use them

**41%** of designers cite client comfort with smart automation as a challenge





# Layering Above All

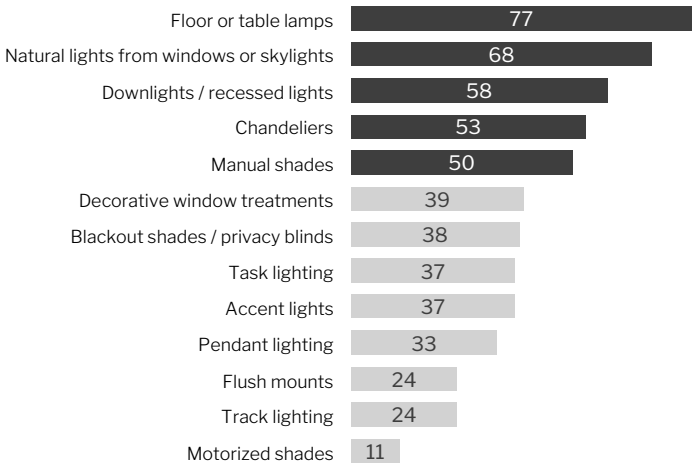
*“Lighting sets the tone for how we live and feel in our home. During the day, it’s about maximizing natural light—through our windows, thoughtful orientation, and shades that filter light softly while keeping us connected to the outdoors. In the evening, layered lighting is everything. I love combining Ketra’s tunable full-spectrum light with accent and decorative fixtures to create mood and depth. The right lighting and control system lets you shift seamlessly from bright, energizing light for daytime activity to warm, inviting light for entertaining. What I love most about today’s technology is that lighting now allows us to create an experience through emotion and atmosphere at the touch of a button.”*

— **Julee Ireland**, Julee Ireland Design Studio



Ketra D2 Downlight - Great Room

## Lighting design elements featured in affluent American homes



*“The all-recessed ceiling grid—the flat wash of identical downlights at a single-color temperature—is fading fast. It flattens architecture and lacks personality. Warm, layered light flatters people and materials, making homes feel more human. During the day, use natural light as your anchor: sheers open, shades high, and a gentle base of ambient light, with drapery as a backdrop softening the space. At night, shift to intimacy: lower shades and closed drapes, dim overheads, and let sconces, pendants, floor lamps or table lamps take over. Layering these moments, like setting a playlist, defines the rhythm of home life.”*

— **Huma Sulaiman**, Huma Sulaiman Design

# Controlling Natural Light

**Privacy, interior aesthetics/views, and energy savings** are the top three factors affluent homeowners consider when choosing window treatments.



**59%** of affluent homeowners indicate daylight is as important as artificial lighting in their home

**58%** of designers indicate sunlight is an integral factor in lighting design

*"Shades have evolved from mere coverings to light instruments. They manage glare, acoustics, and energy while shaping mood. Designers now see them as active participants in the design: balancing sunlight and privacy, layering texture, and also creating interesting layers and textures that speak to the rest of the room, creating a seamless dialogue."*

— **Huma Sulaiman**, Huma Sulaiman Design



## Automated Shades on the Rise



Melissa Andresko

*"Motorized shades are increasingly viewed as a standard feature rather than a luxury. With motorization, shades become active systems responding to light, time of day, or voice commands. Motorized shades can also solve practical concerns, preserving artwork, flooring and furniture from the harsh sunlight and providing coverage for tall windows and hard-to-reach skylights."*

— **Melissa Andresko**, Chief Corporate Brand Ambassador

**56%** of residential interior designers and architects indicate their final designs include automated shades, and **43%** additionally recommend these features



**38%** of affluent homeowners are interested in automated shades, yet only **11%** currently use them

# Fabrics and Aesthetics in Window Treatments



Palladium Roller Shades - Side Window

**98%** of residential interior designers and architects indicate clients are interested in customizing their fabric selections

From Lutron's sales data, neutrals like **White**, **Off White**, and **Light Grey** are the most popular for decorative fabrics and **White** and **Charcoal** are the most popular colors for screen fabrics.

*"Shades and drapery are no longer a second-thought, they're part of the architecture. Layered, motorized window treatments anchored by beautiful textures and fabrics remain the go-to. Light colours and neutrals provide a calm foundation; soft panels or sheers add personality and dimension. Natural fibers filter light so beautifully, as well as being classic, and effortless to coordinate. They offer consistency across rooms and styles while letting natural light become the star."*

— **Huma Sulaiman**, Huma Sulaiman Design

*"Basketweave 90 is currently Lutron's top-selling roller fabric family. Fabrics with allover soft textures/patterns are the most popular, followed by horizontal patterns and then chunkier/more natural materials."*



— **Eva Kimmerly**, Fabric Portfolio Manager



# Fabrics and Aesthetics in Window Treatments (cont.)

Balancing privacy and comfort is reflected in Lutron’s purchase data. Solar screens are measured with “openness factors” - the percentage of a fabric’s weave that is open, indicating how much light and view will pass through. A **3%** openness factor is most popular, with **1%** second and **5%** third

### Top 10 Roller Fabric SKUs (All Shades)

1	2	3	4	5
				
Harbor Pearl (RF-HAR-PE)	E Screen 3% - White (S0202-E-3)	Basketweave 90 3% - Charcoal (SV21-90-3)	Luna Blackout Atmosphere (RF-LUNA-17)	Standard White (BN-903-0)
6	7	8	9	10
				
SheerLite 3% - Pearl (SHL-001-3)	Basketweave 90 3% - Oyster (SP12-90-3)	Basketweave 90 3% - Bright White (SP84-90-3)	E Screen 3% - Charcoal (S3030-E-3)	Element Chalk (RF-LMNT-CH)





# The Design Potential of Controls



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*"Controls complete the experience. Whether adjusting lighting, shading, climate, or entertainment systems, they allow us to personalize our environment, layer light, and create spaces that support how we live and how we want to feel. When we feel good in our space, we live well — and that's truly timeless."*

— **Julee Ireland**, Julee Ireland Design Studio

*"Controls should reflect personalized simplicity. Easy to use keypads and subtle automations let homeowners shift from "Bright" to "Evening" or in a single touch. The tech fades into the background, leaving comfort and atmosphere at the forefront."*

— **Huma Sulaiman**, Huma Sulaiman Design



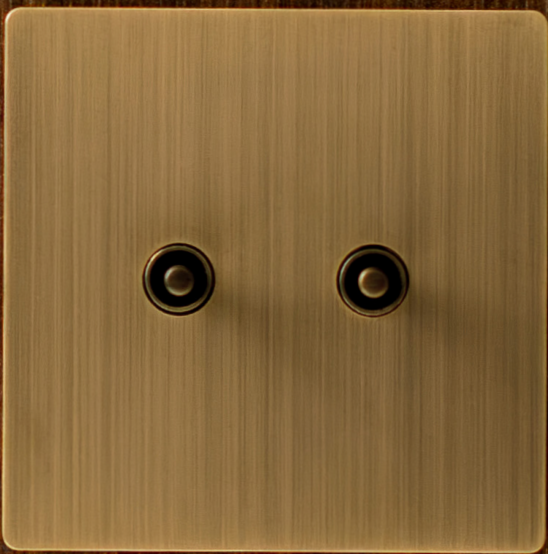
## The Design Potential of Controls (cont.)

**61%** of residential interior designers and architects indicate their final designs include lighting that can be controlled via an app on a smartphone, and **36%** additionally recommend these features



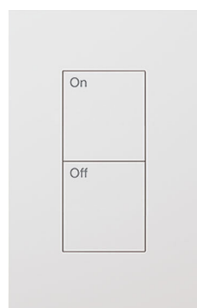
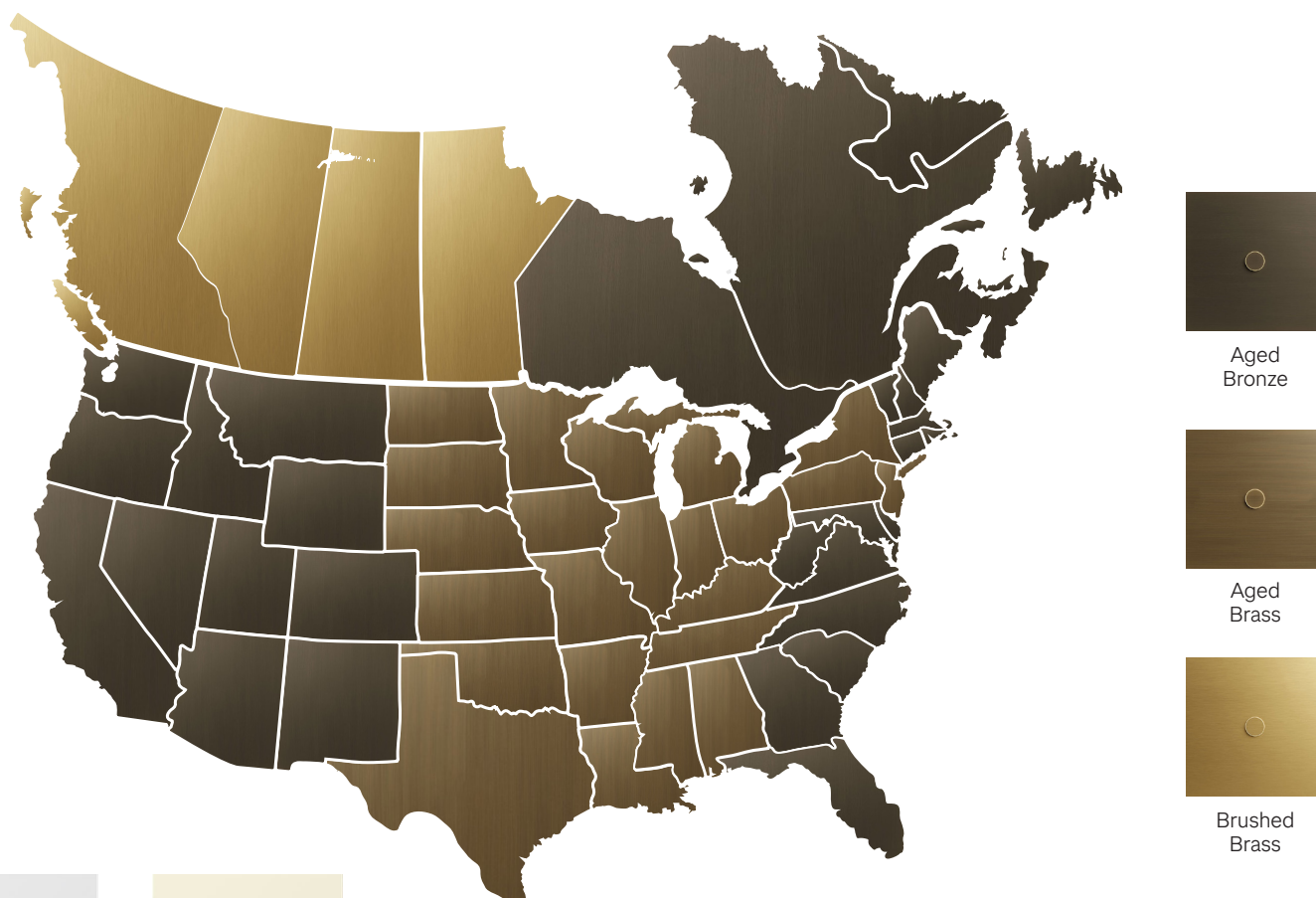
**56%** of residential interior designers and architects indicate their final designs include custom finish selections, and **43%** see clients requesting these customization options

**51%** of residential architects and designers feel it is important that any home automation systems fit the aesthetic of the home

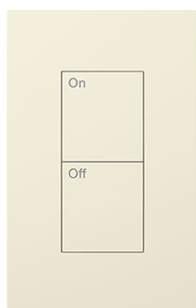


## The Design Potential of Controls (cont.)

On **Alisse** controls, bronze takes first place! Aged Bronze is the most popular finish purchased in nearly all territories. The US Mid-Atlantic, Midwestern, and South Central prefer Aged Brass, while British Columbia and Western Canada find Brushed Brass its top choice.



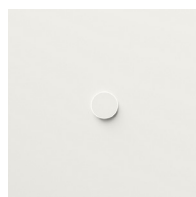
White



Light Almond



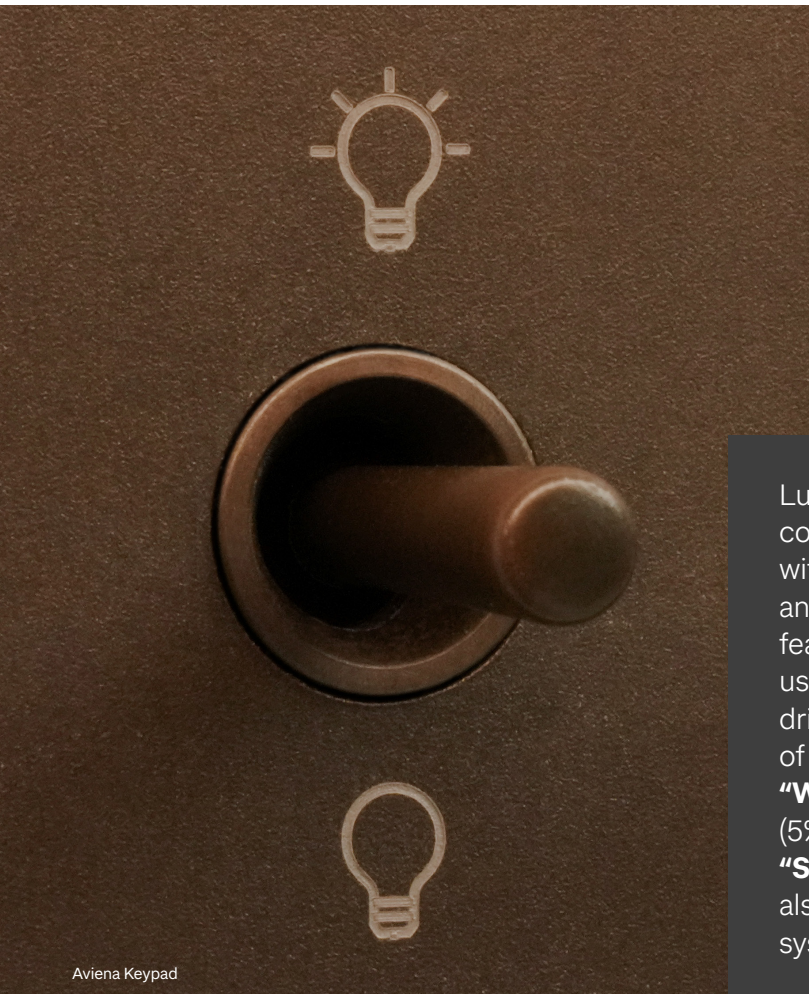
Graphite

Architectural  
White

Neutral finishes continue to be valued for their timelessness — white is the most purchased finish choice for **Palladiom**, with Light Almond being another popular selection. Non-metallic **Alisse** finishes similarly follow regional patterns — Graphite is more popular in the west, and Architectural White is more popular in the east.



# Customization and Personalization



Aviena Keypad

**45%** of residential interior designers and architects indicate their final designs include custom engravings, and **43%** see clients requesting these customization options

Lutron offers custom engravings to support personalized control of light. Most ordered engravings remain functional, with **“On”** and **“Off”** among the top ordered for every room and accents like **“Fan,” “Chandelier,”** and **“Vanity”** regularly featured in relevant areas. Select designers and homeowners use these engravings to create mood-driven and function-driven scenes that connect multiple light sources or zones of light, such as **“Reading”** (7% of bedroom engravings), **“Welcome”** (10% of foyers/entry engravings), and **“Entertain”** (5% of kitchen engravings and 5% of dining room engravings). **“Shades”** and its counterparts **“Raise”** and **“Lower”** are also rising in popularity, as automated shading and lighting systems are more integrated.

*“Design is always in the details, and custom engravings are a small detail that tell a much bigger story—they reflect how personal our homes have become to us. Our homes are now extensions of who we are. We’re designing spaces that respond to us, not the other way around. Personalized engravings—like “Morning,” “Dinner Party,” or “Meditation”—make technology feel human and allow us to set our lighting to what feeds our soul and makes us feel good. They’re intuitive, purposeful, and beautifully customized to how people actually live. It’s functional design that also feels emotional and deeply personal—something that aligns perfectly with the direction home design is headed.”*

— **Julee Ireland**, Julee Ireland Design Studio

*“‘Favorite’ is a smart choice for an engraving, which we find being used across the home in bedrooms, sunrooms, offices, and more. It’s the definition of being personalized as it can mean different things to different people, and with Lutron’s systems’ wireless functionality, that “favorite” can be changed at any time.”*

— **Cecilia Ramos**, Senior Director of Architectural Markets



# A Room by Room Analysis



Intelligent lighting through Lutron's HomeWorks systems is most often installed in Bedrooms **(18%)** and Baths **(16%)**.

Rania Natural White Tape Light - Bedroom

Where is intelligent lighting prioritized

Location	Included in design	Recommended	Total Prioritization
Bedrooms	64	36	100%
Living spaces	67	31	98%
Home offices	49	49	98%
Dining rooms	59	37	96%
Kitchens	61	33	94%
Libraries / art displays / collections	43	50	93%
Closets / dressing rooms	38	54	92%
Bathrooms	52	40	92%
Multipurpose rooms	47	45	92%



Ketra D2 Downlights - Bathroom



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