



Interactive Dealer Showroom

New Dealer Showroom is a Crestron Experience of a Lifetime

What tough economy? Sound Concepts puts a new spin on an old (and proven) marketing strategy and literally drives business right to the front door.

When integrator Sound Concepts decided to build an interactive customer showroom, it spared no expense and left no component untouched. The grand marketing vision was to provide a hands-on experience for customers to interact with the latest home and building control and automation technology. Executing the big idea, Sound Concepts (SC), Jonesboro, Arkansas, designed an impressive multi-room showroom that never fails to unlock a customer's imagination. Residential and commercial customers can see, touch and play with all the products that SC would likely include in their proposals.

For SC president, Ryan Heringer, transparency with his customers is an essential ingredient for success. He encourages prospects to be open-minded and honest about what they really want in a system. He wanted a facility that showcased nearly every possibility that innovation leader Crestron had to offer. "We wanted to display just about every type of Crestron product in the catalog. If we quote it, we want to demonstrate it and explain the options you have with each product," reasons Heringer.

Heringer's marketing prowess appears to be paying huge dividends. Located in a small Midwest town with a population of 52,000, SC achieved Crestron Diamond Dealer status last year (over \$500k in annual Crestron product sales) – an accomplishment many thought

was impossible. "Not bad for a small town in Arkansas, and with the new showroom, which everyone is amazed by, business will only grow stronger. People travel for miles and miles to visit our showroom," says Heringer.

Model rooms in the 10,000 square foot facility include two theaters, a corporate conference room, custom kitchen, bedrooms, outdoor theater, kinetics/soundproof room, wine cellar with eSommelier system and his and her luxury bathrooms. In addition, SCs own warehouse, temperature-controlled staging area and sales offices are automated using Crestron solutions and are part of the experience. When all is said and done, 19 customized rooms present an astonishing user experience showing a wide selection of live, functioning automation systems of any imaginable combination.

The showroom – more accurately described as a Crestron experience center - offers interactive demonstrations of advanced automation technology including off-the-charts multimedia theater systems with Crestron DVPHD, distributed audio and video based on the award-winning Adagio Entertainment System, climate control and energy management including lighting and shade/drape control with

Crestron Green Light® technology, security system management, wine cellar automation, digital signage and more. Plus, customers can operate a complete selection of custom programmed touchpanels, keypads and handhelds.

Commercial and Education prospects can experience a model corporate conference room designed to teach businesses how to leverage advanced presentation and training technology such as QuickMedia™ FlipTop Computer Center, and the combination of the UPX-2 Universal Presentation Processor and DTT-17V3 DualTouch™ panel.

Positive customer feedback has been more than ever Heringer expected. "We receive incredibly positive comments on a daily basis. Every customer is blown away by the possibilities of what we can do. With Crestron, our only limitation is their imagination," says Heringer.

Pushbutton Speaker Selection

SCs large indoor and outdoor speaker selection is exhibited using a TPS-15L touchpanel to choose among a variety of audio sources and speaker mixes, while the CNX-RMCLV control system and CNX-PAD8 audio processor allows seamless switching of audio to multiple rooms. Two-way touchpanel feedback enables customers to see their selected input/speaker combo. Always a popular attraction, CEN-IDOC Interface for iPod® distributes any iPod media to the whole system.

A Model Conference Room

A conference room is fully loaded with advanced AV/presentation solutions and lighting/shade control. Presentation sources include a PC, laptop, document camera,

video conferencing and 1080p projector, which are programmed for easy-to-use touchpanel control. In addition, building systems such as HVAC and security systems are centrally controlled. "We wanted to let our commercial and education customers play with all the products we would recommend to them," explains Heringer.

A QM-FTCC-TPS4 3.6" FlipTop Computer Center is flush mounted into the conference table, showing convenient connectivity options for lecturers to gain instant access to the whole room AV system, including Internet, right from their laptop. The FlipTop intuitive touchpanel proves to be a compelling demo for SC. "It's so easy for visitors to connect their laptop and begin, plus it displays two-way feedback on the touchscreens. When a laptop is connected, it gives helpful hints like "please plug-in laptop VGA cable", or once connected, it reads "connected & video is now displayed. They 'get it' immediately", Heringer says.

The UPX-2 Universal Presentation Controller and DTT-17V3 DualTouch™ touchpanel show college administrators and corporate trainers the revolutionary annotation and control capabilities available to instructors. "We set it up to function just like it would in a commercial or classroom environment," adds Heringer. A custom lectern ergonomically stores the UPX-2, keyboard/mouse, UPS and touchpanel.

"We do a lot of boardrooms, training rooms and college classrooms, so we really wanted to show firsthand the presentation technology available to commercial clients," says Heringer.

A wireless TPS-6X, perfect for conference rooms, is programmed for a variety of one-touch presets. When a video source is selected, the Draper lift lowers the projector and screen from the ceiling, shades lower, the projector powers on and queues the desired presentation mode. Draper motorized shades are controlled via Crestron C2N-SSC-2 Somfy Shade Controller.

"This room allows us to demonstrate every possibility, which educates the customer and ultimately leads to more sales. It's always easier to sell the benefits of a complete solution after you demo it rather than just showing it on a piece of paper," states Heringer.

Multimedia Living Room with your choice of Touchpanels

To demonstrate unprecedented Crestron touchpanel functionality, in addition to its own programming expertise, an assortment of TPS and TPMC panels are displayed in the model Living Room. Mounted side-by-side, SC consultants show the benefits of various custom GUIs on 4", 6", 8" and 10" screens. Distributed audio/video functionality from the full-blown Adagio Entertainment System is also demonstrated here.

Guests can see a hidden plasma TV that reveals itself with a button press on a wireless TPMC-8X WiFi touchpanel. When a source is selected on the TPMC-8X, a 42" plasma will rise from inside a custom built credenza, ready for viewing. Another touch and the process reverses, lowering the TV back into its hiding place. The system is also programmed to respond to sunrise and sunset. Automatically at dusk, the MechoShades open and the TV powers down and lowers back into its hidden state, while the outdoor theater projector simultaneously turns on to display video.

The flexible MT-1000 3.8" wireless handheld controls a motorized bracket to select the different sources that can be heard on four different Bowers and Wilkins speakers.

The Ultimate Visibility and Traffic Generation Tool

Perhaps the greatest attraction is the flamboyant outdoor theater and digital billboard. A high output NEC Rear Projection system and a 150" Stewart Star Glass screen is controlled by Crestron TPS-G-TPI Isys® Touchpanel Interface, which turns a 32" Elo display into a large scale touchpanel. The 12" screen can easily be seen from Hwy 63 in Jonesboro, one of the highest traffic areas in northeast Arkansas, attracting scores of people to the showroom.

High definition content displays on the mega screen until a car pulls into the lot, then a motion sensor activates the outdoor Pelco PTZ dome camera to a preset position, displaying the customer's car on the screen. An overlay states "Welcome



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to Sound Concepts, you are now being recorded for your protection”, and they see themselves on the huge outdoor screen, appropriately nicknamed “plasma-saurus”.

Hidden Theater: The Room That Isn't There...NOT!

In a twisted touch of irony, what just may be one of the most innovative home theaters ever designed is actually hard to find. A strangely unique feature of this room is, it's not actually there. That is, unless you know how to access it. Using a Crestron PRO2 control system and TPMC-8X fitted with a biometric keypad, a hidden door can only be opened via a finger swipe. Run your finger across the keypad and the screen reads “Welcome”. Once the door opens, guests are mesmerized by one of the most upscale and feature rich media rooms ever seen. It's like being in a modern cave, with an open sky. The TPMC-8X controls the color kinetic LED lighting on the ceiling. Creative scenes like thunder and lightning are integrated with a media server demo for unique, real life movie experiences (imagine that during a viewing of *The Perfect Storm*). Other scenes created by SC include sunrise/sunset, holiday-themed green and red fades, and just about anything else you can imagine, in any color, all controlled from the touchpanel.

The hidden theater, not just a show of flashy gimmicks, is outfitted with the most sophisticated audio video system and supporting components on the market today.

A Runco VX-22D projector with Autoscope, allows viewing of any source in 2:35, 16:9, 1:85, and 4:3 formats transmitted to a Stewart 135" CineCurve screen. Aspect ratios are controlled or automated from the touchpanel depending on source selection. An easy-to-use menu enables customers to demo combinations of audio systems, speakers and subwoofers.

the fireplace uses VisionArt, which conceals flat-panel screens with fine art prints when not in use. A one-touch preset raises/lowers the art work while the TV powers on/off.

Another 32" display creates a stunning mega-touchscreen control panel with complete Crestron functionality. Not surprisingly, the kitchen's central command center always gets lots of attention.



Taking high definition video to another level is the Crestron DVPHD-Pro High Definition Digital Video Processor, which enables seamless multi-window viewing. Touchpanel presets allow various viewing configurations including twin screen and a side-by-side three or four window view with each available on eight different screens. A program designed by SC enables control of any window or source and can move any audio to any source as needed, all from an easily understood GUI.

Custom Kitchen Becomes Command Central

The model custom kitchen sports the latest amenities and high end appliances and serves as central command for the facility, just as it would in many homes. Crestron TPMC-17 touchpanel enables facility-wide control, monitoring and management of lighting/shades, multimedia/AV, HVAC, security & surveillance, VisionArt software and an eSommelier Wine Management system.

The versatile 17" panel with 24-bit color and full motion graphics also allows TV viewing, displaying any source content, including HD cable/satellite, Blu-ray player, Internet or iPod content. A plasma TV mounted above

To insure smooth customer presentations, any 6" touchpanel or larger throughout the showroom can control any feature in any room. Therefore, if for any reason a touchpanel isn't available, the customer or salesperson can simply go to another touchpanel, or bring a wireless panel from another room, and operate the desired room.

"All programming was written to duplicate what we'll provide the customer. What they see anywhere in the showroom, is how it will work in their home or office. The code is also designed to be reusable, which reduces programming time on projects and leads to faster job completion," notes Heringer.

Creating a showcase where customers can experience the benefits of home and building control technology enables Sound Concepts to educate customers, which leads to great relationships, loyalty and referrals. Ultimately, a simpler, shorter sales cycle has unleashed a sales growth explosion that helped this small town integrator turn dust into diamonds. ■



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