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## Pecar Custom Home Theater Installation

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Of The Daily Oakland Press

In the future world depicted in Ray Bradbury's 1953 science fiction novel, "Fahrenheit 451," television has become a way of life for most people, as the walls of their living areas are literally turned into TVs.

Well, friends, kick back in your perfectly angled, motorized, massaging recliner chairs - with cup holders, of course - because the future of entertainment is here.

All of the new advances in digital technology certainly sound like they are from a science fiction novel. From high-definition plasma screens and liquid crystal displays to digital front projection systems that do, in fact, turn one's wall into a TV, the modern consumer has a near limitless variety of choices when it comes to creating a home theater environment.

And people are doing so in record numbers.

In January, the Consumer Electronics Association announced record sales of more than 4 million digital televisions in 2003. In fact, the total digital television unit sales for the single month of December 2003 nearly topped that of the entire year 2000 sales. This was during a holiday month when many retailers were struggling to combat the lack of consumer confidence with fear over an uncertain job market and economy. The CEA projects that these sales numbers will nearly triple in the next three years.

Like so many other aspects of life in the past few years, the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, seem to be driving the home theater trend, at least in part.

"There's this whole concept of 'cocooning,'" says Tony Falouse, president and CEO of Pecar Home Theater Environments in Troy. "After 9/11, people tend to stay at home a lot more with their families."

Don Paulson, sales manager at Paulson's Audio & Video in Farmington Hills, agrees.



Family bonding and digital technology are driving the home theater business. -The Daily Oakland Press / JOSE JUAREZ



## The Big Screen

When it comes to movies, there's no place like home

"People want to make their seat as comfortable as they can," he says.

For Ken Laderoute, 62, of Clarkston, family comfort and convenience was certainly a big factor.

"We had a lower level that we wanted to finish, and you start thinking about things you want to have there," Laderoute says. "We had an ideal layout for a home theater and wanted a larger television screen and surround sound. We also wanted everything completely within one room."

In the end, the Laderoutes chose to have HOD's Home Theater in Waterford Township install a traditional-style home theater with a front projector and a 92-inch screen.

"It's really nice," Laderoute says. "The screen size is just like being in a movie theater. It's great to be able to watch a movie or high-definition cable channel. High-definition was really our objective."

Falouse says such installations are well-used.

"People throw Super Bowl parties, pajama parties, and all sorts of other get-togethers," he says. "Technology has gotten to the point where you really have a theater. You don't have to brave the weather or the roads. You can stay at home and be safe."

High definition: the 'new color'

Technology is one of the other major factors driving the market. As anybody who has drooled over the latest offerings in their local home electronics store can attest to, home theater technology is just, well, cool.

The lion's share of the credit belongs to the advent of high-definition television.

"High-definition technology is the best thing to happen to TV since black and white went to color," Paulson notes.

For decades, TV technology relied on the cathode ray tube (CRT) model, which was hulky and offered lo-hum resolution. Upgrading your television setup meant getting a model with a bigger screen or perhaps adding some speakers for a surround-sound effect.

Billy Carl, 5 (from left), Jakob Carballo, 5, Luiza Cohen, 11, and Joey Carballo, 8, watch "Fishing News" on a 50-inch Sony Plasma TV screen, part of the home theater package in the Cahillo family's West Bloomfield Township home. -The Daily Oakland Press / DOUG BAUMAN