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KRISSY RUSHING, AVI CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Audio Video Interiors is dedicated to helping you navigate working with specialty A/V retailers, custom installers, interior designers, builders, and more. We'll show you how to produce practical, elegant, and mind-blowing rooms in your own home—but on your budget and with the space you have available. And we'll go beyond the dedicated theater, showing you how to integrate new technology into your home.

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Krissy Rushing



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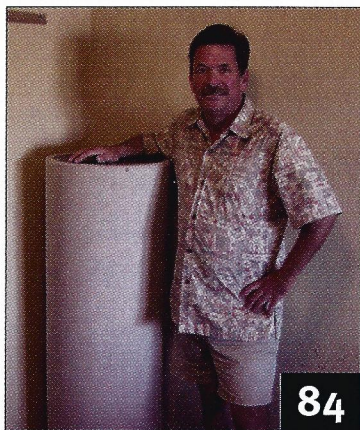
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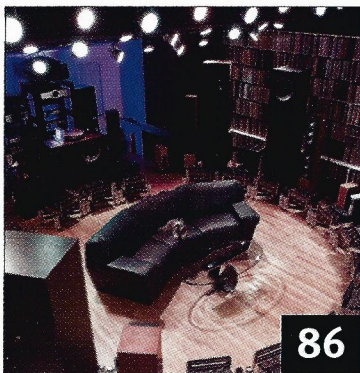
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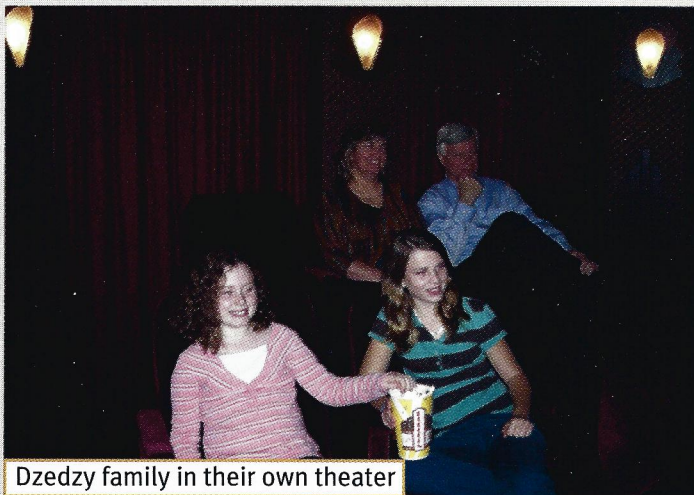
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Bringing It Home

Custom A/V integrator uses his many skills to create a signature home—his own. By J. Makin

Rob Dzedzy has been passionate about art and science since he was a kid. Dzedzy founded Media Rooms Inc. in 1983. It's a custom electronic design and installation company in West Chester, Pennsylvania. This highly successful business is the culmination of his two childhood passions. Today, his skills are evident in the custom audio/video systems, home theater interiors, and handcrafted furniture he designs for his clients.



Dzedzy family in their own theater

The systems Dzedzy designs can be housed in bold, aesthetic cabinetry in styles ranging from traditional to contemporary. Dzedzy also specializes in home theaters that contain impressive amenities such as quality home theater-style reclining seats, decorative columns, acoustical wall treatments, and custom moldings, not to mention high-quality A/V gear. He has extensively researched the Art Deco style because it is one of his favorites, and he frequently incorporates these details into the home theaters he designs. The decorative elements he recommends and implements are designed and fabricated by Media Rooms' employees.

Dzedzy has organized Media Rooms to be a complete turnkey organization. More often than not, when a person is interested in outfitting a media room or dedicated home theater, he or she will contact a designer, then an electronics installer, and finally a cabinetmaker—hoping that the cabinetmaker and electronics installer will communicate for a successful end result. Media Rooms provides all of these services, so the client only deals with one company. The passion that Dzedzy exhibits for his business was also evident when he set out to custom-build his own home. "I wanted my home to be creative but blend in with its wooded setting. Although I was working within a set budget, I expected that the house would make an architectural statement and include state-of-the-art [electronic features]."

The central focus of Dzedzy's house is the media room, which is similar to the traditional family room but full of audio/video gear, including multiple TVs, a quality surround sound system, and a comfortable sofa. Designed by Dzedzy and crafted by his company from American black walnut, the cabinet includes two tall, thin vertical drawers that hold hundreds of DVDs and CDs. When the

front-projection video system is turned on, the projection screen drops down in front of the artwork.

The media room is centrally located in the house. Dzedzy planned this intentionally so the room's resources are easily accessible from anywhere on the first floor. Besides designing and fabricating the media unit, Dzedzy designed and built two custom 18-inch subwoofers that serve as the base on which the left and right main speakers reside. This speaker combination is hidden behind speaker fabric on either side of the cabinet. A cabinet door in the kitchen—located directly behind the media room—allows access to the wiring of all 21 components.

The house is full of electronic conveniences, which Dzedzy considers necessities. Dzedzy installed a Lutron HomeWorks interactive lighting-control system because he wanted to feel comfortable with the system when he recommends it to clients. "The system is wonderful," claims Dzedzy. "We never bother to turn lights off at night when we head up to bed. We simply push the All Off button on the keypad in the master bedroom, and it turns the entire house off. Likewise, we rely on the system's timeclock to turn lights on or off at preset times. The lighting-control system has many other features, such as scene and pathway settings that simplify our lighting-control needs." In addition, the house has an extensive Crestron home-automation system, which provides wholehouse audio and control of the heating/air-conditioning system. It is also linked to the home's security system.

The lower level is divided into two sections by a hidden "beer door" that Dzedzy custom built. When closed, it appears to be shelving that contains a collection of imported beer bottles. A push of the hidden latch causes the door to swing open into a guest bedroom. The main area of the lower level contains the game room and the home theater. A wall-mounted keypad controls the wholehouse audio system and allows the family to play various sources of music through the in-ceiling speakers.

The final room in the lower level is the home theater. The home theater décor has Art Deco influences and is a smaller version of the grand movie palaces of the 1920s and '30s. The elegant interior was designed by Dzedzy and fabricated by Media Rooms. It includes an 8-foot-wide screen complete with a motorized curtain that conceals the screen when not in use. All nine speakers are hidden behind decorative columns. The walls between the columns are covered with floor-to-ceiling draperies, which provide acoustical treatment. Dzedzy believes that a home theater's environment



DZEDZY'S OWN HOME is an example of his complete turnkey company: electronics, interior design, and hand-crafted furniture and cabinetry.



is as important as the audio and video system. A JBL Synthesis 7.1 surround sound system fills the room with incredible audio, and a Digital Projection Mercury three-chip DLP video projector completes the big-picture scenario. The room is completely tuned in to the movie-watching experience. One touch of the remote control slowly dims the lights, starts the movie, and adjusts the volume to the perfect level.

So, how does Dzedzy's home theater compare with the average theatergoer's experience? "I'm not sure I've seen a state-of-the-art local movie theater. Most are average at best—you're looking at the back of someone's head, the screen has marks on it, and most have marginal sound systems," said Dzedzy. "One of the most magnificent theaters I have ever been in was the Stag Theater at George Lucas' Skywalker Ranch. The theater is so well designed acoustically that there are no ambient distracting sounds. The Stag made a profound impression on me and influenced the design of the Dzedzy home theater," he added.

Now that the family has lived in the house for a while, is Dzedzy happy with the result? "Absolutely! I wanted my house to be comfortable and every room to have a purpose. I also wanted electronic features—the ability to push a button and control the lights in the house or go to our home theater and watch a movie on an 8-foot-wide screen." As technology advances, does Dzedzy have plans to enhance his A/V and electronics system? "Customers frequently ask me about preparing their systems to accommodate future changes," he said. "There is no way to know what the future will bring. In my house, I have pathways to run wire anywhere in the house and have complete access to the electronics systems. Because I am in a highly technical business, I want to have a comfort level with technology before I will recommend or use it." His clients couldn't be more grateful. 📺

CONTACT:
Rob Dzedzy (610) 719-8500
Fax (610) 719-1515
Media Rooms Inc.
20 Hagerty Blvd., Suite 5
West Chester, PA 19382
www.mediaroomsinc.com
info@mediaroomsinc.com