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Chicago

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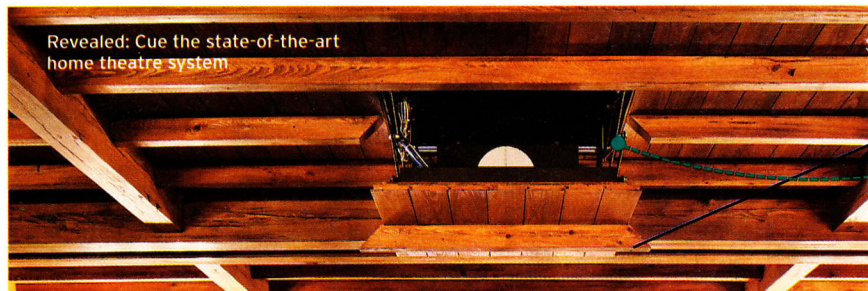
HIDE-AND-GO-CHIC

How to work technology into a room without compromising the design?
A suburban renovation offers an excellent case study **BY CASSIE WALKER**

The architect David Poulton faced a challenge. His client, a family in the north suburbs, envisioned a living room complete with a full-blown home theatre system. But they didn't want the gadgets and gizmos to interfere with their taste for traditional design. "Everybody wants technology, but no one wants to see it," says Poulton. So he teamed up with Frank Ponterio, a Chicago-based interior designer, and Rick Akins, who owns FirstPoint Residential Technologies in Elmhurst, to help him create a classic 900-square-foot living space that can transform into a cutting-edge media center with the touch of a button.



Concealed: The traditional living room—no gizmos in sight

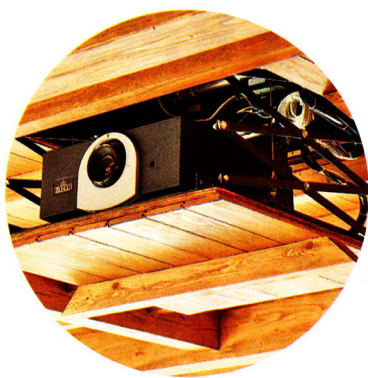


TUCKED AWAY
No one would ever guess that the deep bass tones of the freestanding Sunfire SubRosa subwoofer are coming from inside a custom walnut bench.



THE COMMAND CENTER All of the technology—from the theatre system to the security—runs through a central "brain" designed by Elan Home System, a company based in Lexington, Kentucky. The client can control the system via a **touchscreen panel** on the wall, an iPhone, or a hand-held controller similar to a remote. "If the client wants to add a new projector or DVD player, we can log in remotely without having to send people on-site to make changes," says Akins.





HIDDEN ABOVE A French-farmhouse-inspired ceiling made out of waxed red cypress beams conceals a THX-rated, three-chip Runco VX22d DLP projector, which is raised and lowered (via remote) on a Draper SLX14 scissor lift. "There is a certain amount of imperfection in the boards, which really masks the fact that there is anything hidden up above," says Poulton, who aligned the joints of the boards with the projector cavity.



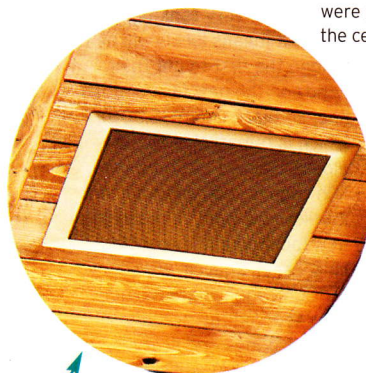
BETTER IN THE SHADE

The client family—nature lovers—bought this particular house because of the expansive views of the landscape from the 30-foot west-facing window bank. But how to block out excess light during movie time? Akins, the technology consultant, found a set of Sivoia QED blackout shades from Lutron; they drop down from concealed rollers that are mounted in the ceiling. For day-to-day use, ivory silk drapes hang on a mechanized system that automatically adjusts as the sun rises and sets.



Fun fact: You don't see any wires snaking across this room. All of the wiring—seven miles of it!—has been tucked into the walls.

SOUND EFFECT Seven surround-sound Triad speakers were painted and mounted in the ceiling so that they blend in.



The mechanized screen drops down from the ceiling.

SCREEN GEM A Draper Series E 106-inch motorized home theatre screen drops down at the touch of a button. The screen had to be mounted two feet from the wall to accommodate the fireplace mantel below.

CALLING ALL COUPLES!

Chicago wants to give one lucky couple a head-to-toe fall makeover. To nominate a pair, go to chicago mag.com/couples makeover.

Participants must be 18 or over and willing to be photographed. The deadline for consideration is June 7, 2010.