

# In Concert

*By wedging all of the electronics for a high-end audio/video system into a single enclosure, SE2 Labs may have created the first foolproof home theater.*

A TYPICAL HOME THEATER includes six to eight speakers and a like number of electronic components, which must be interconnected with at least five different types of wire and configured to operate properly with each other. Even the professionals who install and service these systems find that creating reliable, easy-to-use home theaters demands a team of seasoned technicians. However, a maverick Utah company called SE2 Labs has created a new system that may turn home-theater installation into an afternoon affair rather than a weeklong ordeal.

SE2 Labs' ITC One combines every component of a home theater except the speakers and video display into a single unit that measures only 21 inches tall, 18 inches wide, and 20 inches deep. The base unit of the ITC (Integrated Theater Console) One includes a surround-sound processor, a video processor, digital audio amplifiers, and a touchscreen control system. To these features you can add a dizzying array of options, including a high-definition DVD player, an iPod dock, a digital video recorder, a cable TV tuner, a Dish Network satellite tuner, and Xbox and Wii video game systems. Because a single box incorporates all of these functions, SE2 Labs can configure the ITC One at the factory so that all of its components operate correctly, and so that they work with the video display and speakers your installer specifies.

According to SE2 Labs CEO Michael Pyle, the installation process involves little more than connecting the speakers and video display. "The concept is to make a system that works and is configured properly from the get-go, instead of the installer having to take all these separate components and try to make them work," he says.

This concept produced the home-theater-in-a-box systems found in mass-market electronics stores, but those products lack the integration SE2 Labs achieves. None, for example, incorporates a cable TV tuner or satellite receiver. Nor do they share the ITC's pedigree. Instead of assembling the ITC from generic circuit boards, SE2 partnered with an elite group of high-end audio/video companies. These include Bryston (famous for professional audio components), Vidikron (a video projector brand whose products commonly are found in elaborate theaters), AMX (a maker of home automation systems), and Transparent Cable (known for audiophile-grade cabling and AC power filtration).

SE2 acquires circuit boards from these and other partners

and combines them in a single chassis with an elaborate cooling system designed to enhance the ITC's reliability. "All of the components are mounted vertically in a computer-style card cage, so they can take advantage of convection cooling," Pyle explains. "We also use four computer-controlled fans with acoustic baffles to keep everything quiet."

Pyle's experience as president of Aurant, a Utah-based custom electronics installation firm, guided his creation of the ITC's control interface, which can be manipulated through a 4.3-inch AMX touchscreen on the front or through a

separate remote. Buttons light up automatically when the unit senses movement. "Just push in a disc and things start to happen," Pyle says.

According to Pyle, three ITC Ones have been installed, and many more are in production. Prices start at \$19,900. The ITC One is also available in packages with Vidikron video projectors and Triad speakers—with the ITC configured at the factory for optimal performance with these components. ■

—BRENT BUTTERWORTH

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*The ITC One combines such functions as DVD playback, satellite TV, video games, and a digital video recorder in a single unit.*

