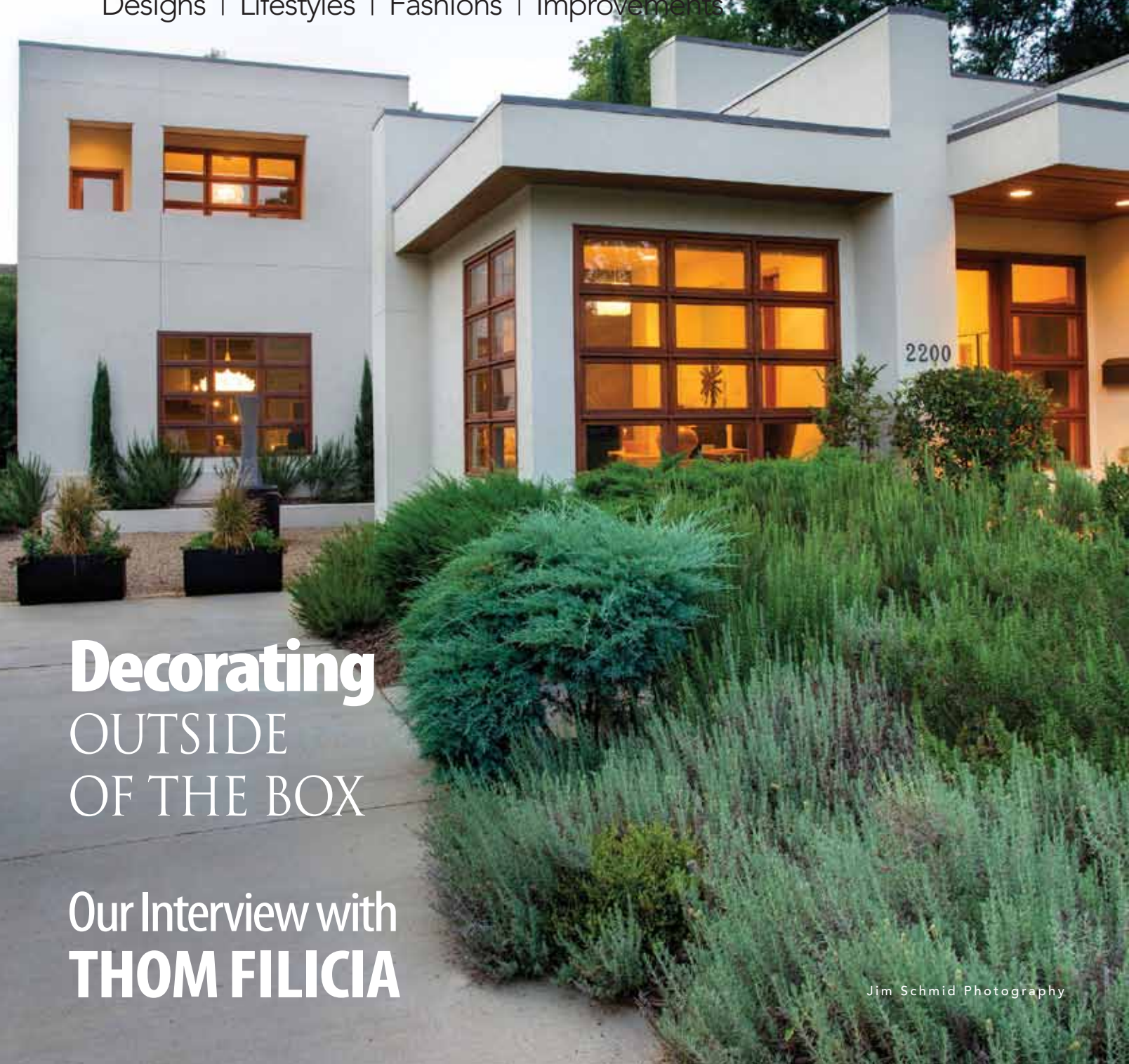


CHARLOTTE URBAN

HOME

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2011

Designs | Lifestyles | Fashions | Improvements



Decorating
OUTSIDE
OF THE BOX

Our Interview with
THOM FILICIA

Jim Schmid Photography



THE well-connected HOME

by Nancy Atkinson

To say **custom home electronics** have advanced in the past decade is an understatement. What started with home theatre rooms, lighting and music systems has expanded to include security, light and shade control, telecommunications, climate control, home networking, whole-house audio and video, and surveillance and electronic entry access – all fully integrated.

There's no question that creating a smart home adds value to your bottom line and improves your quality of life. But making decisions about product options, design and installation can be bewildering. Relying on big box retailers to guide you through the process can be frustrating, particularly if you want to customize your home automation and need the help of in-home service after the sale.

We consulted the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA), the Custom Home Theatre Installation Contractors Association (CEDIA) and local home technology experts Dawayne Bowers of Automation Home Entertainment and Matt Ocnas with Bang & Olufsen South End for their advice on creating the well-connected home of tomorrow.

What should homeowners consider when building or renovating?

The experts say you should wire for everything now. Your structured wiring system becomes the electronic foundation for many advanced services, including telephone, broadband Internet, cable or satellite TV, computer networking, audio and video, security and home management. Most importantly, structured wiring systems have enough capacity to support current and future digital technologies.

“Be sure the company you choose to wire your home will stay current with new technologies on the horizon,” says Dawayne. “The wiring plan they create should ensure that every room in your house from the front porch to the attic and basement is wired for your current and future technology needs.”

What are the options for home electronics integration?

As you add electronic components into the mix, it is important to make sure they can be integrated and operated under one easy-to-use control system, such as an application for your smartphone. Work with a trusted professional to design a plan that will guide you when making purchases.

What do we need to look for when purchasing home electronics equipment?

Many stores purchase large orders of equipment and sell it at discounted rates. Don't buy yesterday's products. Shop with a dealer who provides only the newest equipment and technologies and rely on a home automation consultant you trust.

“With the proper wiring foundation you can install any home automation or premium audio/video system throughout the home,” explains Matt. “But you don't have to add everything all at once. Install only the items you want and need now and add new equipment as your needs change.”

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Wiring the entire home will also allow you to hide all the sources (satellite receivers, Blu-ray players, Apple TV, video game consoles) in another room such as a closet, allowing the area where the TV is located to remain uncluttered by excess wiring and equipment.

Can I integrate the lighting in my home with my other electronics?

Yes. Lighting sets the mood for home theatre entertaining or a quiet evening at home. You can control your home lighting from the same remote you use for all the other automation in your home, including your music and audio system.

What kind of control device is recommended?

There are easy to use all-in-one remote controls available for any system. You can even have one custom programmed so it makes perfect sense to you.

“Ask your home integrator about using either a handheld remote with a built-in LCD screen or an application that can be downloaded onto your smartphone or tablet, such as an iPad. Either should allow you to control home audio, video, lights, shades, thermostats and other devices seamlessly,” advises Matt.

How much should homeowners invest?

A smart home installation is a good value. While the average expense of a typical wiring system installation is 2 percent of a home’s market value, the potential return is significantly higher, often reaching up to 125 percent of the installation cost according to industry reports.

“When deciding what you will build into your smart home, you need to identify what

is important to you, whether that is lighting control or a multi-room audio system,” Matt says. “But also think about quality and long-term dependability. Purchasing products from manufacturers that have a reputation for quality will ensure your system is productive for years to come.”

How should I choose an electronics professional?

Your home electronics system is a big investment. Easy-to-use systems, reliable installation and in-home service are a must. Be sure the company you’re considering has CEDIA-certified professional designers and installers on staff.

“Your home technologies team should provide you with extensive options, complete installation and reliable in-home service for your systems,” says Dawayne. “Most of all, they should make the experience simple and enjoyable for you, and be someone you trust to introduce you to new technologies on the horizon.”❖



Bang and Olufsen



The Beo6 represents a merger of form and function. It is a remote control that works as an extension of your hand, with touch-screen control of your TV, films, music and more. Fully programmable, the same Beo6 can be as simple as you want and as flexible as you need. **Bang and Olufsen.** www.bang-olufsen.com/southend.

At the 2011 Consumer Electronic Show, the "best of show" in the home theater category went to Samsung for their HT-D7100 home theater. It manages to fit an entire home system into a single cubic design. It can be broken into different components as needed, if you prefer a different configuration. **Samsung Electronics.** www.samsung.com.

When it comes to cool speakers, these are the Eames lounge of the audio world. Praised for their stunning design, the SoundSticks II speakers and subwoofer system became a milestone in audio history when it became part of the permanent collection at New York City's Museum of Modern Art. **Harman Kardon Electronics.** www.harmankardon.com.



This one wireless network device unites music from all the computers in your home, from music services such as Pandora and from thousands of Internet radio stations. Plugs into your audio receiver and uses your laptop, iPad, iPhone or Android as a remote control. Companion speakers can play different or the same music in multiple rooms all from the same music library. **Sonos.** www.sonos.com.

Drawing on inspiration from radios in the past, the Tivoli Model One AM/FM table radio has been described as "the best sounding table radio ever made," (MSNBC) offering "the kind of room-filling sound that many other radios claim to deliver but often don't." (Forbes). When you want to listen to iPod library, the radio has an input jack for external music devices. **Tivoli.** www.tivoliaudio.com.

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Automation Home Entertainmentwww.automation-entertainment.com704-773-7075
 Bang & Olufsen South Endwww.bang-olufsen.com/southend704-372-7375



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