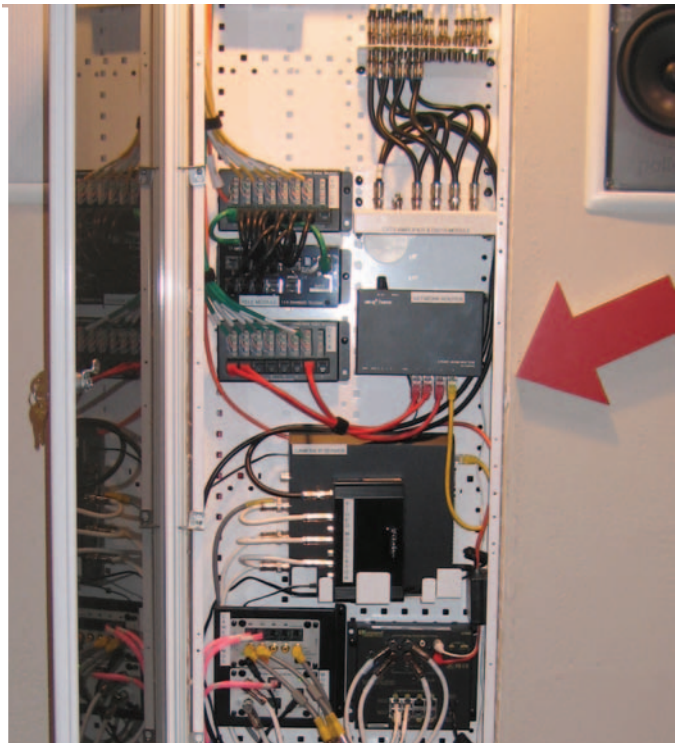


Neat-O!



Neat-O! Tips

- The quality of your structured wiring shows the quality of your overall work, so make sure it's positively represented.
- Organize and label everything so you can easily find what goes where on a future call.
- Make sure the client gets a wiring chart to go with the tidy installation—it's all part of good customer service.



If you're a start-up integrator with no showroom, how can you demonstrate to potential clients the quality of your work?

For newcomer Savant Living of Virginia Beach, Va., one answer has been through tradeshow.

Savant director of operations Tom Wilson says the four-person company was the only A/V integration business among the roughly 50 exhibitors at the Mid-Atlantic Fall Home Show in Virginia Beach in November, in which it participated as a member of the Tidewater Builders Association.

Though the integration business under the name Savant Living has only been around since September, the company spent 10 years in the IT world and Wilson says the staff—which besides Wilson includes two technicians and company owner—account for more than 25 years of tech experience. Savant, which

also participated in a two-week parade-of-homes type show called Homearama last fall, constructed walls and installed the enclosure and wiring for its Home Show booth in a two-week span.

"We're trying to build some brand recognition since we are a start-up," Wilson says. "Just being known that we are in the business at the tradeshow, it's a form of advertising."

At the Home Show, Savant used an On-Q/Legrand 42-inch, smoked-glass enclosure to house its structured wiring. Wilson says the weekend show attracts about 12,000 attendees—Savant plans to participate in one twice the size this month—and that common remarks by the pedestrian traffic focused on how much neater Savant's structured wiring can was than

what was installed in their own homes.

"The biggest thing was people who did have structured wiring compared our can to theirs. Ours is nice and neat, with everything structured and labeled, whereas theirs looks like a rat's nest," Wilson says.

Wilson ensures that every client receives a wire chart or diagram and documentation of the entire installation after a job is completed. He says exhibiting at tradeshow leads to follow-ups that have typically included about 20 percent clean-up work, which presents the opportunity for upselling technology.

The company also uses a model condo in the builders' developments for demos, Wilson says, while a showroom might be in Savant's future as an integration showcase. —Arlen Schweiger



Congratulations to Tom Wilson for a Neat-O! installation. He will receive a Rhino 3000 labeling system. To submit your Neat-O! installation, go to www.cepro.com/neato. We're looking for the tidiest racks, vans, warehouses, documentation and other displays of neatness.