



Alpine Home Media

Custom Home Systems

Home Theater & Audio • Networks • Automation

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Digital Music & Pictures on Your Living Room TV

Digital music and pictures are great inventions. They are flexible, rich and easy to manage. The trouble is that up until recently they were locked up on your computer and difficult to share in a family room type of setting.

As with any technology, there are several ways of doing what we wish to accomplish. Each has its advantages in terms of simplicity, flexibility and cost.

The important thing is to use quality devices, designed specifically for the task and set up in a way that fits both the family's needs and their capabilities. If it isn't simple to use, it won't get used and that's a shame given the fun and richness they bring to parties, family gatherings etc.



Below is a run down of some of the options from each group, ranked roughly from the simplest solutions through more sophisticated ones.

Digital Photos – Simple to deluxe:

- Use a cable directly between the digital camera and the TV
 - Advantages – Cheap and simple
 - Disadvantages – Can only look at the pictures on the camera, not something saved on your computer; TV input connection is often inconveniently located on the back of the TV; you must use the controls on the camera to advance to the next picture.

- Get a TV with a built in memory card reader
 - Advantages – You can sit back and use the TV's remote control to kick off a slide show or advance to the next picture; no cables to worry about.
 - Disadvantages – Can only look at the pictures on the memory card, not something saved on your computer; the TV likely only takes one style of memory card and it must be compatible with current and future cameras.



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- Use a device designed to connect your TV with your computer.
 - Advantages – Can look at any pictures stored on your computer; can sit back and use a remote control to work the slide show and advance pictures.
 - Disadvantages – Requires some set-up and installation; pictures must be on computer which is inconvenient if guests want to show the pictures on their camera.

- Set up the above device to show the pictures selectively on any TV in the home.
 - Advantages – Different family members can use it to show their pictures on the TV of their choice throughout the house; use the remote control for that room to adjust the slide show.
 - Disadvantages – Requires more set-up and installation; still can't be used for guest's own pictures.

Digital Music – Simple to deluxe:

- Take advantage of the free music channels provided with your cable TV service.
 - Advantages – Free; simple to use, just tune to your favorite channel, no commercials.
 - Disadvantages – limited program material that tends to repeat itself; no customization or pausing possible

- Get an XM or Sirius satellite radio and connect it to your stereo or TV.
 - Advantages – much deeper music selection than free services; still largely commercial free; great sound quality.
 - Disadvantages – subscription based, requires a clear view of the sky for good antenna reception.

- Get a docking station for your iPod or similar MP3 player.
 - Advantages – Allows you and your guests with compatible players to bring their music to the party; you can sit back and use the stereo's remote control to control the iPod.
 - Disadvantages – only plays music on the player, not the larger collection stored on the computer.



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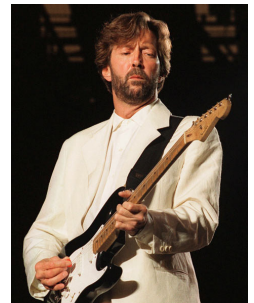
- Get a remote controlled device to connect your computer to your stereo or TV.
 - Advantages – can play the full library of music residing on the computer; can often pick up Internet radio stations for greater music variety; provides on screen cover art and song info when browsing music collection.
 - Disadvantages – requires installation and set-up; isn't easy to casually play music from players that guests bring to the party.
- Get a device that allows digital music to be played throughout house.
 - Advantages – browse cover art and select different songs, playlists etc in different rooms of the house; play the same material throughout the house in a party mode fashion or play different programs in each room individually; select from digital music on the computer, Internet radio or subscription music services; simple remote control from any room.
 - Disadvantages – requires a separate dock to used guests iPods; requires installation and set-up

Alpine Home Media can help you with any of the options presented above. Just contact us if you have any questions. *Below are some tips on finding and enjoying music – cheers !*

Music Tips:

Tip#1 – Listen to more music

Many people like music but just don't seem to find the time to listen to it. Music is a great stress reliever and an ideal background activity. Instead of just leaving the TV on to a random channel while working around the house, try putting on one of the commercial free music channels provided by the Cable TV service. This works especially well at dinner time. Instead of turning the TV completely off during dinner, try one of the lighter music channels or turn on the radio.



Tip #2 – Listen in unusual places

Listening in the kitchen while cooking or eating are obvious but also consider music in the office, formal dining room or out on the deck. Music is ideal as a backdrop to other activities and gives you mind a place to momentarily rest between tasks. Equipment is available that will allow the same or different songs to be played in every room in the house with the touch of a button.



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Tip #3 – Explore music

Many of us learned to love music when we were in our teens and then lost interest as we moved on into adulthood. We therefore know certain bands, songs and radio stations and gravitate to them again and again through familiarity. Sadly, this soon becomes tiring and reinforces our current lack of interest in music.

There are a number of tools available today that let you easily find new music that is as close or as far from your current tastes as you wish. Much of it is free and lets you easily note what suits you and what doesn't so you can better cultivate your interests. Many of these tools are Internet based so they naturally lend themselves to exploration while using a computer. However, virtually any service that is available on a computer can now be set up for use on your home entertainment system. There are many devices that allow you to navigate internet music with a remote control on your TV.

Explore the following web sites. If you find an interest in music reemerge, consider bring your new found interest to your home entertainment system.

- Pandora.com – build your own personalized radio stations
- Rhapsody.com – flat rate subscription to a vast library of music
- Shoutcast.com – Internet music stations from around the world
- iTunes.com – purchase songs, albums and videos individually

Conclusion

We have covered a lot of different options here. All of these solutions come in a variety of configurations to suit any budget. We hope that you have found this paper to be helpful and informative and if you have any further questions or need any assistance, please don't hesitate to call us at (845) 398-4582. It would be my pleasure to speak with you.

Kind regards,

John Vitiello
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