

### The Client

Allen Schuler, a single professional in his late 30s. Allen owns a condo where he wants to turn his living room into a media room. His old system includes a Pro Logic receiver, a 27-inch TV and wall-mounted satellite speakers. He would like to upgrade to a large screen TV with high-definition capability, better on-wall surround speakers and, of course, a DVD player and Dolby Digital surround sound. If the budget allows, he would like to include a subwoofer and universal remote.

### Room Description

The large living room measures 25-feet wide by 30-feet long and has a high beam ceiling. The room has hardwood floors, no crawl space and one side opens into the kitchen.

### Maximum Budget

Not to exceed \$18,000

### System Design

Rob Dzedzy

President

Media Rooms Inc.

20 Hagerty Blvd., Suite 5

West Chester, PA 19382

(610) 719-8500

www.MediaRoomsInc.com

# Allen's New Media Room

■ DESIGN & INSTALLATION BY MEDIA ROOMS INC.

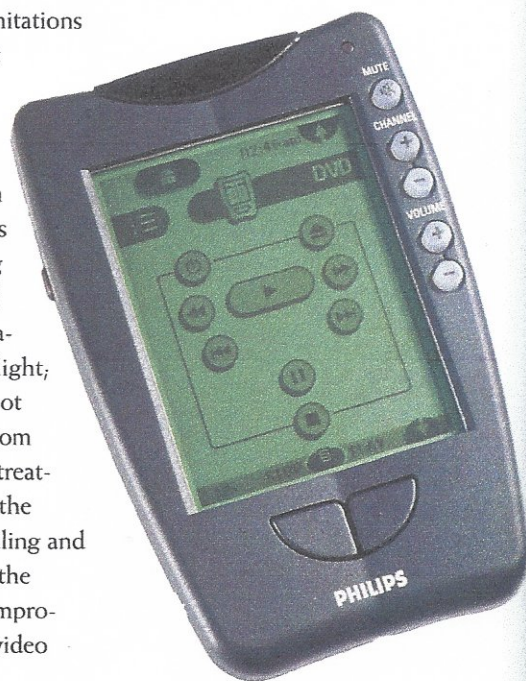
One of the most exciting aspects of the audio/video industry is the advent and implementation of new technologies like Dolby Digital and HDTV. One of the most exciting aspects of "custom" audio/video installation is to understand these systems and technologies and then bring them to our customers. The industry changes rapidly and customers are anxious to upgrade to new and improved technologies.

Allen Schuler is a perfect example. His current system includes a 27-inch TV and a Dolby Pro Logic receiver. He owns his condo and wants to turn his living room into a media room where he can enjoy movies and an occasional football game. A 27-inch TV is fine for a bedroom or sitting

room scenario, but is generally too small for a media room or home theater, especially a room that is 25 feet wide by 30 feet long. A room this large is well suited for a front projection system with a 72-inch to 100-inch screen. However, there are several limitations that prevent a front projection system from being the optimal choice in this case. The room has several windows and a large opening into the kitchen, all of which let in a reasonable amount of light; and the client did not want to invest in room darkening window treatments. In addition, the room has a high ceiling and Allen did not want the décor aesthetics compromised by having a video

projector hanging down from a pole in the center of the space.

After reviewing the room layout and the client's budget, I suggested that a large rear screen TV is the most appropriate way to go. Allen wants to





upgrade to an entirely new system, and does not want to exceed \$18,000. The key components in a home theater system are the TV, speakers and the surround processor. Of course the DVD player, VCR and satellite receiver are also important, but these components are generally not as expensive as the others. And in addition, it is easy to use a DVD player in another room when you want to upgrade, but it is not very easy to move a 65-inch TV around the house.

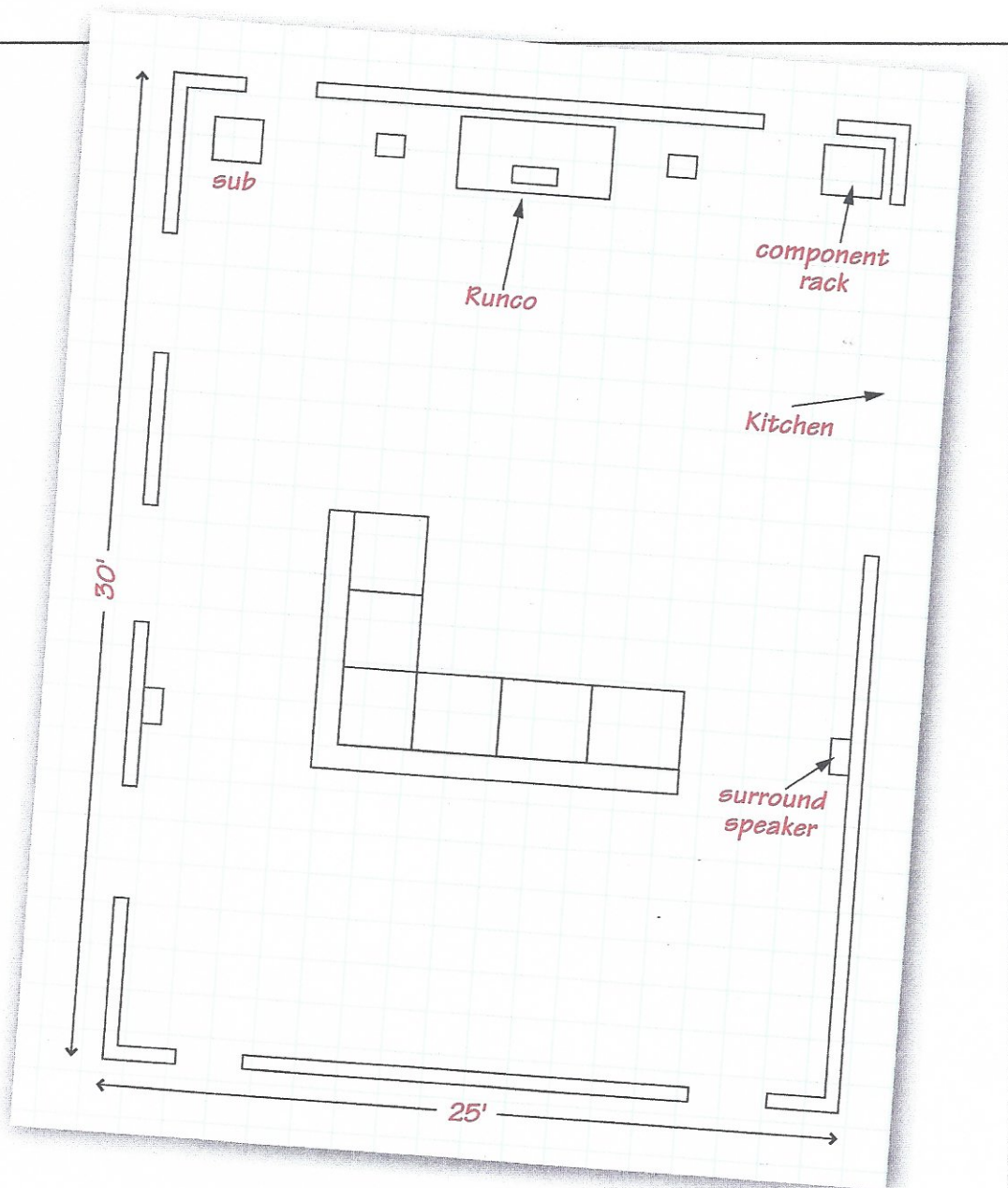
Allen's main criteria were a large format TV that could handle HDTV and a surround processor or receiver that has Dolby Digital processing. My choice for the TV is the Runco DTV 5801 which costs about \$9,995. This TV is 65-inch diagonal—large enough for the living room. Its screen is in the wide screen format and it is capable of all HDTV formats. The TV produces a stunning picture and with its built-in line doubler, even non high-definition sources look outstanding. The speaker system that I recommend is from M&K and consists of the LCR-750s for the left, right and center speakers, the Surround-55 tripole speakers for the rear and the V-1250 for the subwoofer. There are hundreds of speakers available from many manufacturers and each have their strong points. I like this M&K configuration because it

provides flexibility, the speakers are not massive, they are reasonably priced and they sound great. M&K has always been aggressive about developing new and better sounding products and the 750's are a fine example of their efforts. By placing the left and right speakers on stands, we can position their sound field very close in height to the horizontal center of the TV screen. Locating the left and right speakers a foot or two away from the TV at the horizontal center of the

screen helps the sound field tie in perfectly to the image on the screen. The surround speakers are a tripole configuration, which means that they have both side and front firing drivers. The last speaker component is the subwoofer. I always recommend at least one subwoofer (in many situations I use two) because the bass information is very important to the overall visual experience. M&K manufactures over 12 different subwoofer models

so there is plenty to choose from in all different price ranges. The speaker package comes in at about \$2,700 (including stands).

The receiver in the system is the Denon AVR-3300. This receiver is not the most expensive or the most feature laden in the Denon line, but at \$999 it is perfect for this application. At 105 watts per channel it has plenty of power for the living room and it has both Dolby Digital and DTS





## custom concepts

decoding. In addition, we installed a Denon DVD 1500 DVD player (\$499) that decodes Dolby Digital DVDs and a Philips Pronto remote control (\$399) to tie all of the components operation together.

The installation was pretty much straight forward, with one exception. The room has hardwood floors, no basement and no attic space above so running wires to the surround speakers proved to be a challenge. If there were a basement we could have easily run the rear speaker wires from the receiver into the basement, up into the sidewalls then to the speakers. We had two options. We could cut through the dry wall and drill through all of the studs from the front of the room to the back. Of course we wanted to avoid this option because of all the patching that would be required. The option that we chose was to hide the speaker wire in the baseboard molding. As part of our services we have a fully equipped cabinet shop and we frequently fabricate custom cabinets for our clients, so it was easy to remove the small shoe molding at the baseboard, hollow out the back of it, install the wire then reinstall the molding.

After the installation we did a walk through of the system operation with Allen. He was very impressed with the installation, the performance of the components and the fact that we met his budgetary requirements. We discussed briefly what possible upgrades or additions he might consider. The first thing I suggested is to add a high definition satellite dish system. There are currently a few high definition channels available and more to come. The high definition signal looks great on the Runco. I also mentioned the development of progressive scan DVDs and digital VCRs. He felt confident that he has a solid system in place that will provide many hours of quality entertainment.

The total cost of the job (including installation and miscellaneous items) came in just under budget at \$17,500. ♦