



# AUDIO VISUAL HEAVEN

*Don't be fooled by the bucolic setting of this Hampshire cottage. The interior's filled with all the media gadgetry a modern family could possibly wish for.*

Word of mouth counts for an awful lot in the domestic systems installation trade. When your business involves working closely with contractors and designers in order to realise a person's technology-assisted dream home, personal recommendations from former clients matter enormously. It's something that Bournemouth-based installers Kudos Sound & Vision are well aware of, a good example being the story of how they came to be involved with this ambitious renovation of an old cottage near the border of Hampshire.

As luck would have it, the owner's building contractor happened to be the recipient of one of the company's past multi-room installations, and was quick to pass on Kudos's name. The owner was sufficiently persuaded to meet with the Kudos team during the initial planning stages, where it was decided to include an integrated audiovisual system and dedicated home cinema system as part of the building work, helping to bring this rustic dwelling well and truly into the 21st century. This introduction to the project through one of the construction professionals

involved had a further benefit – as Kudos's main man Mario Aquilina explains: "Early introduction on the design and construction process is vital...this enables us to plan our infrastructure and ensure nothing is missed, while also allowing for later modifications if warranted." Considering the wealth of electronic inclusions the client had in mind, it's just as well that Kudos managed to get the early start that they did.

## **Totally wired**

As some readers may know, at the heart of any self-respecting smarthouse these days is a network of wires, the complexity of which will depend on what features the client has in mind. In this case, a plentiful supply of CAT5e media cabling and high-grade speaker cable was required in order to send video and audio signals to a total of 10 different areas throughout the house. Even the rear terrace is in on the act, its view over the substantial landscaped garden and nearby natural woodland able to benefit from being soundtracked by a variety of sources.

Said sources include two satellite decoders, a Freeview receiver, a DVD-player and an Imerge sound server to take care of the music side of things. What's interesting about the latter is that in addition to serving up the client's sizeable CD collection with full track information and cover art via any of the home's numerous screens, it's been set-up in such a way that two listeners are able to listen to their own audio selections in different locations simultaneously.

As far as the video is concerned, Kudos opted to go for the Nexus AV distribution system from UK firm AVNEX. Able to deliver standard-def footage up to an impressive 18 different zones via CAT5e with full source control, it was felt that this was perfect for general TV viewing throughout the house, the bedrooms, the kitchen and dining room and games room. In order to send crisp, hi-def Sky+ and DVD visuals to the technical showcases that are the lounge and home cinema areas, however, use was made of HD distribution hardware from Cypress Technologies. And it's to both of these that we now turn our attention...



### The main event

Let's start with the snug, well-appointed home cinema room. In here is a Planar 7130 HD projector firing upscaled images on to a fixed 2.4-metre wide screen at the far end, with the sounds from the room's Denon 7.1 surround receiver brought to viewers' ears via six ceiling-mounted directional speakers, a wall mounted 'centre' channel and down-fire subwoofer, finished in high gloss piano black. The drapes and carpeting used for the split-level floor work to absorb some of the sound, and the movie theatre ambience is boosted further by subtle illumination effects achieved through the use of 'pin' LEDs.

In contrast to the largely single-purpose cinema room, the family's lounge area had to both ably serve as a relaxed space for casual viewing and meet the client's demanding audio requirements. Kudos's approach to tackling this was to design the system from the ground up, selecting the necessary components in accordance with the dimensions and make-up of the room, the client's preferences and, naturally, the available budget. The 46-inch full-HD Samsung LCD adorning one of the walls is the attractive result.

Given the spacious surroundings, the team then chose to base the audio around a 2.1 set-up, incorporating a pair of near full range satellite speakers in combination with a down-fire subwoofer with the satellites set up to achieve a virtual surround effect. The installed 3 channel amplifier delivering 1600 watts of sound to all three, enough to keep the clients and party guests happy. When you consider that even the pool table-toting games room located in a specially-built extension boasts 8-inch ceiling-mounted speakers driven by one of the home's many rack-mounted power amplifiers, you can see just how much importance he places on his music library.

### Complete control

It would be remiss of us not to mention the vital link between the house's numerous features and its users; two RF-enabled MX-850 remotes and a MX3000 wireless touchscreen, all custom-programmed, are permanently on hand to do the family's bidding. We should also touch on the home's advanced security features. Four high-resolution CCTV cameras keep watch over key areas around the property at all times, the feeds of which are linked to a 4-channel security DVR with 500GB storage capacity. As much as that is, it won't take long for four cameras running simultaneously to fill it with video footage; thus, images are only captured on detection of movement, before being recorded and flagged as an event for later review. Providing the finishing touch is an Ethernet port enabling remote access via the Internet when needed.

So, what's the verdict from the owners? In the client's own words: "We are delighted with the installation; it's better than we could have imagined. Kudos Sound & Vision are very professional, but also friendly, always on hand if needed." For his part, Mario Aquilina notes "I believe that we have an affordable formula that appeals to the middle market. While we continue to enjoy the occasional high-end project, this caters for the hard-working professional who wants to enjoy the benefits of a bespoke AV and smarthome solution." As Kudos's work on this project goes to show, you don't necessarily need a sports car in the garage and a bank account in the Cayman Islands before getting to enjoy the fruits of the smarthome industry.

Sometimes all that's required is a team of professionals with the requisite experience, knowledge and imagination to make the magic happen. For further information, contact: [www.kudossoundandvision.com](http://www.kudossoundandvision.com)

Article by Callum Fauser of Smart Life International.



## Considering an installation?

### If you are engaging the services of

- An Architect/Interior Designer - introduce an audio visual expert early so they may communicate ideas that may influence the design of a room or rooms.
- Builders and contractors - your audio visual specialist should happily work alongside your contractors to ensure nothing is missed during the build/early installation process.

### Also

- Don't get too bogged down with having 'HD everywhere' if it isn't absolutely necessary, or running expensive proprietary cable throughout the house. Cat5e is a proven standard and relatively inexpensive, and there are numerous applications that will deliver your HD content over it to your plasma or projector.
- Try to be clear as to what you want out of the system- or if you're not sure be open to guidance.
- Involve all members of the family.
- Have a set budget if at all possible. The Custom Installation and Home Theatre industry has many facets and the range of products and solutions is enormous.
- Finally - keep the lines of communication open at all times.

Kudos Sound and Vision supplies affordable, astonishingly simple integrated Audio-Visual and ICT solutions for ordinary mortals, homes and businesses. For more information contact: [info@kudossoundandvision.com](mailto:info@kudossoundandvision.com) or call 07802 985595, [www.kudossoundandvision.com](http://www.kudossoundandvision.com).

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