

SPLURGE OR SAVE? TIPS FROM THE PROS

ELECTRONIC HOUSE

July/August 2009

TECHNOLOGY IDEAS FOR YOUR HOME

SMART ROOMS

FOR SMALL BUDGETS

**SOLAR
POWERED
HOME THEATER**

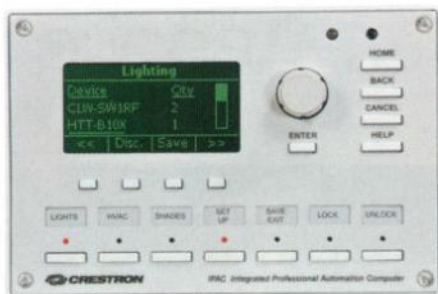
**LED PROJECTORS
THE NEXT BIG THING**

**MORE WINNING HOMES
HIGH-TECH KITCHENS & MASTER SUITES**

U.S. \$6.95 www.ElectronicHouse.com



COOL THINGS



DUAL WINNER: LIGHTING/SHADE CONTROL GREENER MANSIONS

Big home, less energy? As the hub of Crestron's Green Light power switching system, a wall-mounted IPAC-GL 1 can automate hundreds of lighting loads, plus handle some shade control and automation features like timed events so a home uses its electronic systems more efficiently. Ethernet and RS-232 ports allow connectivity to a wealth of devices and interfaces, while the LCD display and front-panel controls enable easy setup and configuration. \$1,300, www.crestron.com

DUAL WINNER: LIGHTING/ SHADE CONTROL ONE-ROOM AUTOMATION

As a single-room application, Lutron's RadioRA-SR plays nicely in new or existing homes. It comes with Sivoia QS shade control, in-line lamp socket modules, vacancy/occupancy ceiling-mount sensor, a scene controller, wall-mounted keypad control, dimmers, remote dimmers, switches and remote switches. It's scalable to meet any room size, and will blend into your decor with 20 matte satin and seven glossy keypad colors. Price varies, www.lutron.com



WINNER: APPLIANCES FOUR-IN-ONE OVEN

Sharp's AX-1200 SuperSteam Oven blends four cooking methods—Super-Steam convection, steam, convection and microwave—into one smart, healthy system. Use the large LCD display to pick from 43 automatic settings for time, temperature and optimal combination of cooking methods. It's also flexible to install, whether you place it in a 30-inch wall-oven cabinet or on a countertop or cart. It comes in stainless or black finishes. \$999, www.sharppusa.com



WINNER: BUILDER SENSING HOUSE

The goal of the Blair House Custom Home by Blair Construction Company was to blend "old Southern charm" with modern electronic convenience. And does it ever. The automation system is programmed to respond to temperature and humidity sensors, and includes preset lighting scenes and remote online access. The home also boasts a home theater, multiroom audio/video and an elaborate security system with video surveillance. The home theater has custom acoustic panels, powered theater chairs, automated lighting, Windows Media Center on a custom PC, and PlayStation 3 for Blu-ray playback. www.advancedtechnologiesbr.com



LET'S GO BLU

- ▶ Warners Bros., which effectively ended the format war when it announced sole support for Blu-ray, is letting customers swap their HD DVD titles for the Blu-ray version in its new Red2Blu program. The "upgrade," available through Red2Blu.com, costs \$4.99 per title.
- ▶ The two-disc set of Frank Miller's *The Spirit* provides more than the usual Blu-ray digital goodies. Viewers can log into the film's MoLog (movie blog), hack up the storyboard and insert their own directives (audio, text, graphics). Share your talent with other MoLoggers.
- ▶ Free Blu-ray rentals? More public libraries are offering them free of charge. The Washington Centreville Public Library in Ohio, for example, offers more than 1,000 HD titles, which can be borrowed two at a time.
- ▶ The average price of Blu-ray players dropped nearly 34 percent in the last year, falling from \$393 in the first quarter of 2008 to \$261 in the first quarter of 2009, according to the research firm NPD.
- ▶ Rumor has it... Blu-ray is finally coming to Apple computers.