



ONE FOR ALL: CRESTRON UNITES AUDIO, HOME AUTOMATION

By Mario Morejon

With the release of its Adagio devices, Crestron is making a bold move to combine audio distribution and home automation in the entry-level space. From the front, the Adagio unit looks like a great stereo, yet behind the box it is a completely different animal. Adagio is a powerhouse capable of integrating audio with lighting, HVAC and other home devices through custom programming by providing various external room controls.

The Adagio Entertainment and Audio Distribution units can pump out about 45 watts per channel of stereo throughout six rooms and can expand to up to 24 rooms by integrating with the Adagio AAE audio expander. *CRN* Test Center engineers connected the Adagio unit to 12 speakers and added room controls for each pair.

Adagio is deceptively simple to set up, taking less than 30 minutes. Integrators can install the entire system from the LCD attached to the main unit. They do not need to use a laptop and connect through its Web interface.

Integrators can hook up to 12 APAD LCD controllers or CN2-DBF12 decorator keypads and divide them into key areas in a home for the control of audio and other devices. The keypads come with plastic slots for custom labels, which can be generated on the spot with a laptop and label printer.

Both the Adagio Entertainment and Audio Distribution systems arrive with tuner card slots for AM/FM/XM/Sirius radio and include a CEN-IDOC interface for the Apple iPod. The CEN-IDOC connects via Ethernet and supports just about every iPod format available. The iPod connection provides bidirectional view and control of all audio files stored

on the Adagio.

In addition to copying music, users can view album metadata through the iPod. Crestron's APAD LCD controller uses a nav-wheel that resembles the iPod's fly-wheel. The nav-wheel also makes the system very easy to navigate and reduces the number of keys on the APAD, simplifying the overall experience. Crestron also sells its Isys Touchpanel with Adagio, which can be connected through Ethernet.

Under the hood, Adagio supports SIMPL Windows and SIMPL+ for custom programming, which is a sophisticated low-level language designed to control devices. Crestron programming, however, is notoriously difficult and requires experience with the platform. However, integrators can generate extra revenue by ripping CD collections, integrating devices and offering custom programming.

Adagio is available at \$3,700 MSRP.