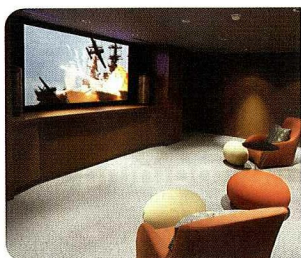




FINDING NEMO IN YOUR OWN HOME



Homeowners using that spare room to install a home theatre are finding it pays off with enhanced family time.

Home theatres are becoming the new family room, where parents, their children and friends can sit back and be entertained in a comfortable and relaxed setting.

□ About once a week, Paul and Ingrid Brown and their two young children go to the theatre to watch a movie – maybe *Finding Nemo*, or the latest Disney release. No travel is involved, no problems finding parking – the theatre is in their own home.

The Browns also enjoy more adult fare, sometimes inviting friends over for a Super Bowl party or the Stanley Cup playoff. The children, 5 and 7, invite their own friends to watch movies on the 82-inch screen – “The largest we could get in the room,” says Brown.

“The quality is amazing,” he says. “I find myself watching the Discovery channel and programs I would not normally watch.”

But the biggest bonus, he says, is the room itself, which has become a family room in the true sense – exactly what he had in mind when he first took a look at a storage room in the basement and assessed its potential as a home theatre.

“We noticed we were enjoying family time watching home movies, videos and DVDs and the four of us would crowd around a small TV. I realized it would be a lot of fun to have our own home theatre – something more conducive to family time.”

Researching the Internet, Brown found what he thought would be suitable seats for the room and contacted the local representative, which turned out to be La Scala, the home theatre experts.

La Scala describes itself as the best-kept secret in Vancouver, but for more and more consumers the secret is out – and they have the high-quality home sound and cinema to prove it.

No more fumbling with five remotes as friends wait patiently to watch the latest movie that refuses to play,



or for the static to stop as they listen to the CD that's the pride of your collection. One compact remote is all it takes to control all your video and sound throughout the house – with an undreamed-of quality, crisp and pure.

That remote, called an Intelli Controller, is another exciting aspect of his home theatre, says Brown – it is so simple the whole family can operate it. "You have to have a system that everyone can use – you don't want to wait for Dad to come home from work to turn it on."

La Scala, with offices in Vancouver and Whistler, has been in business for 17 years, installing home cinema and media rooms, multi-room audio and video, listening rooms, lighting control systems, networks, security, surveillance, and whole house control and communications.

Homeowners opting for high-end cinema and sound may spend upwards of \$100,000 to include all the bells and whistles, but the company also has an alternative option, which it calls La Scala Lite. For a fraction of the cost of a full-technology package, consumers can find user-friendly state-of-the-art solutions to suit their budget.

"Most people tend to focus on the entertainment area," says La Scala's Patrick Tasci. "With the popularity of iPods, everyone wants their music in electronic form such as MP3s or iTunes, and they want it to be available throughout the house."

There is no need today to have radios in every room or turn light switches on or off at the source. "If I'm in the kitchen listening to my favourite CD then go to my [home] office and want to listen to that same CD, we can have that music located and accessible from any room in the house," says Tasci.

Along with today's enhanced entertainment technology, the same level of availability applies to lighting and security, Tasci adds.

"Say I am leaving the house and half the lights have been left on and I'm in a hurry, I can push one button saying 'All Off'."

The popularity of IPODs and MP3s is exciting consumers and giving them a deeper appreciation for their music – as well as a significant demand for in-home music distribution, says La Scala President Marilyn Sanford.

"Technology has changed over the past 15 years," Sanford points out. "Home connectivity solutions hitting the market today are far advanced compared to the first generations of home automation, which were sometimes unreliable... and required a very affluent buyer."

"Today, things are different, with a host of robust and inexpensive solutions hitting the marketplace."

She cautions that consumers should do their homework and make sure the companies they



A lighting control system can be located in just one button – and that lighting can be set at the level of your choice. If you're expecting friends for a meal and want subdued light around the dinner table, just push the "Entertain" button to turn on the low lighting you've programmed for such occasions.

For the Browns, their home theatre has become the gathering place for a delightful family activity.

"I want our home to be a fun place where the children are excited to have their friends come over and watch a movie," says Brown.

"I feel like we are blessed and a bit spoiled," he adds.

La Scala has won many awards over the years for its installations, including an industry best Home Theatre Award. Website www.lascale.ca, phone 604-606-1888. ■



The Intelli Controller can be easily operated by even the youngest member of the family.

choose are reliable and can keep the promises they make.

When deciding to install a new electronic system in the home, whether a theatre, multi-room audio system, consolidating remote control or an automation system, Sanford suggest consumers ask questions, such as:

- Does the company offer follow-up service?
- Is the company a member of the Custom Electronic Design and Installation Association?
- And always check references to ensure the work you are contemplating has been done, and done well.

For more information, check the website: www.lascale.ca