

HOME ENTERTAINMENT

THE FINEST IN AUDIO/VIDEO TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN

1080p
VIDEO

1625
WATTS

0 Complaints

Anthem's
Statement

D2 & P5 surround-
sound gear >>>>>>

+ SPECIAL INSERT

Vertical
Living

Featuring high-tech,
high-rise lifestyles



INSIDE:

IPOD'S PERFECT PARTNER: GENEVA LAB'S STYLISH, SUPER-SIMPLE

PHASETECH'S NEW DARTS DIGITAL IN-WALLS: THE ULTIMATE

THE 10 DUMBEST CONSUMER ELECTRONICS PURCHASES



kaleidescape™



MAKE MINE MUSIC

With the addition of music playback capabilities (and more), Kaleidescape moves one step closer to total home entertainment world domination.

Nothing raises my ire quicker than walking into my media room to find all those thousands of dollars worth of equipment sullied by a TV broadcast of *Jerry Maguire*, swear words sloppily overdubbed, interspersed with commercials for canine vacuum cleaners. “Did I not buy this for you on DVD?” I ask my wife. “Yeah, but I didn’t feel like digging for it.” “It’s right there!” I point out. “Yeah, but it was on TV and I didn’t feel like dealing with all the hassle.” All the hassle, indeed.

The evening after I install the newly updated Kaleidescape System at home, the drama begins again as soon as I hear the sounds of a movie score interrupted by 1-800 numbers. “Did I not ...?” “Yeah, but ...” But this night, the argument ends right there. At the press of a button a gorgeous interface full of DVD covers appears on my display, as well as on the Crestron touchscreen on the ottoman in front of us. I touch the first romantic comedy I see and it immediately jumps to the center of the screen, while the other artwork flutters, flips, and shuffles around to surround my first choice with similar selections. Another touch and *You’ve Got Mail* fills my display in uncompromised DVD quality, with full digital surround sound, and no Ron

The Kaleidescape System includes the Movie Player (on top) and the Server (on bottom), which incorporates as many as 12 hard drives.

Popeil. (No FBI warnings or forced trailers, for that matter.) Take that, Superstation TBS!

Of course, this is essentially the same experience conveyed in our original look at the Kaleidescape System (“The DVD Concierge,” April 2004). Since then, though, Kaleidescape has added a whole host of new features and functionality. Perhaps most notable is Music for the Kaleidescape System, which does everything for CDs that the system of old only did for DVDs. Best of all, no additional hardware is needed. For existing customers, the capability comes as part of a free software upgrade.

But Kaleidescape’s new Music Player greatly expands the experience. The Music Player takes the place of the Kaleidescape Reader that came with the original, DVD-only systems. Like the Reader, the Music Player rips the contents of DVDs and CDs onto the Kaleidescape Server’s hard drives, with no MP3-type audio compression. The Music Player also offers outputs for four separate zones of audio.

You can control the Music Player from the various zones through a wireless web tablet or a touchscreen controller like the Crestron that Kaleidescape supplies with my review system. You can mix and match Movie Players and Music Players as you like. The new Kaleidescape System delivers as many as 25 zones of audio, video, or both per server—a substantial improvement over the original system’s seven zones.

BY DENNIS BURGER • PHOTOGRAPHY BY CORDERO STUDIOS



The new Kaleidescape Music Player (above) rips CDs and DVDs onto the Kaleidescape Server, and also supplies music to as many as four zones. Its design, while attractive, does not match that of previous Kaleidescape components.

To describe the Kaleidescape music experience as painless would be an understatement. Simply insert a CD into the tray and in less than eight minutes the album is imported, categorized, organized, and ready for instant access, with cover artwork and metadata provided by Kaleidescape's database via

the Internet. On the rare occasion that the system does not recognize a CD or DVD, simply open a web browser on any PC connected to your home network and type in a short URL. From there you can enter song titles, movie names, and/or cover art yourself, or simply type in the DVD's UPC code and let Kaleidescape do the work. I take the easy route and type in the UPC code when the system fails to recognize all eight discs of *The Adventures of Brisco County, Jr.: The Complete Series* on DVD (a full six weeks before the official release, it

should be noted), and by the next morning I wake to find the entire set grouped as one collection, complete with disc artwork, plot synopses, and a handy list of all the episodes.

This Kaleidescape Web Utility page is also an indispensable tool for quickly creating custom CD playlists and permanent mix albums, as well as tinkering with another of Kaleidescape's new features, known as scripts. Scripts allow you to trigger control system events for other devices in your system, string together a collection of trailers from different DVDs, or compile a collection of your favorite scenes from various films.

Is Music for the Kaleidescape System really worth all the fuss, though, especially given that music servers are nothing new? Certainly so. The functionality and ease of use is unparalleled, the graphical interface is light-years beyond the competition,

and little touches—like the smooth, intelligent cross-fade between songs whose transitions would otherwise be jarring—put Kaleidescape in a league of its own. Combine that with movie storage and playback, and you have the ultimate in convenient home entertainment, all wrapped up in one tidy package. Not to mention the fact that, in the long run, a complete Kaleidescape System is probably quite a bit cheaper than long-term marriage counseling. [HE](#)

DESCRIPTION

The Kaleidescape System is a whole-house DVD and CD server and delivery system consisting of Server, Movie Player, and Music Player.

STORAGE CAPACITY

Unlimited. The Kaleidescape System can be configured in any number of ways to store your entire movie and music collections. One server can store hundreds or even thousands of DVDs and CDs and additional servers can be clustered together for unlimited scalability.

CONNECTIONS

Movie Player: HDMI, composite, S-video, and component video outputs, Toslink optical and coaxial digital outputs, RCA stereo analog audio outputs, RS-232 port for control, 3.5mm minijack for IR input, RJ-45 Ethernet connector

Music Player: Four coaxial digital audio outputs, four Toslink optical digital audio outputs, four RCA stereo analog audio outputs, RJ-45 Ethernet connector

Server: RJ-45 Ethernet connector

DIMENSIONS

K2500 (5U) Server: 8.7 x 17.2 x 16.9
K1500 (1U) Server: 1.7 x 17.5 x 18.5
Movie Player: 1.7 x 17.2 x 14.5
Music Player: 1.7 x 17.5 x 13.75

PRICE/CONTACT

PRICE: Kaleidescape System configurations start as low as \$9,995.00 USD (USA and Canada).

CONTACT: 650.625.6100
www.kaleidescape.com



Kaleidescape is best known for its dazzling, animated DVD selection interface—and wisely, the company chose the same interface design (above) for the Music for the Kaleidescape System feature. Cover art is automatically added when you rip a CD. Using a computer connected to the same network as the Kaleidescape System, you can create custom playlists (right) for your CDs or DVDs.

