

When surround sound just isn't enough

*Mequon's Techteriors builds Design Center
to show off newfangled home theater setups*

By DANA ZIOLKOWSKI - GM Today Correspondent

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MEQUON - Imagine creating your own in-home theater or having an audio system piped throughout every room in your house. Thanks to Techteriors of Mequon, and their newly developed Design Center, that innovative technology is right at your fingertips, literally.

Founded in 2001 by Mike Phillips, John De Toro and Frank Porcaro, Techteriors is a high-end, customized electronics designer and installer, specializing in the residential integration of various systems for easy usability. They can develop personal home theaters, distributed audio systems, security systems, lighting systems and much more, and then integrate it all for easy, universal command by way of a customizable touch-screen controller.

December 2005 marked the completion of the 3,000-square-foot Design Center staffed by nearly 30 employees, making it the largest custom home technology design center in southeastern Wisconsin and an attractive addition to the company's headquarters at 12308 Corporate Parkway, Suite 600.

"In our Design Center, we're basically trying to show (our customers) different concepts and different types of technology," says Phillips.

Sophisticated high-tech possibilities displayed throughout the space provide a personalized buying experience. Customers can view home theater arrangements with a recessed screen, projector, programmable lighting controls and an automatic table that lowers to hide the DVD player, VHS player and game systems. An audio system listening area comprised of five various speaker levels allows customers to choose the sound that best suits their needs.

"Instead of buying speakers because somebody says these are good, you can hear them yourself and see what you like and see what you want to pay for," Phillips explains.

For those who want high-tech gadgets in their home without seeing the bells and whistles, an aesthetically pleasing display features a flat-screen TV that when shut off becomes a mirror. The sound resonates from speakers masked behind a wall.

"When we design a system, our focus is on getting the right products to meet the needs for the customer," says Phillips.

Systems can be integrated in both new construction and existing homes and cost from \$1,000 and up. Phillips says Techteriors stands apart from its competitors because its staff is trained in systems integration, not electronics or security, a driving force behind their ability to simplify complicated technologies of today.

"So, a lot of what we do is just try to make this stuff simple," he says.

And for many of us, both electronically gifted and not, simplified technology is better technology.

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