



Ancient MODERN

Half heritage home, half modern dwelling, this whole-house installation presented special challenges to InSight Systems.

The brief for this installation was fairly modest, says Wayne Schultz of InSight Systems in Melbourne. At first, anyway. The family wanted a home theatre that has a server system for CDs and DVDs — so they wouldn't need to swap discs every time they wanted to watch a movie or listen to an album. And the intention was for everything to work seamlessly, without the usual array of remote controls.

"The owners were quite into technology," says Schultz. "They had a reasonable idea of what was possible. And they asked for the system to be flexible for future expansion — such as distributing out to other areas of the house. The kitchen was also to have its own system, but needed to also be linked with the rest of the house."

A house of two halves

The house itself — as you can see in the pictures — is an unusual combination of heritage and modern. In the front it's a classic Victorian construction, with the owners spending the last few years totally restoring this front section of the house back to its former

glory, including a formal dining room, formal lounge room, and a bedroom. But the rear of the house is intended to be a modern but timeless design, using the very best of all appliances both for the audiovisual system and for the kitchen and lounge area.

"It is quite a special house," says Schultz. "It feels like you are travelling in time when you move between the two distinct areas."

Raising the bar

After the first couple of consultations, and once InSight had provided ideas to provide and enhance the owners' original goals, the system grew larger.

"It made sense for the AMX system to integrate as much of the electronic control of the house as possible," says Schultz, "including heating and cooling, audiovisual, lighting and blinds. And it had to integrate with the existing home computer network. Even the gas log-fire installed as part of the whole renovation was incorporated into the system. Apart from an existing DVD player and VCR, everything else was new, and with budgetary constraints not a major issue, it was really a matter of having the best equipment and the best control of the system possible." ▶



The kitchen (above) was the first area tackled, with a temporary AV system installed there until the main lounge area was complete. The large colour touch-screen forms a central control point for the house

Order of play

InSight had come to the job by recommendation, and the installation timelines were guided by the builder and interior designer with respect to pre-wire and final fit-off.

The kitchen was the first area to be tackled, and a temporary AV system was installed there until the lounge was complete. Wayne Schultz reckons this was the hardest part of the job.

"It needed quite a bit of thought — the fact that there were two distinct areas [lounge and kitchen]



which had to be done at separate stages, but at the end of the day needed to work together seamlessly," he says. "The equipment was housed in temporary racking in the kitchen, and then later we disassembled and re-installed it in the new lounge-room cabinetry. This added cost to the project, of course, but it gave the owners an AV system to use while the lounge renovations were under way."

Teamwork

In the specifications for the main AV system in that lounge, one key request from the owners was that the equipment be hidden where possible. InSight worked with the owners' interior designers (Mortice & Tenon) to design the cabinetry that would achieve this. Certain furniture had been chosen already, so that the cabinet below the NEC plasma screen was not to be used for the AV equipment, nor was the centre speaker allowed to sit on top of it.

So the main equipment racks are situated in cabinetry against the wall to the right of the screen, to the left of the fireplace. This was constructed to allow each separate cupboard section to slide out of the enclosed space on rails and then pivot, giving easy ▶

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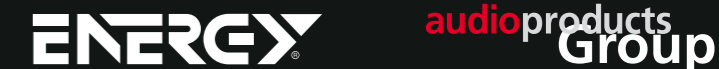


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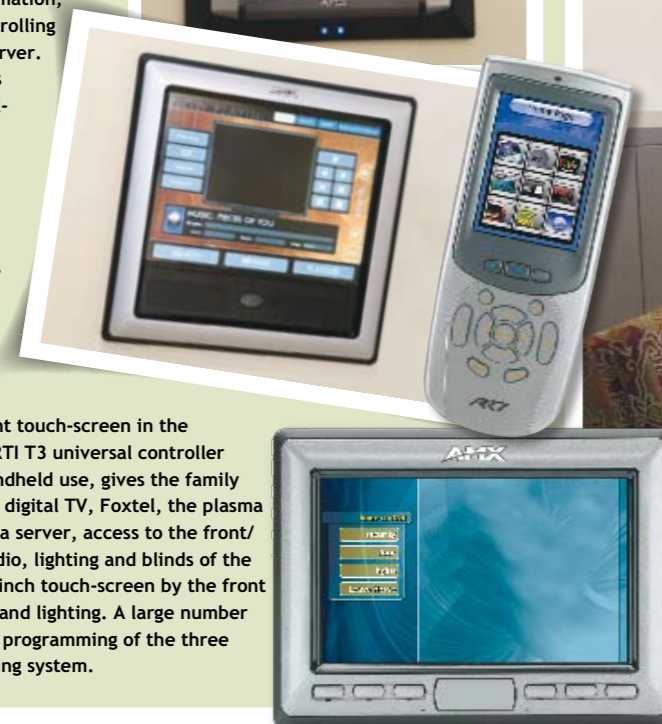
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AMX system control

The owners had read about the AMX MAX server system, but the design and products were chosen by InSight Systems. The main control system incorporated in the project uses two AMX NI 3000 master controllers, one which is controlling the home and AV automation, while the other is controlling the AMX MAX media server.

An 8.4-inch wireless touch-screen with wall-docking station in the lounge room gives the owners control (via the NI 3000) over DVD player, Foxtel, digital TV, the plasma screen, the MAX Media Server, audio, lighting, blinds, front-door bell notification and the fireplace!

A 12-inch wall-mount touch-screen in the kitchen area, plus an RTI T3 universal controller (pictured right) for handheld use, gives the family similar control of DVD, digital TV, Foxtel, the plasma screen, AMX MAX media server, access to the front/rear door cameras, audio, lighting and blinds of the kitchen area. A seven-inch touch-screen by the front door controls security and lighting. A large number of hours went into the programming of the three touch-panels and lighting system.



Above: InSight's planning for the rack designs
Below: the roll-out racks installed in custom cabinetry



Left below: a 61-inch NEC plasma provides the focus for family entertainment, with KEF front speakers and twin subwoofers, plus Energy in-ceiling speakers for surround. To the right of the room is the fireplace and equipment cupboards (above) – the fireplace is even controlled automatically through the whole-house AMX control system

access to the rear of all the equipment (see images top right, opposite). A separate air-conditioning system was designed to keep the equipment cooled.

Kicking back

For the main AV system the owners wanted front speakers that would handle both movies and music, and were happy to have floorstanding speakers. InSight used a main system of KEF front and centre speakers; the centre was surface-mounted below the plasma. Two KEF subwoofers were installed (the owners had asked for "plenty of boom"), with four

Energy flush-mounted in-ceiling speakers used for surround sound. A seven-channel Integra receiver provides the power.

With windows directly opposite the plasma, new motorised blinds were installed to darken the room, together with additional lighting – everything controllable via the touch-screen, as is the Jetmaster fireplace, "which pleased the owners very much!" says Schultz.

All this gorgeous AV gear, fully-integrated house control, and it's always the automated fireplace that gets the "Wow!" Despair, despair... —

THE SYSTEM

Theatre

- NEC PX61XM4W 61-inch HD plasma
- Integra DTR10.5 7 x 150W receiver
- Integra DPS10.5 DVD player
- LG LST5100P HD set-top box
- KEF iQ9 tower speakers
- KEF 9000C centre speaker
- 2 x KEF PSW4000 subwoofer
- 4 x Energy V2.0CMRP 8-inch three-way in-ceiling speaker
- AMX MVP8400WDS wireless touch-panel with docking station
- AMX WAP200 Wireless Access Point
- AMX NI-3000 Controller
- AMX Power Switch
- 8-Port Network Switch
- Dimtek DTK410CE lighting controller

- Dimtek LSP550 5-button wall-panel controller
- Motorised blind controllers and AMX interface
- Hallam 45RU Equipment Rack
- AMX MAX MMS-125 Media Server
- AMX MAX AVM x 2
- AMX NXA-ENET24 Network Switch
- APC UPS System with AMX integration

Family room

- Hitachi 55PD8800TAKIT2 55-inch plasma TV
- Integra DTR5.6 AV receiver
- LG LST5100P HD set-top box
- 2 x Sonance S625TR Symphony ceiling speaker
- AMX NI-3000 Controller

- AMX NXD1200, 12-inch touch-screen with video monitoring
- RTI T3 universal controller system with AMX interface
- Audio balancing converters
- AV switcher 3-in, 1-out

Other

- AMX NXD CV7, 7-inch colour touch-screen
- Audio Balancing Converters
- Dimtek Lighting System

INSTALLATION:

INSIGHT SYSTEMS,
Tel: 1300 369 451
Email: wayne@insightsystems.com.au
Web: www.insightsystems.com.au