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> mighty Mac



To anyone familiar with the iconic McIntosh brand—heck, to anyone familiar with audio, since the brand is so iconic—the company's latest offering will look like just another new McIntosh amplifier or pre-amp. Not that there's anything wrong with that, since audiophiles have been celebrating the company's hand-crafted products since the 1950s. But despite its strong family resemblance, McIntosh's new MPC1500 is not an amp or pre-amp, but rather a power controller. Sporting six medical-grade duplex outlets that can provide up to 1,350 watts of clean, noise-free power and surge suppression for up to 12 different components, the MPC1500 is McIntosh's first-ever power control product. And given the company's long and illustrious history and heritage, that in itself is rather surprising. \$4,500 (800.538.6576, mcintoshlabs.com). —S.W.

> OnSite

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U-verse versus Cable

How does AT&T's fiber optic TV service compare to cable?

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Samsung LN-46A750 Review

It's got a touch of red in the bezel, and some black in the screen.

Disney's Innovention's Dream Home

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Also, additional images of recent homes and theaters, Blu-ray and game reviews, as well as product announcements and manufacturer line shows.

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Richard Schneider, president and founder of Antennas Direct (antennasdirect.com), a company that makes innovative terrestrial TV "antennas for the HD revolution."

Schneider, looking to fill a need for what he believed was scant research and development work on TV antennas, started his company as a hobby in 2001. He says demand for his products has resulted in the company's business doubling approximately every six months.

HOME ENTERTAINMENT: How has your company become so successful?

RICHARD SCHNEIDER: There has been relatively little innovation in this area for years. But a lot of people laughed at me when I told them I was starting a TV antenna company, saying that it's the 21st century, and we're all supposed to be getting our television signals from cable, satellite, telephone lines, or the Internet.

HE: But you obviously don't believe that's true. Why not?

RS: Because a terrestrial antenna provides a better HD signal than satellite or cable. HDTV is an enormous bandwidth hog. It takes a lot of digital data to distribute that signal, and so providers usually compress it. With an antenna, there's nothing between you and the original transmission signal.

HE: Do a lot of people realize that a good terrestrial antenna can deliver excellent HDTV?

RS: Well, our first customers were guys spending six figures on home theaters—absolute purists about audio and video quality. With large projection screens and high-end projectors, they could really notice the difference between off-air and pay-TV providers.

HE: But there are plenty of terrestrial antennas out there. What makes your products unique?

RS: We're using equipment designed to develop military antennas that allows us to do thousands of "what-ifs" in a couple of months whereas it used to take years. We're not aware of anyone else using this type of technology to design TV antennas, because conventional wisdom is that TV antennas were going to die. We don't consider our competitors to be other antenna makers as much as cable and satellite TV providers. And our challenge is that 80 percent of the population doesn't even know they can get HDTV with an antenna.