



SUPERCALIBRATIONS, INC.

Custom Home Electronics

651.777.5444



Newsletter

"Welcome to our March newsletter. Another cold Winter has passed us by and the Spring's bursting with technology news. Here is the latest insight into our fun and exciting industry. Thank you for your continued support."

LIGHTING SYSTEMS FOR EVERYONE

Supercalibrations has been selling and installing Lutron lighting systems for many years. Although automated lighting is commonly integrated in larger homes, I am excited about adding a Lutron system to my modest 1,400 square foot space. Since I will be "retrofitting" all the needed equipment, Lutron's Radio Frequency-based RadioRA system makes the most sense. Simply replace all my existing light switches with their super reliable RF-controlled dimmers and we will be ready to start automating every light in the house. I look forward to coming home to a well-lit driveway and yard! As soon as the garage door opener in my car is activated, Lutron's "brain" will send a series of commands to turn on the outside lights as well as a few key "pathway" lights inside. No more fumbling for the light switches in the dark!

Lutron systems even "know" when the sun rises and sets! Our technicians can program lights to turn on just before sunset, and off again later in the evening. Or have lights come on an hour before sunrise and turn off after the sun has fully kicked in for the day. I know I am going to like this!

Dimming features abound in a Lutron system. Ramp light levels up and down at a variety of rates. With one button push set whole-house lighting "scenes", providing pleasant lighting levels for a quiet evening, or crank up all the lights for a big house cleaning project. After dark, leave bathroom lights at 15 percent to eliminate tricky late night trips to the "loo". Yeah!

It is worth noting that dimming a bulb by 50 percent reduces the power consumption by about 40 percent. Bulb life is increased 20 times as well! So dimming, and in particular automated dimming, can save money and reduce your carbon footprint. Add convenience to your life while improving the environment! A win-win!

Alarm systems can be tied in as well. All lights "strobing" will definitely make it easy for the police or fire department to find the house.

I can't wait to get started at home, and will continue to report progress on our Facebook page. Check in for regular updates and photos!

RENTING MOVIES IN THE 21st CENTURY

Consumer Electronics is a constantly evolving industry. There seems to be an endless introduction of "leading-edge" product categories, along with constantly improving existing technologies. Even I find it exhausting to keep up! Currently, one of the fastest growing categories is "streaming" movie and television content via the internet.

Renting movies has been a mainstay of home entertainment for more than 30 years now. First VHS and Beta (remember Beta?); then DVD, and now Blu-Ray versions of movies and television shows have been successfully offered "for rent" at a rate representing a small percentage of the disc's or tape's selling price. Netflix really put the industry into high gear by offering a simple internet-based selection process, combined with fast delivery by the U.S. Mail. A "no late fee" return policy provides the "icing on the cake" to their industry-leading service. Netflix currently spends \$600 million a year on postage!

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When Netflix introduced their subscription service in 1999 only 10 percent of U.S. households subscribed to a High Speed Internet Service. Roughly 12 years later that proportion has increased remarkably to around 65 percent. With a decent bits-per-second (bps) download rate, it has become possible to “stream” movies directly to electronic devices in your home. Pick a movie from your “queue” and you are watching a few minutes later. Instant gratification!

I am sure the post office is not happy about losing their biggest corporate customer, but Netflix is anxious to eliminate the expense and hassle of sending the discs through the mail. Interestingly, Comcast and other cable companies have recently been grumbling about the “bandwidth” being consumed by movie download services. Netflix and others will probably end up paying an upcharge to send movies through many internet providers.

Most major electronics manufacturers are adding download and streaming services to their products! The list includes: Apple, Microsoft, Sony, Roku, Google, Samsung, Panasonic, Nintendo, and others. Over a very short period Netflix, VUDU, Pandora, Slacker, and many other content providers have become standard fare on televisions, video game consoles, and Blu-Ray players. Manufacturers benefit from a small commission from Netflix for each movie rented. Plenty of incentive for all parties to make “streaming” a success!

Want to start streaming? Purchasing a new Blu-Ray player is the least expensive way to add Netflix and others to your home system. Many of the latest models have Wi-Fi built in. Some setup is required, but it is pretty simple to get up and running... Especially the wireless models.

SOCIAL NETWORKING IS FUN!

Facebook and Twitter have really taken off in the last couple of years! I finally jumped in early 2009. It turns out almost everyone I’ve ever known over the last 50 years or so has joined as well. It’s fun to reconnect and see what the gang has been up to. Of course, it didn’t take long before I was posting about home electronics, and more recently, adding a “Supercalibrations Fan Page”. Okay...I admit I have fun writing about our current projects, along with important industry trends! There are a bunch of photos too. Take a look, or better yet become a fan! You can search for “Supercalibrations” on Facebook or use the below link:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Supercalibrations/72123788177>

Not wanting to miss out on all the 140-character Twitter action, “Supercalibrator” has joined the millions “tweeting” on this fast growing social network. “Follow us” at:

<http://twitter.com/Supercalibrator>

If you have any questions about Supercalibrations on Facebook or Twitter, feel free to go “old school” and call for more information.

iPHONES and iPADS

Apple has really thrown a wrench into the home electronics industry. A really low-cost, high-tech wrench, that is!

Both the iPhone and iPad have dozens of applications for home electronics. We recently replaced a \$5,000 home theater remote system with a \$700 iPad. It actually has a bigger and brighter image! Of course, a few additional costs were involved in that transition-- but overall a

ridiculously good value. iPads can be mounted in a wall-mounted bracket as well.

Recently we found ourselves unable to access a house for a scheduled appointment. I contacted our client, who was away on business in New York; he simply punched a button on his iPhone and the garage door magically opened. Very cool!

Many of the brand names we use every day are now showing iPad and iPhone options, or "apps". This is a nice improvement to the price-to-performance ratio in our product mix.

Give us a call. We can elaborate on all the cool iPad/iPhone options.

BEST PICTURE QUALITY EVER!

What is the best home video we have ever seen? Probably our recent installation of a DPI Titan Reference 1080p 3D front projector, combined with a Lumagen Radiance video processor, displayed on a Stewart Filmscreen 144" (12 feet!!!) wide StudioTek 100 screen. In many ways, viewing movies on this setup is better than going to the theater!

What really puts this into the "best picture quality ever" category is the ability to "calibrate" or fine-tune a variety of critical areas to "reference" levels. When you match references set by the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, or SMPTE, you are reproducing what the cameraman saw while recording the event.

This turns out to be pretty hard to do! The key is using test instruments that can accurately measure the light coming off the screen or flat panel. We recently upgraded both calibration software and test instrumentation to some of the best available. Expensive but worth it!

The Lumagen Radiance video processor allows tremendous flexibility for calibration. While most displays have a six-point white balance adjustment, the Radiance has 21 points! Unheard of adjustment for Gamma and Color Point accuracy is another Lumagen highlight.

The Lumagen "Mini" Radiance sells for \$2,000; calibration is typically \$500 to \$1,000. How about a Supercalibrations Newsletter special? Buy any Lumagen video processor and we will provide calibration at no charge. We love to calibrate TVs!

THE ART OF COMMUNICATION

Over the years we have learned the importance of communication in our business. I personally find it very discouraging to end up in "queue" or voicemail when trying to connect with a service provider. Many times, by the time there is a response it is too late for the immediate need. Our policy at Supercalibrations is to answer any call (if at all possible) without going to voicemail. Or worst case-very shortly after receiving a message.

We love our BlackBerries! They are always on. We know everyone has busy lives so we try to accommodate their timetable. Even if that means evenings or weekends.

You can feel confident in a quick response when emailing. It's our favorite way to keep track of incoming sales and service requests. Give it a try.... Anytime!

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Supercalibrations is Now on Facebook... AND Twitter!

Check us out by searching for "Supercalibrations" on Facebook, or "Supercalibrator" on Twitter. You can also go to our website: www.supercalibrations.com and click on the links at the bottom of the Main Page to access our Fan Pages. Become a FAN and read about the latest trends in electronics!

We hope this gives everyone some insight into current home electronic trends. We actually find it to be great fun and hope it shows in our work. We also know that most of our business comes from referrals. If you give us a referral that generates new business, we have a program that provides a few perks to your home entertainment system. They make a nice reward for giving us a recommendation.

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. If you have any questions, feel free to call me anytime. I'm always available for further discussion!

Dallas

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Installers Wanted

We are looking to add experienced Installers to our growing company. Feel free to give us a call if you know someone who may be interested.

