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Remote Control Solutions

Spring is here! Well maybe not if you live in Eastern Ontario, but the calendar does confirm the arrival even if the snow on the ground and outside temperatures disagree. With spring comes spring-cleaning and my tasks have been mandated. At the top of the list is the need to bring some order to the coffee or should I say remote control table. I'm sure many of you have one of these tables or a version of it. It use to hold magazines and drinks but it now functions as a storage center for the many different remotes required to operate the home audio/video system. Since a typical home entertainment system can now consist of some or all of the following components: a surround sound receiver, DVD player, gaming system, satellite or cable controller, iPod, music servers, VCR and satellite radio to name a few of the possibilities it would seem that the days of the single remote control to operate the whole system are well behind most of us or are they?

A simple easy to operate remote control is not just the key to removing the clutter from the coffee table, but also overcoming the challenge of operating today's complicated home entertainment systems. With the complexity of many of these new technologies and components, it is often no longer as simple as walking up to the unit and pressing the power button to make the system operate. Due to changes in design, it is often no longer possible to control many of your components functions from the unit itself. For many of today's components, some or most of the control functions have been removed from the equipment itself and can only be triggered from the remote control. For some equipment it would seem like a degree in rocket science is required to operate the system. I've been directed to provide a solution to the dilemma of not just the clutter, but also the inability of anyone else in our household being able to operate the home theater system if I not there.

There was a time in the not so distant past when a \$ 20.00 or \$ 30.00 universal/learning remote could not only replace a damaged remote, but would also replace many of your existing remotes. Unfortunately those days have now passed us by and these remote controls are really best left to the job of replacing the damaged remote and not controlling a complete system.

The solution to this problem is in one of the many new "advanced" remote controls available. Image a remote control that can operate up to 15 different components and turn them on or off with the push of one button. Not impressed? How about if it will also change the setting on those same components to match your desired listening or viewing choice with the push of that same one button. These new remotes can allow you to experience a new standard in simplicity from even the most complex system. The new activity based functions of these remotes allow you, with just one touch to start watching, listening or playing.

Still not impressed? What if you could hide all of your equipment out of sight, inside a cabinet with the doors closed or in another room altogether and still have all the control that line of sight offers. This is possible today with a degree of consistency that wasn't available in the past. Many of these new remotes now offer either built in RF (Radio Frequency) transmission or RF transmission as an option. There are also hard-wired kits that can be added to existing systems if you want to move the location of your components behind closed doors or to another room and not lose its functionality.



The world of "advanced" remotes opens the doors to many possibilities not the least of which is one-touch access to the home-entertainment activities you love. The only limitations you'll find to these new remotes is your imagination and budget. Prices start at about \$ 150.00 and can easily exceed a \$ 1000.00 depending on your specific requirements. The real advantage of these advanced remotes is to allow anyone in the house to easily operate the system without help. One thing to consider when purchasing one of these remotes is that they will require some initial programming to achieve the simplicity described above. Most users can accomplish this programming themselves if they are patient. Depending on the specific remote this programing can be completed successfully directly on the remote itself or through the use of sophisticated setup help via on line computer programs. While you don't have to be an expert any longer to set these up, you may want to ensure the vendor you purchase your new solution from either offers a programming service or a suitable level of support should you find you require it.

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