

Technology comes home to roost

We've become comfortable with the idea of real estate clients using the Web to look for available housing and other information, but will they one day soon consider the Web another must-have utility in the new home they purchase? Some Internet applications developers believe homeowners will view the Web in the same category as electricity, gas and phone service and that builders will wire houses for increasing Web applications.

Home owners who want to simplify their lives are embracing e-mail terminals and screen phones in their residences, as well as a handheld Web pad that gives the ability to control home systems from anywhere in the house.

Visionaries—and application developers—believe the home of the future will be fully wired: doors, TV, stove, refrigerator, and more. Left the lights on when you left for work? You can go online to turn them off.

The *Olympian* reported several home-technology features on the near horizon in the Dec. 12, 2000, issue:

- Starting this year, some retailers (Best Buy, Sears and others) will network existing computers and TVs with state-of-the-art home security, heating, air conditioning, stove, refrigerator, DVD, VCR, gaming and monitoring devices via a cable modem. Users in one room will be able to monitor various video views of their home; by linking PCs and TVs, they can watch DVD movies on the PC and streaming Web video on the TV. Price: about \$3,000. For more info, see InternetHomeAlliance.com.
- Wireless is growing, and it can be retrofitted. Later-model ThinkPad laptops from IBM can be fitted with an attachment that lets them communicate wirelessly with printers, wireless phones, mice, digital cameras and PDAs with a wireless technology called Bluetooth. Price: \$189.
- Cell phones swing, storing and playing MP3 music that you put on hold when a call comes in. Samsung Uproar phone \$399, available at Sprint retailers.
- Digital voice recorders are storing more and using built-in speech recognition software that lets you dictate, transfer the data to your computer and see your words instantly turned into text. Sony ICD-MS1VTD with Naturally Speaking software, \$199. Olympus DS3000, \$299, plus software.
- Eye Trek goggles from Olympus make TV time quiet and personal by plugging into any TV and replicating a 52-inch image on an LCD screen a few inches from your eyes. \$499.
- The WinTV Personal Video Recorder from Hauppauge tapes shows directly onto the PC and stores them on the hard drive or burns a recordable CD, an alternative to pricier personal digital TV recorder/players. \$249.

And the house itself can be a technological wonder. Bellevue REALTOR® Deena Loveland is building her "House of the Millenium" on the Pine Lake Plateau north of Issaquah. An open floor plan—free of walls except those enclosing bathrooms—will showcase views of Lake Sammamish from a hillside location. The structure will be a mix of concrete, steel and glass, supported by exterior walls made of Rastra, recycled Styrofoam filled with concrete that provides long-term durability. A new stucco product, designed specifically to endure Pacific Northwest weather, is being applied directly to the interior and exterior foam walls.

"There will be very little wood," Loveland said, citing her interest in recycled, sustainable building products.

The interior will shine with state-of-the-art products, which Loveland has spent considerable time researching personally. Among those new items will be the latest in kitchen and bath design from Italy; interior steel beams powder-coated with a baked-on finish to prevent rust; European tilt-and-turn windows that open like doors or tilt open in a manner that ensures security; flexible plumbing that does not rust or leak; and an energy efficient hot water tank that never runs out of hot water, while hanging on the wall in a mere 2 feet-by-3 feet-by-6 inch space.

A 25-year real estate veteran, Loveland works for Prudential Michael Smith in Bellevue. For more about her "House of the Millennium," visit her website, www.deenaloveland.com.

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