

The Sunset Wire

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Planning for a Future-Proof A/V
Installation

Installing A Home Theater

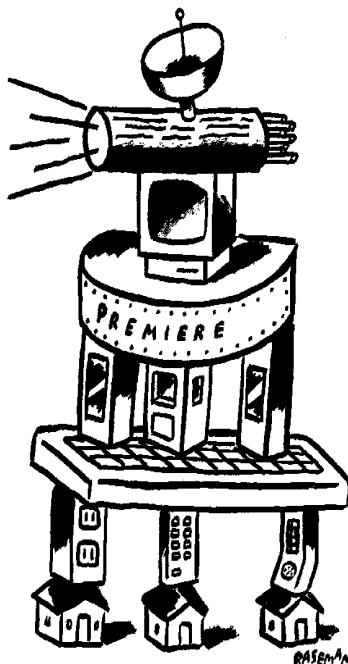
Since the days of 8 mm movie projector systems, the Home Theater has been the domain of the “techno-buff-do-it-yourself-er.”

So now you’re ready to dive into the 21st Century with the latest in home theater technology. The timing couldn’t be better, because the quality is superior to anything ever before available at prices only previously dreamed about.

Here are a few questions to ask yourself before you invest in all that equipment.

The answers to these questions will help you utilize your space—and your dollars—most effectively. The three questions to ask are:

- How many people will be using the space, and for what purposes?
- What is Digital Audio and how is it used?
- How can you Future-Proof your space?



Question 1: How Many People Will Be Using The Space?

As you may know, the amount and kind of furnishings and number of people in a room can have a big impact on the visual and acoustic experience. It’s important to contemplate how a room will be used every day, not just when watching a movie. Are you a sports fanatic who enjoys watching the games with your friends? Or are you ready to create a dedicated movie viewing space and snuggle in to watch the Academy Awards?

How much furniture do you have? What about drapery and wall coverings? Are you a music lover who always had a stereo and plan to use this room as a surround sound listening area?

One of our clients had a grand piano in his home and wanted to play it through the home music system.

How many people will be using the space? If you anticipate having seven people over every week to watch Monday Night Football on your big screen, allowances must be made for bodies and furniture. These allowances could affect speaker placement and acoustic filters, not to mention the types of equipment you would need to order.

Don’t hesitate to hire a qualified home theater installer, especially since the investment could be in the thousands or even tens of thousands of dollars.

Question 2: What is Digital Audio, and How Is It Used?

Digital Audio

Digital audio is a method of compacting and storing sound digitally so that high-quality, multi-channel soundtracks can be easily carried via DVDs, digital TV broadcasts, digital cable and satellite. It provides customers with an enhanced listening experience that can be dispersed throughout the theater space and ultimately throughout the home via hidden speakers to provide a background audio system.

Surround Sound

Surround sound originates from program materials such as motion pictures and television shows that have multi-channel soundtracks. The multiple channels are reproduced by front speakers across the viewing area, and surround speakers to the side and to the rear of your seating area.

Video tapes and TV broadcasts have for years provided Dolby Pro-Logic in the two channel format, allowing surround sound to be decoded into the room from the stereo analog tracks. The newer digital formats actually digitally encode the number of channels of surround sound into the digital broadcast and DVD audio track. This information is then decoded by your 5.1 capable receiver and routed to the proper speaker channel. You have probably heard of Dolby Digital and DTS. Both are 5.1 surround sound formats. "5" refers to the primary Left, Center Right, Right Surround, Left Surround; the ".1" refers to the sub-woofer channel required in a proper THX home theater system.

Die-hard home theater aficionados will need to be prepared for 7.1 or even 9.2

formats of surround sound! Using the primary requirements of 5.1 surround sound system design, our approach is to define the number of speakers required in the room by the size of the room and ultimately the uses for the room.

The Hand-held remote control

The remote control has begun to transform from the morass of button devices on the coffee table into its own component of great importance.

More than just a remote to turn on and off the VCR, the touch screen controller can even interface into the internet and display up-to-the minute weather or financial information. Whether you choose the most simple home theater control or link your interface to the whole home with cameras, internet and security, the Touch Screen system will continue to serve as the A/V systems integrator of your home technology.

If you are not considering putting a computer in your home theater now, you may still want to wire the room for internet connectivity.

Question 3: How Can You Future-Proof Your Space?

Future-proofing your space is the best way to minimize costly future upgrades. The best approach incorporates the use of additional outlets for new and undeveloped media, to be utilized when the time comes. An A/V consultant or installation company can talk more with you about what kinds of outlets you would need.

The computer continues to play an important role in the home on many levels. If you are not considering putting a computer in your home theater now, you may still want to wire the room for broadband internet connectivity. It will not be long before you be able download a movie directly to your computer.

When that happens, you want to have some way of beaming it into your home theater without having to burn a disc to put into your DVD player.

If you would like to have additional information about home theater installation, please contact one of our design professionals at **310-277-0901**. We would be happy to consult on any job, large or small. Also, feel free to take a look at our website at www.sunsetstudios.com.

About Sunset Studios

Sunset Studios has been a valuable team player and asset to many projects, working with some of the most distinguished architectural and design firms in the world. We do both Design/Consult and Design/Build projects, and we have been responsible for some of the most elegant state-of-the art facilities in the Los Angeles area, including the Warner Brothers Television Multimedia Focus Room and the Bacara Resort & Spa in Santa Barbara. For more information, or call us at 310-277-0901. We look forward to talking to you about how we can help translate your clients' dreams into 21st century reality.

Please visit our website at www.sunsetstudios.com.