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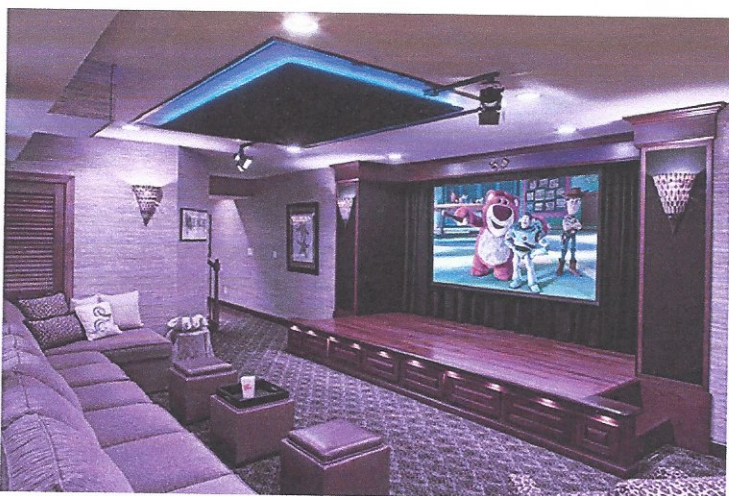
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KITCHEN

Always return the favor of a referral

BY ROB DZEDZY ON JUN 17, 2014



My business is different than most electronic systems integrators, because we provide in-house design services and in-house custom cabinet fabrication in addition to custom electronic integration. For more than 30 years we have worked diligently to establish relations with remodelers, new home builders, architects, interiors designers and homeowners.

During the past three decades we have given out several hundred thousands of dollars in work to remodelers, but we very rarely get work *from* remodelers; we have given out far more work to remodelers than we have received in return. We enjoy referring good people, but reciprocity would be greatly appreciated.

There have been situations where a client of ours wants to finish a basement and install a dedicated home theater. Or one of our clients wants to renovate or build an addition and looks to us for a referral to a remodeler or electrician. Sometimes the homeowner asks us to design the basement because the theater is the focal point of the space. We have frequently recommended a remodeler and often that recommendation leads to a contract. As an example, just this past year we designed a basement and the client asked us to refer a remodeler. In another situation, a long-time client of ours was planning a remodel. I was proactive and asked him who he was planning to have bid on the project. I recommended a remodeler who was then awarded the contract. Each of these jobs was well more than \$100,000.

Homeowners are interested in technology and, in many cases, want technology in their homes. What better time to include it then during the remodeling phase? But remodelers rarely think of asking clients if technology is important to them and if they want it (in some fashion) in their homes. Perhaps this is because the remodeler does not understand what home electronic technology is all about. Or perhaps the remodeler feels that another subcontractor in the mix will upset their schedule.

Technology can provide convenience, energy savings and security for a homeowner. It can also add elegance to the finished project by using motorized lifts to hide TV's, or by getting rid of wall clutter by

transforming large gangs of light switches into a single keypad. But it also can easily be overlooked, especially if it is not presented to the homeowner.

Success can be simple if remodelers, during the interview process with homeowners, ask them if they are interested in or if they are considering home technology. In most situations the homeowner will say, "Yes, I am interested in home technology." The door is then open for remodelers to recommend a meeting with a home technology integrator. It is a win-win result for the client and for you.

Rob Dzedzy is owner of [Media Rooms Inc.](#) in West Chester, Pa.



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