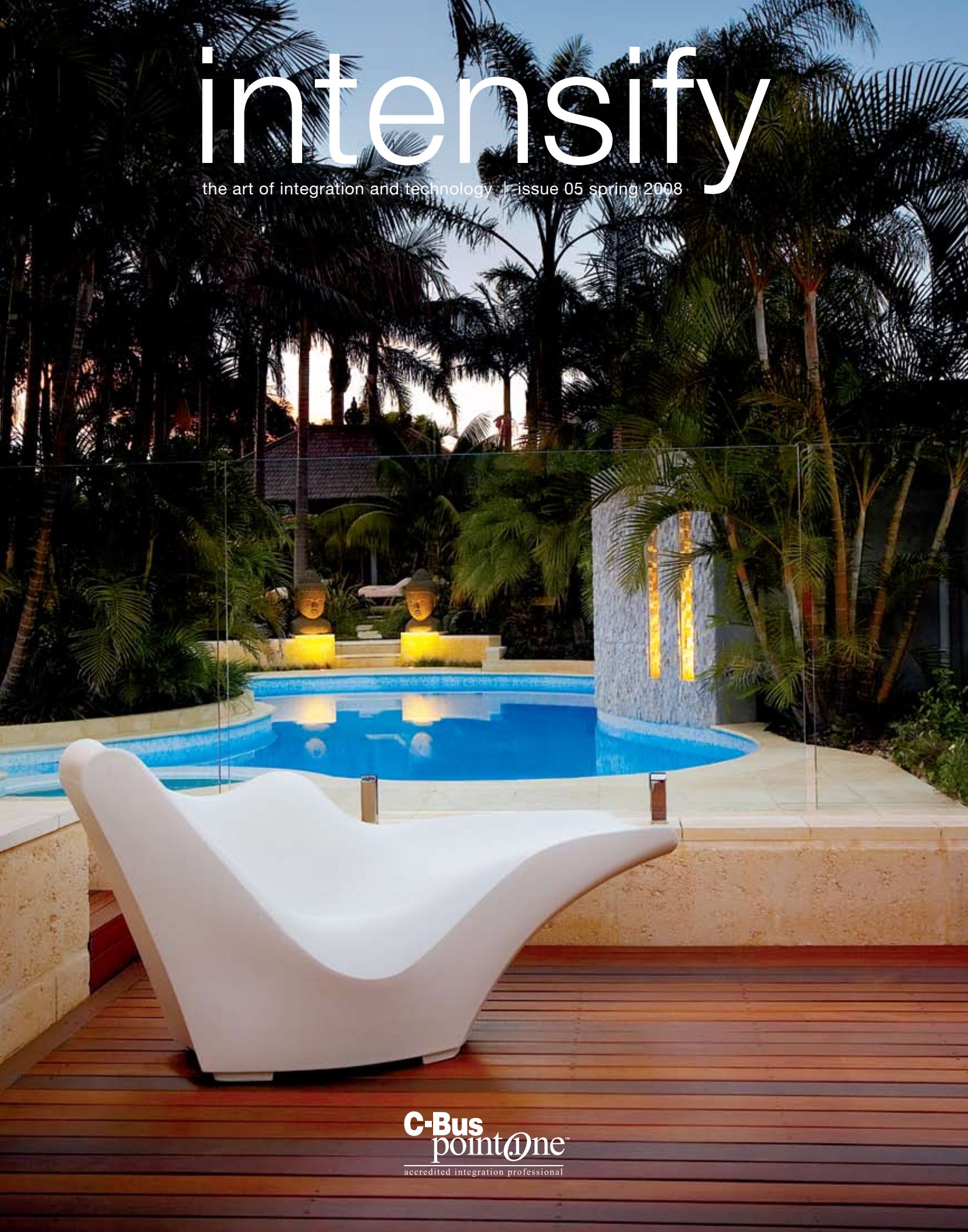


intensity

the art of integration and technology | issue 05 spring 2008



C-Bus
pointOne™
accredited integration professional

introduction

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triple the fun

the art of integration and technology

with a two-day intensive project management course. While most were already familiar with the flow and documentation of running a high-level project, it's our way of ensuring that every C-Bus pointOne member has the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver a consistent customer experience and level of professionalism.

The feedback was outstanding. Not only did it provide an amazing level of information, it reinforced Clipsal's commitment to raising the bar within the home automation and commercial integration industries.

In this issue, we'll share tales of sweeping views from Coolangatta to Sanctuary Cove, showcasing an amazing project in Tallai on the Gold Coast hinterland, with design by Robert Harcourt and Associates, and integration by C-Bus pointOne member InTechSys.

You'll find out how Harry Poulos Architects and C-Bus pointOne member 5thCorner used technology to ensure the boardroom was never a 'bored room' for Mitsui Coal Holdings' new corporate offices in Brisbane.

And finally, we profile Barbé Interior Design, finding out more about their exciting move into the Asian market and the benefits of a close working relationship with C-Bus pointOne member Intelligent Homes in Perth.

Those of you who attended DesignEx and had an opportunity to check out the Clipsal stand would have experienced the cutting edge technology of our new 'Premise Gateway' and the design of the 'Synergi Solutions™ Partner Program'. If you missed out, then don't worry – simply contact your local Clipsal office and ask for an invitation to the Living Innovations Expo8 – coming to a city near you!

In closing, if you are getting more and more requests for technology and know you need to find out more, I'd like to invite you as a guest of Clipsal to attend this year's CEDIA expo on the Gold Coast, 31 July to 2 August. Pre-register at www.cedia.com.au and enter 'INT08' for your complimentary trade visitor's pass.

Regards,
Simon Wehr

Marketing Manager – Residential
Clipsal

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It's been a busy couple of months, with plenty of fodder for our party pages. In April, Clipsal's stand at DesignEx was well attended, showcasing a balance between developing cutting edge technology such as the new 'Premise Gateway' and the focus on design with the 'Synergi Solutions™ Partner Program' between Gainsborough, Caroma Dorf, Wattyl and Clipsal – all amongst the hustle and bustle of this popular design trade fair.

Soon after, C-Bus pointOne hosted a series of breakfasts around Tasmania for architects and consultants providing quality information and one-to-one training for the Tassie crew.

And in May, the national C-Bus pointOne conference provided C-Bus pointOne members with a two-day intensive project management course run by external consultants PM Partners. In addition to this, the 'Best of the Best' awards recognised the work of C-Bus pointOne members from around Australia. Congratulations to 'One Touch' Wollongong, 'Nation Technology' Launceston, 'Advanced Living' Sydney and 'Electrical Integrated Solutions' Brisbane. A special commendation was given to 'SKE' from Newcastle for outstanding entries across three of the four categories.

DesignEx 2008



National C-Bus pointOne conference



Architects and consultants seminars, Tasmania



Welcome to *Intensity* Issue #05!
I don't know about you, but I am sick of all the 'on sale' catalogues that fall into my lap as I attempt to read my weekend newspaper. It seems every single retailer across the land is 'closing down', offering everything at 'below cost' and 'interest-free terms'.

While on the surface, this may appear as the catalyst for creating a buyer's market, the truth is that it is doing little more than compromising the consumer, as the purchasing process is driven purely on price with little or no regard for quality, service, or even whether it's the right product for the customer's needs.

In this edition of *Intensity*, we will explore the need for training and a consistent message to remove the fear-factor and confusion that exists within the home automation industry. In fact, as I write this article, I have just returned from a conference where we put our money where our mouth is by providing C-Bus pointOne members



automated splendour

Over five levels on a steep slope with sweeping views of the Gold Coast, this house on Tallai Road, designed by Robert Harcourt and Associates, provides a stately home, with first-class automation to boot. Penelope Barker reports.



A landmark residence within a prestigious residential estate at Tallai on the Gold Coast hinterland, this imposing home is sited on a steep, sloping block with sweeping views of the coast from Coolangatta to Sanctuary Cove. As the site is in a well-known slip area, the design by Robert Harcourt and Associates required significant structural engineering. Four retaining walls with steel and concrete cores were driven into the embankment to a depth of five metres, and are worked into the design of the extensive landscaping on five levels interlinked with sandstone paths and stairs.

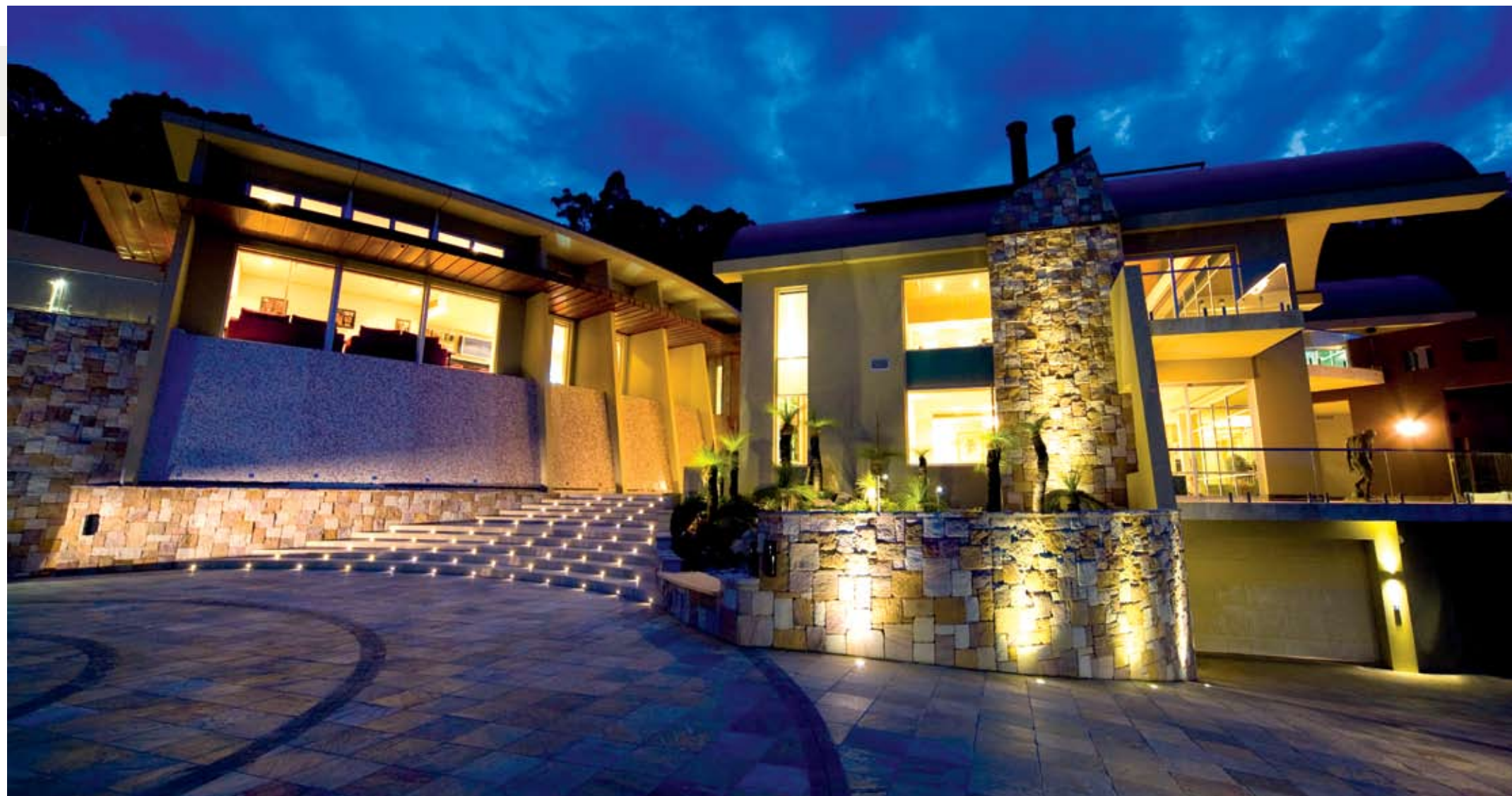
"The concept of the double-vaulted Colorbond roof structure was intended to project a strong contemporary image," says Project Architect Brian Kidd. "While the design is contemporary in flavour, the use of the double vaulted roofs and skillion for the adjoining entertainment wing provides a timeless character."

The palette of materials is varied, including sandstone, frameless glass balustrading, floor to ceiling glazing and copper panelling. From the

basement carpark through to the top floor of the master suite and the separate entertainment wing, all four levels are linked by a glass and steel lift. Meanwhile, curved balconies combined with vaulted roofs create a striking combination of forms.

"The client gave us a detailed brief and an important component was to include state-of-the-art communications and lighting throughout the house," says Kidd. "All the high tech security, communications, lighting, heating, window treatments and the sound system can be controlled via three touch screens located in strategic parts of the house. Via an internet connection, the clients can access these systems and see inside the home from anywhere in the world. Additionally, the home theatre is absolutely top range and an automated sliding panel in the master suite allows the occupants to sleep under the stars in fine weather."

A fully automatic generator back-up system has been installed in the event of power failure and lightning protection was also vital for such a high and exposed position.



“An important component was to include state-of-the-art communications and lighting throughout the house”

C-Bus pointOne member Stephen Cooper of InTechSys oversaw the installation of all systems, from basic electrical to full Clipsal C-Bus lighting and power control systems, and an electronic security system (including CCTV surveillance, multi-zone distributed audio, home theatre, PABX telephone system and data networking).

"All the external landscape lighting is LED," says Cooper, "with colour changing fittings specially made to highlight architectural features."

An internal walkway leads to an entertainment wing, featuring a study, bar area, parquet dance floor and stage and an outdoor viewing terrace. The high tech 16-seat home theatre features a complete Meridian and Optoma digital home theatre system. From seats upholstered in imported red Ferrari leather, the family and guests can enjoy a first-rate cinema experience enhanced by these premium imported audio visual and acoustic systems.

*Text Penelope Barker
Photography Brian Usher / UB Creative*

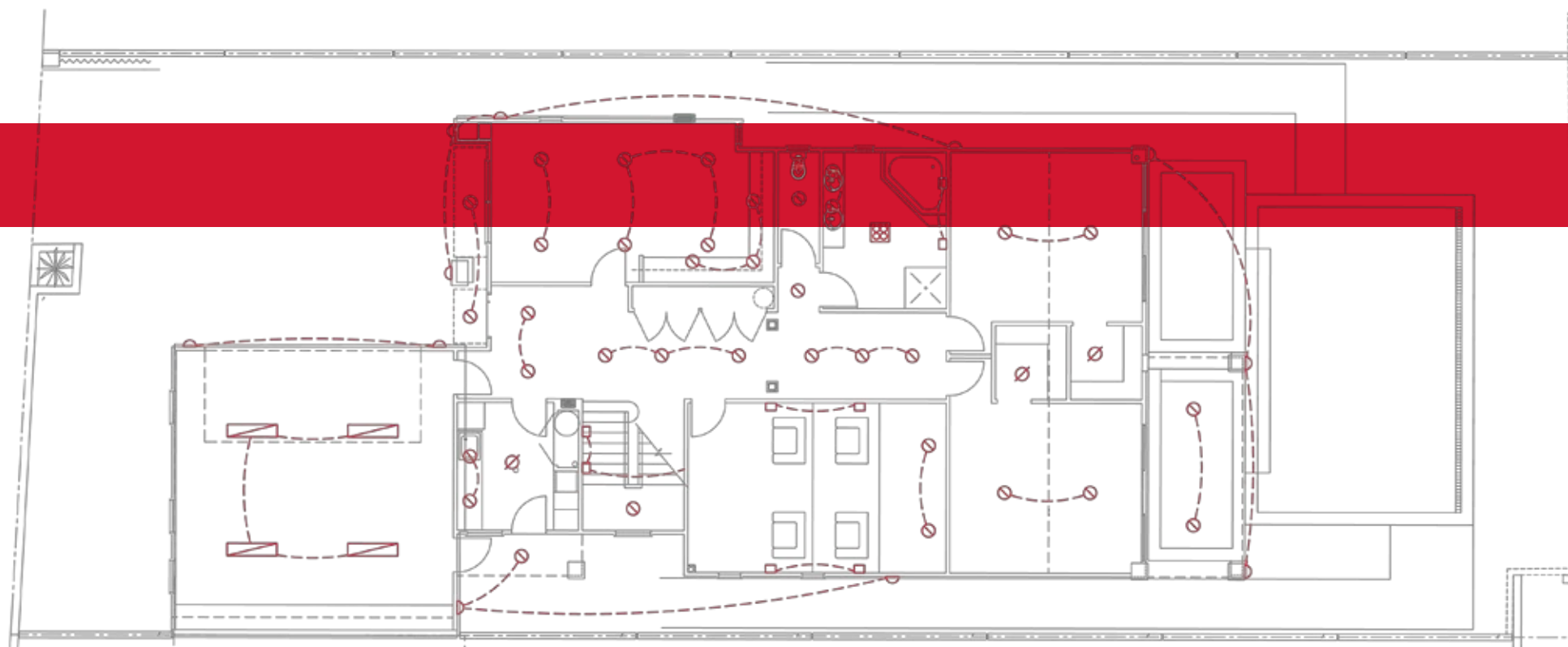


C-Bus pointOne member
InTechSys
Builder
Ingles Group
Electrical and
Mechanical Engineer
Kevin Burns Consulting
Architect
Robert Harcourt and Associates
Project Architect
Brian Kidd
Senior Designer
Kristian Meredith



let's get educated

Simon Wehr, Residential Marketing Manager of Clipsal Australia, Director of CEDIA (Custom Electronic Design & Installation Association) Asia Pacific and a member of the steering committee of The Australian Industry Group Connected Living Cluster, advises that education and professionalism are keys to success in a splitting economy.



We are currently facing the impact of a splitting economy as the gap between rich and poor increases. According to the Living in Australia Study 2008, the wealthiest 10 per cent of households have a net worth of \$1.56 million while the least wealthy 10 per cent have debts which exceed their assets. In other words, the rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer, but they still want the same things as those with money.

The million dollar question is: Why is it that the average person in Australia today lives beyond their means? Upward spiralling interest rates? Maybe. Crazy housing prices? Definitely. Increasing cost of living? Probably.

Most people could and should budget to live within their means, but they want what they can't afford. Worse still, they think they 'need' it.

Then there's Generation Y, or Generation 'Why Not?' who have a completely different outlook on life to the generations before them. They have unrealistic career aspirations, expecting to reach senior positions by 25 and can't comprehend the concept of saving for something. It's the 'I want, no, I must have it now' attitude. They look for the cheapest option which allows them to buy more 'cool stuff' and gives their friends the impression that they are well off. This makes them feel good about themselves. The interesting point, though, is they won't compromise on 'tech with cred', such as iPods™.

Consumers with unrealistic expectations think they can get a home cinema for \$1000 (including a 42 inch plasma screen or LCD projector for under \$700, a surround sound system for under \$200 and DVD player for under \$30). However, commoditisation has created a lack of knowledge. Worse still, it has created misinformation and confusion. The perception is that it's all the same and cheap is good. Nobody is taking the time to explain the difference.

It's a vicious circle. The consumer electronics industry drives box sales, box sales causes price erosion, price erosion creates lack of profit, lack of profit leaves less money to pay and retain skilled staff, and, completing the circle, inexperienced staff push the easy box sale. Customers think they have made a good purchase based purely on price, but they don't get the opportunity to make an educated decision.

We need to create awareness and educate consumers. People building houses want 'cheap' technology and, worse, builders expect 'cheap' technology. Worse still, unqualified installers offer 'cheap' technology. But how can a home that costs under \$200,000 to build have a great home cinema when a great home cinema can cost over \$100,000?

It's time to educate consumers that you get what you pay for. As an industry, we have to change the way people think. There is nothing wrong with



It's time to educate consumers that you get what you pay for. As an industry, we have to change the way people think.

a family room with \$1000 worth of home theatre equipment – big picture, surround sound – but the customer should not be told that they will get the same experience as a purpose-built home cinema just to get an easy sale.

The same goes for home automation. You can get a simple home automation system for under \$5000 but it will never be the same as a \$100,000 system and, most importantly, it won't be a truly customised solution based on the lifestyle of the occupants. It is still worth doing, but the customer needs to understand exactly what they are getting. If not, they end up with a system that doesn't live up to their expectations – and they will be very, very disappointed.

This leads to the vital importance of training. Even hanging a plasma screen on the wall and installing a 5.1 system requires extensive knowledge and the person who is handing over the cash needs to know this. It's important for the customer to understand the balance of spend, i.e. the money spent on equipment, against the money spent on consultation, design and installation. The more money you have to spend, the greater the proportion required on services in order to ensure a user-friendly, higher value, customised solution. If the budget is lower, the spend should be greater on hardware to ensure best bang for your bucks.

So the key is education. Home owners need to understand the Mercedes versus Hyundai theory – if you buy an expensive car, you expect features and quality, if you buy an inexpensive car, you get the features but are realistic that the quality won't be the same. Builders need to understand the right solution for a customer's budget. Installers need to either work within their realm of knowledge, get the professional training to offer more complex solutions or partner with someone who specialises in these areas.

The consistent message should be that true value comes from expertise and the right advice, combined with excellent customer service before, during and after the transaction, *not* from a bargain basement price.

Text Simon Wehr



“A complete package that can change effortlessly on a daily basis for board meetings, corporate entertaining and in-house presentations”



C-Bus Point One member
5thCorner
Builder
Valle Commercial Interiors
Electrical Contractor
Uhlmann Electrical
Electrical Consultant
ITC
Architect
Harry Poulos Architects

natural ingredients

For the presentation spaces of the new Mitsui Coal Holdings corporate offices in central Brisbane, Harry Poulos Architects combined striking natural elements with state-of-the-art technology. The result is a multi-functional environment with a warm and welcoming presence, says Penelope Barker.

A glowing, jade green onyx boardroom table is the centrepiece of the new Mitsui Coal Holdings Brisbane headquarters. The client requested a space that unified the Japanese origin of the company with its current Australian profile. The sophisticated design was to take its lead from natural tones, with an added distinctive ornate pattern.

Treated as a corporate retreat in the centre of Brisbane, the focus on light and warmth in the core presentation space on the 12th floor became the central theme. Fresh tones and clean, crisp surfaces such as glass tiles, stone benches and timber veneer detailing were introduced in the break-out areas and bathroom leading off the boardroom to offer a more casual and intimate atmosphere.

“The clients wanted the best of everything,” says Project Manager Jane Claxton, of Harry Poulos Architects. “And with the presentation spaces, we offered them a complete package that can change

effortlessly on a daily basis for board meetings, corporate entertaining and in-house presentations. The possibilities are virtually limitless.”

C-Bus pointOne member 5thCorner was responsible for coordinating the six levels of lighting, automated blinds, audiovisual and teleconferencing equipment, and high tech sound system within the space, all controlled by either wall-mounted touch screen or hand-held remote.

“We were really impressed with how well the technology was integrated”, says Kelly Weijers from 5thCorner, “You can barely see it, and that’s the idea”. The kind of activity in the boardroom determines what technology is used and the one-touch screens make it easy for the user to adjust the room to suit. If it’s video conferencing, the clients use the plasma, as it gives the best results when there’s lots of ambient light. And for maximum impact during a presentation, they can opt for the

motorised screen and projector. The easiest way to control everything is through the mobile 8.4” wireless Crestron touch screen panel – it’s not only easy to use, but colour-matched to suit the décor.

“With the boardroom table which seats 21 people, 5thCorner really made a fantastic piece of joinery come alive,” says Claxton, “with adjustable lighting beneath, hydraulic lift to adjust the height in three sections, and conceal audio visual components and connections.

“The space provides a welcoming and positive environment for the client’s many visiting international team members and all aspects are effortless to control, creating a truly multi-functional space.”

*Text Penelope Barker
Photography David Hogan, Brisbane Virtual Imaging*



forward reach

After 10 years in business in Perth, interior designer Paul Cox of Barbé Interiors is launching into the Asian market, with a newly opened office in Jakarta. Penelope Barker profiles Barbé and finds a studio with a strong focus on innovation and technology.

The son of furniture manufacturers, Paul Cox grew up in Perth immersed in the product and sales end of the interior design business. After studying interior design, he started Barbé Interior Design 10 years ago, focussing on residential projects. With 15 personnel in the Perth office and five in a newly opened office in Jakarta, the company's staff resources now encompass building design, master planning, architectural design and interior design with more than 100 completed projects ranging from residential interior fit-outs to multi-million dollar developments.

"Over the years, Barbé has developed its own unique flavour," says Cox, "blending the contemporary trends of Australian design culture with inspiration from South East Asia and integrating European innovation and technology. We are huge on lighting, lighting automation and smart wiring and I am always advising clients not to skimp on their lighting – it can make or break a project. We also specialise in multi-room audio and really pride ourselves on our home theatre design."

Cox works closely with C-Bus pointOne member Brenton Morris of Intelligent Home. In fact, over the years their many professional collaborations have forged a personal friendship.

Barbé's point of difference, emphasises Cox, is that the company not only does interiors but building design, landscape architecture, swimming pool design and furniture fabrication. "We are also unique in the way we use technology to deal with projects," he adds. "We don't provide working drawings to the client at first. We design in 3D CAD, map in all the finishes and when the client ticks off on the design, we prepare working drawings for



"...blending the contemporary trends of Australian design culture with inspiration from South East Asia and integrating European innovation and technology"

Council, the builder and other trades. Everything is emailed to the client as work progresses and we send PDFs to the builders. All communications are electronically based – so as long as I have my laptop I can work anywhere. This approach has opened up the world as a market for us."

Each year, Cox and members of his team head to the Milan Furniture Fair to check out the latest design trends and technological advances. This year, Cox noted a strong trend towards electronics being integrated into furniture. "All the kitchen manufacturers included automated electronic drawers, sliding doors and cupboards that open at a touch." Cox predicts the trend will hit Australia in about a year. "I think a valuable application would be electronically-operated sliding panels to hide wide screen televisions when not in use."

The other trend Cox and his team were impressed by was the extensive use of LED lighting. "It's huge now and will eventually phase out incandescent, halogen and fluorescent lighting. In Milan, it was extensively used inside cupboards. LED lights are said to have a lamp life of 100,000 hours as opposed to the lamp life of a normal halogen, which is about 2000 hours. They have low power consumption, don't get hot and the globes don't wear out."

At present, Cox is excited about Barbé's first foray into Asia, with the recent opening of the Jakarta office. "We are supplying our local clients with cabinets made in Indonesia," he says. "This is not only cost-saving but avoids having to wait for a cabinetmaker – which can take six months in Perth at the moment. This is just one way we use our contacts and buying power to save our clients money. A good design team can slice thousands off the cost of a house. Many of our clients invest these savings into going more upmarket with their finishes and end up with a higher quality home than they expected to be able to achieve on their budget."

Barbé Interior Design
(61 8) 9364 6420, barbe.com

Text Penelope Barker



If you are looking to enhance the design, functionality and comfort of your commercial or residential premises, look no further than a C-Bus pointOne accredited integration professional.

To find out more about C-Bus pointOne and to locate your nearest member, visit c-buspointone.com.au or email info@c-buspointone.com.au