

"Welcome to the Spring issue of Volume 8 of our newsletter. It's Finally Spring, after a seemingly Endless winter. The new season has once again brought new technologies! In the spirit of the new growth, we're offering some of our insights into our fun and exciting industry. Thank you for your interest."

Improving Cell Phone Reception...

It seems like "Murphy's Law" applies to cell phone reception. Call quality is great, until you get to your home or office. Then the well recognized "Can you hear me now" advertisement becomes reality, as you lose call after call.

Considering that many people have eliminated home phone connections altogether, the performance of our cell phones have become even more important.

It is somewhat difficult for a provider (ATT, Verizon, T-mobile, Sprint etc) to improve signal quality in a given location. It's not as easy as simply turning up the power; many times a new "Cell" tower has to be installed closer to your home or office.

This is expensive and unless the "statistics" add up financially, unlikely to happen.

In addition, many people do not like the looks of cellular transmitters. So, it seems like the nicer the neighborhood, the worse cellular reception becomes.

Having installed hundreds of TV and radio antennas over the years, it came to mind that there might be a way to improve the cellular signal by placing an antenna in the attic or on the roof?

It turns out that this additional antenna system can work very nicely!! The antenna is pointed at the nearest cellular transmitter, while an indoor "repeater" sends the cell signals back and forth from your phone to the cell tower.

In a recent installation, we went from no signal indoors to full "5" bars on the signal meter.

The indoor coverage will vary, but most houses or offices can be covered completely. The cost will vary, depending on the size of the space to be covered, and the difficulty of installation.

Call us for a free estimate!

Wider Than Widescreen!

I am sure everyone has sat down to watch a new DVD release only to discover that the image was not quite filling their new HD Television? A distracting black bar impinged on the top and the bottom of the image :(

Star Wars and Lawrence of Arabia, to give a couple of familiar examples, are actually recorded in a wider format than 1.78 to 1 - the official width to height ratio provided by most High Definition Televisions. The ratio for "Cinemascope" features is a much wider 2.35 to 1.

When 2.35 films are projected in a commercial theater there aren't any bars. Curtains (or masking), hiding sections of the screen on the far right and left are raised. Meanwhile, the image is enlarged to fill the full height and width. Room filling images that make you feel like part of the action.

Now we are talking!

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Recently, there has been a trend in home theater designs allowing "residential" systems to display "Wider than Widescreen" films in their original uncropped format.

So far, front projection systems are the predominant technology allowing for properly displayed 2.35 images.

All the major projection screen manufacturers are offering models in 2.35 ratios. Adding a special lens to the projector and circuitry to stretch the image height and width complete the requirements.

Of course bigger is better! Especially with Blu-ray HD 2.35 titles available. We just completed an installation with a 54" by 127" 2.35 screen. We found ourselves sitting 10 feet or less from this "huge" image. Hang on during a car chase. You just may need a seat belt!!

Give us a call for more information and pricing on "Wider than Widescreen" systems.

Blue-ray Wins!!

The war for High Definition DVD Format domination is over! Sony's Blu-ray format is officially the winner. We are very happy the battle has ended. To say the very least, it was confusing to have 2 choices for Hi Res DVD on the market.

If you own a HD television, you should strongly consider a Blu-ray player. Prices start around \$400. Of course the new players are backward compatible. Standard DVDs play beautifully on these well engineered devices.

The HD images from Blu-ray titles are the best

we have ever seen! If you have a "1920 by 1080" (1080p) display you are in for a special treat as the output of Blu-ray players will use everyone of the 2 million "pixels" on your set. Very sharp and clear.

Although standard DVD have provided excellent images over the last 10 years or so; Blu-ray Discs, with 6 times the resolution of regular DVDs, almost demand you provide the biggest television possible.

We have seen very compelling results when combining a 110" diagonal front projection system with a Blu-ray player. Better than going to the Movie Theater.... Really!!

Netflix, Blockbuster etc. are now offering a large selection of Blu-ray titles and more and more titles are being released every week.

We love this new format! Give us a call for more details.

Supercharger for your TV

I recently added a Supercharger to my two seat convertible. Miata's are fun anyway, but adding 50 horsepower to a 2000 pound vehicle is almost beyond description! "YIKES!!" seems to be the most popular response so far.

In our industry, we have seen television resolution increase dramatically. Pictures can be incredibly sharp! In addition, most, if not all, home electronics have become "digital" in nature. Digital means Plasma or LCD TV's - no more "Picture Tubes" with scanning electron beams.

The only problem with new technologies like

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LCD and Plasma is all your sources have to be converted to match the "native" resolution of the panel. This conversion uses a ton of digital processing power. Not done properly, significant distortion or blurring can occur.

An example would be converting a standard resolution 480i DVD to the 1920 by 1080 (1080p) resolution of the latest generation of displays.

Even when viewed on the best factory built in converters, a significant softening of the image can occur.

We have found adding an outboard "processor" dedicated to this conversion process really improves overall picture quality. Kind of a Supercharger for your TV!

We feel the best processors are designed here in the US by a small company called "Lumagen". These guys have a great understanding of the digital processing required to convert signals precisely for a given display. Your standard DVD collection will start to look more like High Definition!

Lumagen processors are probably at their best when combined with larger displays. I have been using one on a 110" front projector at home; the improvement over the factory conversion is remarkable. We have also had great success "Hot-Rodding" 50"-60" flat panels with Lumagen processors.

Lumagen also designs their devices with calibration (a Supercalibration?) in mind. Not only will you notice improved sharpness, but gorgeous color, too.

Give us a call for a quote on a complete TV/ Lumagen combination, or just add a Lumagen to an existing display. You will love the results when you "Supercharge your TV"!

Every One Needs A DVR!

Do you like to catch a few TV shows every week? I know I do.

What would life be without Battlestar Galatica? Do the Cylons eventually wipe out the Human Race? Or do they combine with us to become an ultimate being? Whew! Shakespeare has nothing on this dramatic weekly Sci-Fi event :)

I know it would be almost impossible for me to be around every Friday at 9 when "BG" is on the air, so I set up my Digital Video Recorder to record every show automatically.

Simply find it in the guide, click "Season Pass" and you are all set. Now I can wait and watch it anytime I find it convenient. Of course another great feature is being able to fast forward through the commercials, or rewind to hear exactly what Baltar quietly said to Starbuck.

Everyone knows the phone is guaranteed to ring right at the climatic point in of the show. Just push the "pause" button and take the call. Afterwards simply start where you left off.

If I am out of town, the DVR diligently continues to record; collecting copious amounts of great programming for me to sort through upon my return.

Or set up a "Woody Allen" search.

Any scheduled event with Woody Allen involved will be automatically recorded. Even diehard TV critics will find enjoyable programming with these versatile recorders.

Television is really a whole new animal when the all available programming is filtered by a Digital Video Recorder. Give us a call. We can help you get set up. Both cable and satellite have several options.

I hope this gives everyone some insight into the current home electronic trends. We actually find it to be great fun. We hope it shows in our work. We also know that most of our business comes from referrals. We would like to thank everyone for their continued support. We promise to stay committed to being the best in the business.

I will (as usual) be available as much as possible. So if you have any questions, feel free to call anytime. My number is 612-868-6129. We have found that many problems are usually resolved quickly and easily over the phone. I'm always available for further discussion.

One last thing; if you do give us a referral that generates new business, we have a new program to provide a few perks to your own home entertainment system. They make a nice reward for giving us a recommendation. Thanks again for your business!

- Dallas

Have a Great Summer!

From everyone at Supercalibrations

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Dallas supercharging a new TV!

