

Products/Great Finds

Custom builders share their latest product finds



Kamado Joe Co.



Scott Frankel

Frankel Building Group, Houston

An iPad docks in the wall of every home Scott Frankel built last year. With a Crestron processor and the company's Mobile G app, users can control six zones of lighting, music, the thermostat, the shades, and the security system from the Apple touchscreen. Control apps for iPhones and Android devices allow homeowners to adjust the climate and monitor security from anywhere.

"When we are negotiating about a price, customers act like they don't care about it that much," Frankel says about the touchscreen controls. "And then the night before we sign the contract they say, 'Wait, we get the [iPad system], don't we?' That to me is about as key as it's going to get."

Through a client, Frankel discovered another high-tech touch product: the Versa Lift power storage lift. It mounts in the attic or basement and transports loads up to 250 pounds between levels in 15 seconds via remote control, the company claims. "It's almost like a dumbwaiter to get things into your attic," he explains. "Not having to lug things up there, especially in a two-story house, is awesome!"

And outdoors, Kamado Joe grills are the builder's eye-catching choice for summer kitchens. The ProJoe in the company's Revolution Series cloaks a 2-inch-thick ceramic core in a stainless steel shell. An insulation blanket between the ceramic and steel layers keeps heat in, reducing the exterior temperature to half that of the inside. The grill's hinge system is engineered to offset the weight of the 175-pound lid; it lifts with just 8 pounds of force. "They don't rust, they're pretty easy to clean, and they look really neat," Frankel says.—*Evelyn Rabil*



Crestron Electronics. 800.237.2041. www.crestron.com. / Byers Product Group. 405.491.8550. www.bpgohome.com. / Kamado Joe Co. 877.215.6299. www.kamadojoe.com.