



thinkingbricks limited

home cinema • multi-room audio & video • lighting control • networking & system integration



Control, entertain and network...

Summary: Multi-source audio and video, with central digital music library and integrated lighting control, whole house TV/satellite/phone/broadband network, and CCTV access
Location: Hertfordshire
Budget: £20,000 to £25,000

Mr & Mrs. W met with thinkingbricks at the Smart Homes Show in September 2005 at Excel, London.

They admitted that they were complete novices when it came to the systems involved, but they knew what they wanted.

After discussing the plans for the property (which was without a roof at the time!), thinkingbricks arranged a site visit to take a more formal brief, and get to grips with the layout of the site.

We met with Mr and Mrs W, their site manager and architect to go through what they wanted the systems to provide. It was important to keep everyone involved as the W's didn't want to have to act as the go-between for this aspect of the build. As the clients had employed a lighting designer, it was paramount to make the lighting really impactful and controllable.

thinkingbricks began the project management straight away, and took the specifications and work schedules back to base to begin the plan for the systems.

Deciding on a system is sometime the most difficult aspect of the project. It is important to get this right, so that the cabling can be carefully planned.

Thinkingbricks provided a number of brochures as well as examples of the keypads for the client to see and touch.

On the basis of achieving a clean, simple solution for both the audio visual system and the lighting control, the decision was to use Living Control. To ensure that music was easy to access, an audio server for their whole music collection was placed at the centre of the system.

This system involves just one keypad to choose music or video, as well as select a mood for the lighting, as it integrates perfectly with Rako lighting control.

TV and satellite channels would be available in all rooms, but the audio and video system would be in just 6 key rooms, including the kitchen and master bedroom.



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Broadband access for the family was absolutely essential, for whole house internet in the future. The design covered wired and wireless provision.

A simple telephone exchange system was to cover all rooms, as well as providing control of the external gates from inside the house, from any telephone.

To add the cherries on the cake, an Television TV was specified for the ensuite wall, along with a full 5.1ch home cinema with plasma screen for the family room.

The full system design was prepared, agreed and briefed to the electricians to first fix all the cabling. This was checked on completion and the site was ready for the thinkingbricks to build the smart home system!

The rack in the gym became the hub, which houses all the equipment as well as the cabinets where all the TV and CAT5 networks are connected for the whole house.

The music server is incredibly simple to use – just load the CD and wait a few minutes. Instantly the tracks are available at the keypad, and the system allows selection of different tracks in different rooms simultaneously.

Each person in the house has their own personalised “stream” of audio, which they can pick up as they move around the house, by selecting their name.

The CCTV cameras can be viewed through the family room plasma and any other TV in the house. Surfing in the study or the kitchen is a breeze, using both the wired and wireless broadband connection.

A variety of different lighting moods can be achieved with a simple button press, as well as giving the security of an all on/off option from the master bedroom.

When it came to testing the home cinema set up, the decision all those months ago to provide the family with it’s own “Roxy” was fully endorsed.

The gunshots and explosions from the James Bond movie stopped everyone in their tracks, and the electricians, joiners, painters, site manager and most importantly, the clients and their family all agreed it was a great addition to the family room.

Final cost of installation:

£25000 for 6 zones of multi-room audio/video, TV/satellite distribution (integrated into CCTV), full house data / telephone network and 32 circuits of lighting control.



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Time to consult about the install – no roof yet, but ready for the brief...



A key aspect of the decision of the system was a single keypad, for audio system and lighting control – enter Living Control with the Rakopad S



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Ready to entertain the centre of the home – wireless internet and TV for the kitchen, ambient music when dining and the home cinema in the main seating area (rear of the picture)



A touch of luxury and technology – 17" TileVision TV in the master ensuite



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Behind the scenes – Rako lighting control racks and the Living control audio server and central controller – neat and tidy



Relaxing and watching movies – HD ready, steady, go!

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