

Bringing Your Work Home

ARKANSAS INTEGRATOR APPLIES AV DESIGN EXPERTISE IN HIS OWN HOME

by Don Kreski

Ryan Heringer at the bar of the man cave. Note the color changing LED lights below its surface.

While women have more and more to say about home audio video systems, there's one place where a guy can always be a guy: the so-called "man cave." Sometimes a den, sometimes a garage, sometimes a basement, this ultimate male sanctuary is a place where a guy can have his own stuff, entertain friends, or just be by himself when he

with a pool table, ping pong, full bar, card table, shuffleboard, darts, four flat-screen televisions, Hunter Douglas motorized shades, and a killer sound system. It also includes a 21-seat theater, a full kitchen, two bathrooms, an office, and a guest bedroom, each with its own TV, motorized shades, and Crestron control.

Heringer, owner of Jonesboro, AR-based Sound Concepts, already had a state-of-the-art audio video system in his house, but he said he was unable to enjoy it properly. "I work until 9:30 every night, and by that time, my little ones are asleep." He could watch TV in the main house, but he couldn't turn the sound up, and forget about having friends over once his family went to bed.

Now, he said, his friends and neighbors know that his door is always open, there's always a beer or a margarita handy, and there's not one, but every ball game on TV.

"I've got a Crestron DVPHD, the eight-window video processor, which lets me watch up to eight games on my TVs," he pointed out.

Because he ran the DVPHD into his 16x16

switcher, Heringer can watch multiple games on any or every TV in the main house, as well as in the man cave. Needless to say, a setup like this is outstanding for keeping track of fantasy teams. "For sports, it's the ideal place to be," he said.

What else does the ultimate man cave include? Heringer's space offers a Crestron lighting system, pre-programmed to set just the right mood for cards, pool, a ball game or Heringer's hobby, tweaking his electronic systems. "We have an onyx bar with color changing LED lights underneath it," he noted. "I got a driver for our Crestron system, so I can make those colors move, flash and fade in time to the music playing on the sound system."

The Theater and Beyond

The theater in the man cave is something special. As you approach the door, there's a mock ticket booth with a popcorn machine and candy cabinet and, on either side, vertically mounted 46-inch LED displays. These displays have their own digital media player sending them movie clips, plus posters compiled with the help of QuickSign Pro digital

If you're going to sell these kinds of systems you have to show them.

—Ryan Heringer

needs to.

Ryan Heringer is a man cave expert, because he's got the biggest, baddest man cave ever. A 4,000-square foot free-standing structure, Heringer's man cave features a game room



The man cave is a 4,000-square foot freestanding structure next door to Ryan Heringer's house. The patios feature outdoor speakers and TV and motorized mosquito screens integrated into the Crestron system.



The game room of the man cave includes a bar, kitchen, pool, shuffleboard, and card tables, plus a curved sofa for watching TV.



The theater in the man cave features 13 Fortress reclining chairs and eight additional bar stools behind the counter in the back.

signage software.

“QuickSign can pick up cover art from my Kaleidescape and create ‘now showing’ posters of whatever is running in the theater,” Heringer explained.

Inside the theater is a JVC 3D projector with a Stewart CineCurve Electrimask screen that changes aspect ratios to match the movie or TV broadcast.

The Kaleidescape, set up to serve Blu-

ray movies as well as Heringer’s music collection, is actually installed with the other major systems in an equipment room at the main house. Sound Concept technicians installed a fiber-optic link, part of a Crestron DigitalMedia network, to share movies, music, and television sources between the two structures.

Heringer asked his interior designer, M.G. Meyering, to create a look reminiscent of the Star Ship Enterprise for the theater, and Meyering used Kinetics geometric acoustic panels to this end. The theater has 13 luxurious Fortress reclining leather seats on a tiered floor, plus an additional seven barstools arranged along a counter at the back. The sound system, with McIntosh preamps and amplifiers, B&W 800 Diamond loudspeakers, and JL Audio subwoofers, can make the whole building shake.

Outside the man cave is a patio facing a golf course, complete with a Sunbrite 46-inch TV and five Progressive Screen Systems’ motorized mosquito screens integrated into the Crestron system. There’s also an outdoor kitchen with a Big Green Egg gas grill.

An office and guest room decorated with hunting and fishing trophies complete the man cave, and each has a large flat-panel television.

Control is the Key

Crucial to any man cave is the ability to easily control which ball games are going to which TVs, which movie or sporting event is playing in the theater, and what sound comes through on the Klipsch ceiling speakers installed in every area of the structure. It’s important, too, to have the temperature, lights, security system, and even the roll-down mosquito screens out on the covered patio always at your fingertips.

Not leaving anything to chance, Heringer installed a total of eight Crestron touchscreens, some wall mounted and some hand held—between one and three in every room. If he happens to be sitting somewhere where a touchscreen is not handy, Heringer can control the system using either of two iPads or his iPhone.

Heringer admits that, as much as he enjoys his man cave, he does mix some business in with his pleasure. “If you’re going to sell these kinds of

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Ryan Heringer and his family, who are allowed in the man cave after all.

systems you have to show them,” he said. Heringer added that most of his neighbors are his customers, so if they drop by, they’ll see what iPhone control or an eight-window video processor can do. “They’ll tell me, ‘That’s the coolest thing I’ve ever seen.’” If they see it and use it, pretty soon they’ll want to have it, Heringer surmised.

He also uses the man cave to entertain manufacturer’s reps and other business contacts. “If my Crestron rep comes to see me, I can put him up so he doesn’t have to rent a hotel room. We’ll have dinner over there, we can talk after hours, and he’ll have a chance to see the kind of work we do.”

A place to relax and a place to work. A sanctuary from the everyday. A man cave.

Don Kreski is owner of Kreski Marketing Consultants Inc., in Mt. Prospect, IL.



At the entrance to the theater, a snack counter with vertically mounted flat-panel displays on each side.

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