

Building an Entertainment Super Highway Into Your New Home



A structured wiring system can distribute Internet music, radio and video throughout your home.

Like many people today, you may be planning on creating a home entertainment center with cable or satellite television, a high - quality audio/video receiver, and CD and DVD players. Since most family members don't have the same taste in music and videos (children, teenagers and adults) there will likely be additional entertainment mini-systems in the home.

You may also be thinking about sharing Internet access among family members using different PC's. If you're buying a new home,

it's important to understand that linking all these elements together will create a true whole-house entertainment network.

■Using your resources

Through the Internet, you can access MP-3 music, Internet radio and increasingly popular streaming video. To take full advantage of these new technologies, you need to be able to distribute the media sources from your PC to your home entertainment center and other mini-systems located throughout your house. Many people don't realize that the high-tech A/V receiver in their home entertainment center usually offers Multi-Room / Multi-Source (MR/MS) capability right out of the box. This means it can handle multiple input sources at one time, such as DVD, cable or satellite and audio

signals, while sending different outputs to individual rooms. While you're viewing a DVD with surround sound, your A/V receiver can simultaneously send MP-3 downloaded music to speakers in another room. But you can only take advantage of the MR/MS feature if you have a whole-house media distribution network.

■The Structured Wiring Solution

The Leviton Institute recommends that you consider installing a structured wiring system in your new home to create an entertainment super highway.

Today's structured wiring systems use high-grade, interference-resistant RG6 coaxial and UTP Cat 5/5e cabling run from a centralized media distribution box.

This distribution box manages all your entertainment signals as well as your phone and computer networking connections. With a structured wiring system you can neatly consolidate all your entertainment wire and cable and finish it off with stylish jacks and wallplates in every room. Best of all, upgrades to any future communication and entertainment services can be accomplished simply by adding new devices to the distribution box.

The Cat 5/5e wire is as inexpensive as plain old telephone wire and when used with structured media devices, allow you to transmit highdefinition audio and video sources with virtually no loss to signal quality. Assume up front that your whole-house networking needs will change and grow, so having enough Cat 5/5e cabling installed "future-proofs" any system. Costs for installing a structured wiring system in your new or remodeled home are relatively low and can be incorporated into your mortgage or home equity loan. ♦