

CEPro HIGH-IMPACT PRODUCTS OF THE YEAR

Our readers select the most important innovations for 2003.
by Julie Jacobson

Wanted: real products that dealers have successfully sold and installed over the past year, not just neat technologies...products with brand new features...pricing that's opened up new markets for dealers...or simply product that works all the time—sometimes a rarity in the home-systems category. ■ We posed this challenge to members of the CE Pro Community—integrators, consultants and distributors—inviting them to nominate products and manufacturers that have had a particularly positive impact on their businesses this year. ■ Some responded with impassioned appeals that were obviously genuine. You can't argue with "It is the best new product we have EVER seen." That is what David Weinhart of Ambrosia Audio & Video had to say about the Kaleidescape video server. ■ That's the kind of frank testimonial we relied upon when selecting the *CE Pro* High-Impact Products of the Year.

MOVIE MANAGEMENT

Kaleidescape ■ Kaleidescape System

From out of nowhere, it seems, Kaleidescape has emerged as one of the hottest properties to hit custom-installation in years. It has one product—a hard-drive video server that feeds movies to any TV in the house. David Weinhart, president of Ambrosia Audio Video in Bel Air, Calif., says, "It is the best new product we have EVER seen. Period."

The thing starts at about \$30,000 and it doesn't even manage music or photos. So what gives?

"When you can sell a product that can stream DVDs to seven different zones at the same time over Cat 5+ wire, who wouldn't want this?" wonders reseller Gordon Van Zuiden of Cybermanor in Los Gatos, Calif. "Couple that with a drop-dead gorgeous graphical user interface and IP addressability for control, [and] you've got a great product."

The server sends content to Movie Players that connect to remote televisions (via S-Video, component or composite outputs) throughout the house.

"The quality of the video is fantastic—among some of the best quality I've seen from a DVD player," says Greg Margolis of Dallas-based Hometronics. "Soon they will be able to store HD on the system. Talk about having the ultimate demo machine, this is going to be it."

The Kaleidescape system starts at \$27,000 retail for a server with five 300GB disk drives (enough for 125 movies), one Movie Player and a DVD Reader. The Movie Guide service and a lifetime of software upgrades is provided free of charge.

www.kaleidescape.com

