

[kontakt]

modern living, forward thinking

asu: downtown campus of dreams
the sculptured house technology in the home
matters of the heart **toronto: where old meets new**
destination: denver



hoover house and max & luby building
[merz]project: young and on fire

My Home Is Smarter Than Your Home

Forget the Jetsons.

Today's smart homes feature technology that would put Rosie the maid out of business. Glass windows that allow you to enjoy the view without the neighbors enjoying your view; refrigerators that make dinner suggestions based on what's inside; touchpanels that control everything from mood lighting to how much television your kids can watch. The latest technology isn't just for showing off to your friends, it allows for more leisure and fun time. I've got a robot vacuuming my house and my refrigerator is doing my shopping for me – who is up for happy hour?



Only in the life of the fabulously wealthy could a day like this happen, right? Not anymore. With modern amenities like a virtual concierge, total home automation and energy saving design available to everyone, even you can afford to have more time on your hands.

Southwest Concierge offers resort-style concierge service to residents in high rises and condos around the valley, as well as personal assistants to individuals. Tim O'Connell, owner of Southwest Concierge, has an infectious enthusiasm about his company. With over 15 years of experience in information technology, O'Connell brings to his company a unique desire to incorporate technology into the service. His company has the first "visual virtual" concierge service. Clients can log on to their personal computer and visually chat with their personal Southwest Concierge representative.

"We're just getting started with our new technology," says O'Connell. His company is partnering with homebuilders in the Valley to install the new Apple iMac directly into a wall near the kitchen that will allow homeowners direct access to the concierge service. Very soon, Southwest Concierge will offer 24-hour live concierge service. In addition to the virtual service, clients also have immediate access via phone, email or fax.

In order to have complete control of your house at your fingertips, a system like Crestron's touchpanel is invaluable. Lighting control sets the mood, whether you're hosting a dinner party or watching a movie. Pre-programming your lights allows you to vacation without worry as lights turn on and off to replicate your natural lifestyle patterns. With climate control, you can ensure your home will cool or warm efficiently, and you can use your PDA or computer to monitor temperatures while you're away. Correct audio distribution allows you to enjoy jazz CDs in the kitchen while your kids watch a movie in the den. Only your imagination limits the options available for automation.

There's virtually no limit on where you can place your TVs, either. Gone are the days of huge CRTs sitting in even larger entertainment centers. Today's LCD, DLP or plasma TVs can

Let's run through a typical smart home day. Your alarm goes off and as you quiet it, you press a button that activates your "morning" mode. The coffee pot begins to percolate, the towel warmer heats up in the bathroom, and the surround sound speakers mounted throughout the house relay the morning news.

You log onto your wall mounted Apple iMac and virtually connect with your personal concierge, Shannon, to set up a spa appointment for the afternoon, send your mother flowers for her birthday, and get your name on the VIP list in Scottsdale at night. She confirms all this with a bright smile and wishes you a nice day.

On your way home that afternoon, you use your PDA to call your oven to switch from "refrigeration" to "cook" mode and start baking dinner. As you enter, your home recognizes it's you and adjusts the temperature and lighting to your preferences while switching on some pleasant background music.





Trak-Kit is a versatile system allowing flat-panel TVs to be placed in movable panels and free moving, ceiling mounts.



be hung on a wall like a picture, attached to an articulating arm for some movement or, in the case of Trak-Kit, be placed nearly anywhere you desire.

Inspired by the movable screens we might see in hospitals, the Trak-Kit is a ceiling mounted track system designed to allow TV watching to be done from wherever the track may roam. The idea is simple, install a Trak-Kit in the ceiling of your home—be sure to have a professional do it if you're not intimately familiar with what's in your ceiling—and attach a TV. Wires are hidden within the support system and there's even a way to add a center channel speaker below the TV, so you won't get confused with the picture coming from one direction and sound from the other.

New technology such as SPD (suspended particle glass) and smart appliances allow you to incorporate smart products into the design of your home. SPD glass is a softly tinted glass that allows you to control the amount of light and glare coming in from the window. Liquid crystal glass is another glass product that allows user control—it can become completely opaque or totally transparent instantly at the touch of a button. Installed in

your home, these window products help protect furniture from fading, and protect the neighbors from the view of you in your birthday suit.

Appliances connected to the Internet help things run more smoothly in the kitchen. Refrigerators with display screens in the door means you can check stock quotes and the weather while you're pouring a glass of orange juice. If you're willing to update what's in your refrigerator, it will make recipe suggestions based off what's inside. When staples are running low, your refrigerator can order more groceries online and have them delivered at your convenience.

Once thought of as a hallmark of wealth, smart home technology is now something that can be featured in all homes. What's next? A mirror that tells you if those pants really do make you look fat? Wallpaper that changes color as often as your mood? Dishes that wash themselves? Until then, I'll let my concierge handle my less savory chores while I enjoy myself. I'm serious about that happy hour... [Susie Fishleder]



ANTOINE PROULX
HANDCRAFTED FURNITURE



photo: ted dillard/BD-119S bed, ET-36 & ET-22 bedside tables (shown in ebonized walnut with graphite steel details); antoine proulx The Antoine Proulx collection of furniture, founded in 1993 is designed by Marc Desplaines and is hand-made in the U.S. by his brother, Richard Desplaines. While embracing the handcrafted tradition but in a modern vocabulary, the Antoine Proulx collection utilizes the finest materials and the most painstaking attention to detail. All original designs are shipped with a seal of authenticity. Beware of imitations.

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