

Investing in a FUN Future

Why one of the most overlooked parts of new construction and renovations is also one of the most important.

...home A/V is one of the most rewarding investments you can make...

Home Theater, whole house A/V, distributed audio, networked video, even the terms can be daunting much less actually dealing with the equipment. Add to the mix the idea that you not only need to be familiar with the general terms for the systems but the individual pieces as well and you have something that might make your eyes cross.

There's an old saying that says, "You don't buy the jewels, you buy the jeweler." Which is to say that unless you know more about gems and jewelry, the best thing to do is find a dealer you can trust and be guided by them.

That's absolutely true today in audio and video. Depending on how old you are you might recall a time when buying a television the only two questions you had to consider were black & white or color and what size? These days, high definition digital video displays offer a dizzying array of choices. Sure you want a flat panel but LCD or plasma? Is it just a difference in cost or is there something else to consider?

The right dealer will guide you through a process to determine your needs and fit the right device to your needs. It's a risky maneuver to put yourself and your home in the hands of someone who may have been selling toasters or t-shirts the week before. Make no mistake, they may be friendly and helpful (or sadly, not friendly) but are they equipped to help you? Although the tile or carpet guy won't tell you this, home A/V is one of the most rewarding investments you

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can make yet it's also one of the most overlooked. The wow factor when you sell is considerable and you have years of enjoyment while you own the home.

So we'll start by offering some tips for home theater. These seven guidelines are excellent tips to make sure you get what you need.

Tip #1 - Buy from a local dealer you can trust. A local dealer will service what they sell and will come to your home to do it in some cases. That outfit on the net, those guys from the superstore, not so much.

Tip #2 - Plan ahead. Whether you're building a new home, renovating an existing home or just adding equipment, planning ahead is critical. You're always at a disadvantage if you're doing things last minute. Get your dealer involved in the early planning stages of a new home or remodel.

Tip #3 - Think ahead. Consider this, do you think you might sell your home in the next ten years? Keep in mind that more and more homes are being wired for audio and video (as well as computer networking and several other



things). You don't want the one house on the market with none of that to be yours. Even if it's not important to you right now, it will be in the future. Wiring your home for audio and video is a cost-effective investment that will make your home more attractive to perspective buyers (as well as make it a lot more fun for you and your family now).

Tip #4 - Buy from an authorized dealer. Most home A/V companies will not warranty anything that is not sold by an authorized dealer and they



Add A/V
enjoyment to
your entire
home—inside
and out.



do not allow their products to be sold over the net. You may think you're saving money on a product purchased on the net (and we'll talk about that price issue in a moment) but chances are, you're buying something with no warranty coverage. Why give that up?

And don't be fooled by low prices or tales that a neighbor bought their plasma from a store in California and saved hundreds. Chances are, they got old technology or paid a stiff premium for shipping.

Tip #5 - Budgeting for a home A/V system is a complex thing. Unless you understand all of the factors involved, making a realistic budget is difficult. Sit down with a trusted dealer and carefully review your needs.

Tip #6 - We all know new home A/V technology will allow you to do amazing things. It will provide a rich, entertaining experience that lasts for years but it's critical that you can control it. A well-programmed touch screen remote control allows you to easily change any

aspect of your home A/V system. If you want to spend more time enjoying your system and less time fiddling with it, budget for a flexible, programmable remote control.

Tip #7 - Think outside the box. A good dealer will go over possibilities that you might never have thought of. Consider, if you are renovating or building from scratch, adding audio (and video) in rooms of your home that you might not have automatically thought of.

Adding a speaker and a volume control in a laundry room, for instance, might not be a priority (unless you're the one doing the laundry) but it can make the every day drudgery a lot easier to deal with. Speakers in the garage can make working on the car or your home shop more entertaining. Speakers outside can add a whole new dimension to your deck or backyard parties. High quality outdoor speakers come with long warranties and can make tasks such as shoveling snow somewhat more bearable. In the summer, let music welcome guests to your home. The cost for doing



Now you see it, now you don't. A 42 HD plasma display from LG Electronics hidden behind a mirror.

this is minimal and it adds a lot of enjoyment for you and an extra "wow factor" if you ever do sell your home.

R&A

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