

Title:

Home Theater - 101

Assignment:

White Paper to introduce the reader to home theater solutions that addresses head-on, the daily assault of big box merchandising of quantity over quality. Everyone appreciates quality, but can the relationship between home theater components' price and quality be communicated in a way that resonates with both genders ?

Context:

Content was on the website of an audio/video custom installation & design firm. Article was written as an introduction to many desirable options for the residential customer and introduce upscale brands while setting the stage for sales development by in-house sales consultants.

Home Theater 101

Busy executives don't go to the movie theater for the social interaction or the audio and visual impact, they go - to get away - if only for a couple of hours.

What's interesting is that with all the press about the expanding home office, the reality is that executives aren't designing home theaters with the capability of e-mail, file sharing or Internet access. They're choosing to leave this far behind.

Busy executive's build home theaters, not to do more office work, but to tune out the absolute frenzy of the day.

Movies for busy people are about escaping - the higher the level of believability - the higher level of escape.

A chance to get away, a temporary retreat to a welcomed sanctuary.

Today, we can re-create the experience of the movie theater, without all the disadvantages of driving, parking and inconvenient show times.



"Busy executives are choosing to leave this far behind"



DON'T BUY IT BY THE SQUARE INCH

Don't be misled by companies promising the latest technology that is bigger and cheaper. Today, many stores sell home theater by the square inch. Every Sunday, "Big-Box" stores advertise a 60" LCD for \$999 or a 600 total watts receiver for \$299. You've seen the ads; it's as if - more for less - is the key to a great deal. Really?

Can you imagine Giorgio Armani or Albert Nipon selling suits for \$19.95 per square inch? Hickey Freeman suits with 18 pockets. Ridiculous isn't it? Buying a cheap home theater system isn't much different than buying a cheap suit.

Cheap suits invariably result in low quality of materials, poor design and sloppy construction. The result is a lousy look, poor fit, and ultimately low satisfaction. Your "great deal" on a suit hangs in the back of the closet - unappreciated and unused.

"Value
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When you've experienced a quality suit, you feel the quality of materials: the suit fits perfectly, looks great and people notice! The suit looks great on you and you know it. So guess what? You wear it, and because of the high quality, it lasts and lasts. That's great value. Value isn't derived by getting the most cloth per square inch or features for the dollar - it's getting the highest return on the dollar.

Home theater isn't about buying the cheapest screen per square inch or the receiver with the most buttons, knobs and watts per dollar. Buying a home theater should be focused on buying quality products that fit you perfectly.

PERFECT FIT FIRST, MATERIALS LAST

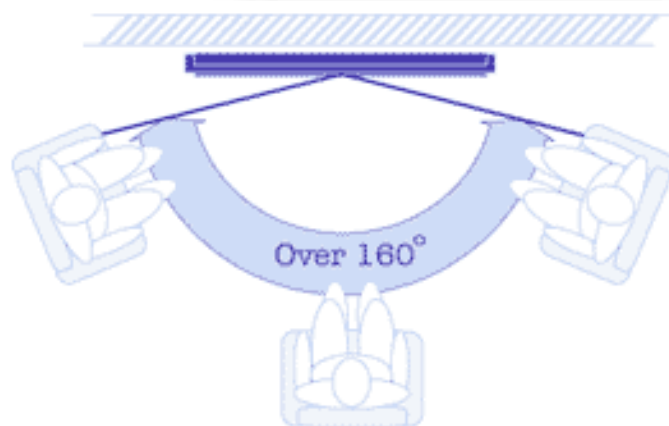
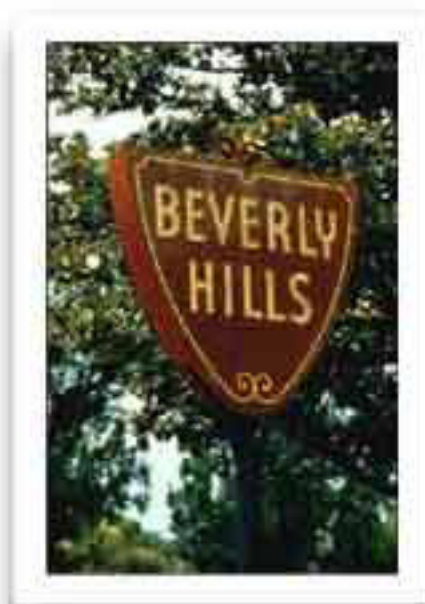
What's one of the key points a tailor insists on? A perfect fit for the use. First, the tailor measures your dimensions and asks how the suit will be used: "Business or pleasure?" "Special occasion or everyday?" "Office or night on the town?" It's all about use and location. That's how you get a "perfect fit".

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

So how do you determine the "perfect fit" in home theater? Simple - who's going to be using it - and where? It's easy to get side-tracked thinking about products first. Plasma or LCD? Front or rear projection? Which is best? Your location will determine the perfect fit for technology. For example, are viewers seated to the sides? Plasma's offer the widest angle of viewing, with a 160 degree viewing angle.

Specific display technologies have advantages and disadvantages, but all of them depend on your location and use. Relax, a few of them are going to be a perfect fit for your location.

It's
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HOW BIG IS BIG ENOUGH?

Consider how close you'll be sitting to the screen. The rule of thumb is 2-3 times the screen size equals sitting distance. A 50" set would equal 100" to 150" or 8' to 12' away. There isn't an absolute for sitting distance. Children insist on sitting in the front rows of the theater, while grandparents often prefer the very back. We all have our own comfort zone of where to sit.



Do some calculations on where you want to sit and calculate the appropriate screen size by dividing the distance in inches by 2.5. This will give you a good sketch of how your living room can still be a comfortable home theater, without becoming the local Cineplex.

IT STARTS WITH SOUND

Sound is what makes the movie believable. The clarity of the dialog and the realism of the soundtrack and sound effects make the experience believable. Accurate sound creates the interest and excitement, and clarity cements the realism.

SOUND REQUIREMENTS

Some people feel deep bass performance and the ability to blow the windows out are the essential criteria for home theater. While dynamics are desirable, the reality is - you listen to movies at moderate listening levels. The most important criteria for movie watching is the same as listening to music - clarity. Especially clarity of the movie dialog.

Just one word changes everything in a movie. A single misunderstood word can change "While you were Sleeping" to... "While you were Sweeping." And the rest changes movie history!

From a breathy whisper to a witty reply, dialog is the essential component of a movie, and the reference for home theater systems.

High quality systems reveal the subtle tonal inflections and details. Voices sound so real, we believe the actors are there in the room with us. Sometimes it's not what was said, but how it was said.

The window between movie and reality is no longer tinted, its transparent. We're transported to a different place and a different time. We've escaped, and the richness and clarity of the sound and picture makes it all believable.

That's what movies are - an escape, a temporary retreat to a welcomed sanctuary.



"Just one word
changes everything"

"...you
know
how
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whistle
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