



The theater room features SIM2's Domino projector, a Stewart Filmscreen 100-inch Firehawk screen, Crestron's TPMC-10 tablet PC, and Berkline recliners.

Consistent Control

Hod's Home Theater Streamlines Home System Functionality for Detroit-area Client

by jeremy j. glowacki

When Tim Corder, of Hod's Home Theater, first met with his Detroit-area clients, he quickly learned what their priorities would be. Because their careers had always dominated their lives, the husband and wife homeowners had never spent much time enjoying music or movies in their previous residence.

Their new home, however, would be different. It was Corder's job to coordinate with the condo's builder and interior decorator, to incorporate more audio and video entertainment into his clients' lives while maintaining a consistently simple user interface and minimizing wall clutter.

The center of Corder's design would be Crestron control. "The most important concepts that we went for was consistency of the interface, integration of audio and video, and avoiding wall clutter," Corder explained. "We wanted to provide the same interface throughout the entire house, whether it's for an audio/video sys-

tem, security, or heating and cooling. If it works one way in one room, then it should work the same in another room."

Crestron control enabled Corder to select the most compatible brands for the project. With RS232 control a priority, ReQuest audio and video servers were a natural fit for the system, as was Crestron's relatively new lighting system. "Because audio and video distribution was to be the core of the system, it just made sense to use Crestron's lighting, from a programming standpoint," Corder said.

The potential for wall clutter was reduced when Hod's selected Crestron's new TPMC-10 tablet PCs for the home. "The Crestron tablet PCs are great because they provide a really cohesive brain for the whole home," Corder said.

For the first time in his custom career, Corder also programmed the entire control system in-house, instead of subcontracting it. "I'm really

proud of the fact that I programmed this job from scratch," Corder noted. "Long-term I don't intend to program forever, but as a bridge to hiring a full-time programmer, this is great. I really feel like we were able to control our quality and functionality a lot more and give it exactly what I promised the customer."

The theme of the control system was basic, according to Corder. It matches the color scheme of the house and features a nested-menu approach. On the main screen the end-user picks what he or she wants to control and then a second screen provides individual controls for that device. Additional work is underway to link the homeowners' offices to the home system as well. "That's been kind of a stretch for me, because I'm having to dig into IT and network protocols a lot more," Corder said. "These skills are just part of our world now, and you're behind if you don't have them."

said. "We ultimately used Definitive Technology's BP7002 Tower speakers in the theater room, because they had the subwoofers built in. The decorator liked the look of a tower rather than having to have subwoofers with in-wall speakers; she didn't like those cubes. The biggest variable that she brought to the equation was that she wanted us to make sure the walls were clean because she was putting a lot of art on the walls. That was a big priority for her."

Two Sony plasmas and two smaller Sharp



Within the home's Middle Atlantic AX-5 e equipment rack are B&K receivers and amplifiers, ReQuest music and video servers, and a Sony VCR and DVD changer.

LCDs are scattered throughout the home, while a SIM2 Domino30B projector serves as the centerpiece of the theater room. "We've been with SIM2 now for a couple years, and I've been very happy with them," Corder said. "I like the exclusivity, especially in our market, and they've got a neat story and real long-life bulb."

Phase Technology CI6.0 and CI6.2 in-ceiling speakers also play dominant roles in the home. "Phase Tech is a pretty low-profile company, but they sure have treated us well over time," Corder explained. "Their product sounds really nice and they offer a 10-year factory warranty and a very reasonable cost. The homeowner was really happy with the fidelity quality, especially considering that there are so many wall and ceiling speakers to choose from."

Since completion of the home, Corder says that his clients are easing into their system. They're starting to delve into their Audio ReQuest, he says, but their Video ReQuest is something they haven't warmed to quite yet. "They are still getting used to all of the basics," Corder said. "I know that they watch TV every morning before they go to work, and I know that they listen to the radio all the time. I also know that they're using the lighting Home and Away modes. They love having a remote control in bed that controls the TVs and the lights."

The strongest testimony to Hod's success on this \$160,000 project, however, is that the homeowners have been enthusiastic about opening up their residence for Corder's potential clients. To date, both clients that he has taken through the home have increased their proposed systems

A Custom Evolution

If you visited Hod's Home Theater about 12 years ago you would have seen a very different type of business. At the time, it was simply a non-descript



Tim Corder, Vice President of Integration, Hod's Home Theater

TV shop with no focus on home theater or installation.

The company originally opened in the Detroit market in 1932, and up until the late '80s focused solely on Zenith TV sales and repair. Mike Corder took over the business in 1993, relocating from a very small inner city location to the Detroit suburb of Waterford.

Mike's son, Tim Corder, joined the business three years ago, making it his mandate to improve Hod's custom department by adding brands and increasing its retail/custom split to 50/50. Hod's now includes a 4,000-square-foot showroom, featuring high-end home theater and home automation products.

"The retail market in Detroit is really tough right now," Tim Corder said. "Thankfully, custom projects are the things that are keeping us going. We're really trying to grow our image so we're considered in that top three or four places in the Detroit area for high-end automation or home theater."

—Jeremy J. Glowacki

because of what they have seen at the Detroit-area residence. "We have a very well-appointed showroom, but nothing can compare to showing a potential client a job well done," Corder said.

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Partial Equipment List

- B&K AV1260 Amplifier x2
- B&K AVR507 Receiver x1
- Berkline Style 094 Motorized Recliner x5
- Channel Vision 6005W Color Bullet Camera x4
- Channel Vision TE110 Telephone Entry System
- Channel Vision W4000 4-Video Input Web Server
- Chief Manufacturing Projector, LCD, and Plasma Display Mounts
- Crestron:
 - AV2 Processor
 - C2N-TAMWX AM/Weather Tuner
 - C2N-TFM FM Tuner
 - CAEN 7x1 Lighting Enclosure
 - CHV-TSTAT x2 with remote sensors
 - CLX-1DIM4 x2
 - CLX-1DIM8 x3
 - CLX-4HSW4 x1
 - CNX-B4W x6
 - CNX-PAD8A
 - CNX-PVID8x3
 - CNX-RMC x4
 - CT-1000 x5
 - ML500 x1
 - MT500C x1
 - PAC2 Lighting Controller
 - TPMC-10 x2
 - TPS-2000L x3
 - TPS-3000 x1
- Definitive Technology:
 - BP7002 Tower Speakers x2
 - CLR2500 Center Speaker x1
 - UIWBPA In-Wall Bi-Polar Surround Speakers x4
- Integra CDC3.4 6-Disc CD x1
- Integra DPC7.5 6-Disc DVD x1
- Middle Atlantic AX-S Equipment Rack
- Phase Technology CI6.0 In-Ceiling Speaker x16
- Phase Technology CI6.2 In-Ceiling Stereo Speaker x10
- ReQuest Fusion120 Music Server
- ReQuest VideoReQuest Movie Server
- Sharp LC-13SU1 13-inch LCD Counter TV x2
- Sharp LC-26GD4 26-inch LCD TV
- SIM2 Domino30B Projector
- Sony :
 - DVP-CX777ES 400 Disc DVD Changer x2
 - KE37XS955 37-inch HD Plasma Display
 - KLV23M1 23-inch HD LCD Display
 - SLVN900 VCR
- Stewart Filmscreen 100-inch Firehawk Screen

Electric was tasked with the prewire assignment, and thanks to the exacting specifications of Hod's documentation, that process went off without a hitch. The need for excessive documentation on this project turned out to be a blessing in disguise, because it forced Corder and his team to develop documentation procedures for future jobs as well. "That documentation saved us on this job because we didn't have a single wiring error and it really taught us how we'll do things from now on," Corder explained. "Documentation is one of the key reasons I think this project turned out as well as it did; there just weren't any surprises. We knew what

needed to go where and, especially dealing with someone outside of our company doing all of our prewire work, it was done right the first time because they executed the plan."

Corder says that the homeowners were unique in that they knew exactly what they wanted and trusted their decorator and Hod's to accomplish their objectives. Corder's team formed a design plan with the interior decorator, making sure the home had a consistent appearance. "We kind of leaned on each other, especially in the theater room, making sure that the speakers would match into the look of what she was doing with the interior design," Corder

Because Hod's Home Theater was required to work with the condominium's builder, Ivanoe-Huntley Inc., the builder's electrician, Precision Electric, and the homeowner's interior decorator, Jane Zetting, proper design documentation was essential to the project's success. Precision