

HOME ENTERTAINMENT

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> iPod for Your HOUSE!



> Sonance's iPort
Spreads iPod Sound
To Every Room



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COME HOME, IPOD

The Sonance iPort makes it easy to spread music from your Apple iPod throughout your home.

BY BRENT BUTTERWORTH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CORDERO STUDIOS

What good does an iPod do you, really? I hope your sense of dignity would not permit you to dance around with it as those silhouetted people do in the ads. I pray that your distaste for kludges would preclude the use of a snap-on FM transmitter to make the iPod work in your car. And I know that you would never leave an unsightly wire hanging from the front of your audiovisual system to connect your iPod for home listening.

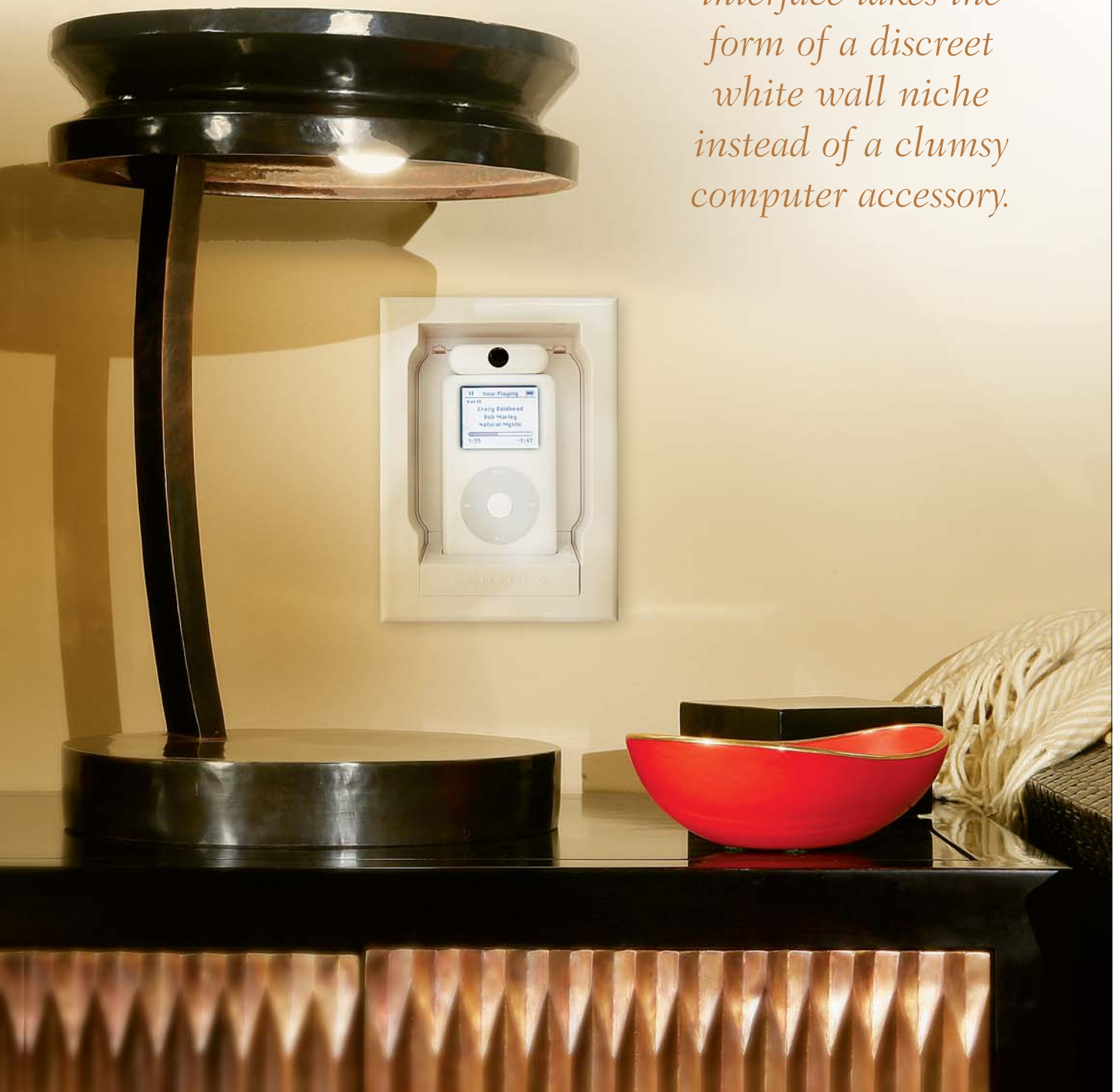
Still, if you are suffering through a cross-country flight, weathering a daily commute by train, or just walking the

Weimaraner, nothing beats an iPod. Many of us now keep our entire collection of music on an iPod and stow our CDs safely away ... actually, I have forgotten where I put them. But wouldn't it be nice if there were a convenient, graceful way to listen to your iPod at home?

I am happy to say that I am one of the very first people in the world to enjoy this luxury, through the ingenuity of the fine engineers at Sonance. The company's new

it easy to integrate your iPod into a home **Drop your iPod into the iPort (above and right) and its music emerges from your home system.** (Without the navipod, you must use the controls on the iPod to select **The iPort also facilitates remote control of the iPod from a touchscreen or in-wall keypad.**

Sonance's iPort iPod interface takes the form of a discreet white wall niche instead of a clumsy computer accessory.



tunes or pause the music.) You or your iPort iPort makes it easy to integrate your iPod into a home audio system without extra-neous cabling. I simply snap my iPod into the iPort, turn on my multiroom audio system, and with the push of a button or two I can hear iPod music in any room. And the iPort also recharges the battery in my iPod, so when I leave the house, the iPod is ready to go.

Perhaps best of all, the iPort takes the form of a discreet wall niche instead of a clumsy accessory for my computer. I install mine in my home office, next to the control pad for my multiroom audio system, where most people would never notice it. And those who do notice it are fascinated.

I can even control the iPod through a programmable remote, the keypads of a multiroom audio system, or an AMX- or Crestron-style touchscreen. The remote control functions are limited, though—I can skip to the next or previous song,

DESCRIPTION

In-wall interface for Apple iPod. Connects to standard audio systems, multiroom audio systems, and home theater systems. Provides limited remote control functions when used with TEN Technology's naviPod or naviPro eX

CONNECTIONS

Wallplate: stereo RCA jacks for audio output, concentric jack for connection of included 15-volt power supply, 3.5mm minijack for remote control interface

DIMENSIONS

6.8 x 5 inches (hw)

PRICE/CONTACT

PRICE: \$599

CONTACT: 800.582.7777, sonance.com



The iPort feeds audio from the iPod to your home system through a wallplate (above). The wallplate also provides connections for the iPort's power supply and an infrared control interface.

and I can start and pause the music, but that is all. I can select tunes by artist, album title, or genre only by doing so directly on the iPod's screen. However, were I a more resourceful journalist, I could do better, as I will soon describe.

I am happy to report that Sonance made the iPort versatile enough to connect to practically any home system. A tiny wallplate the size of a single-gang AC socket provides all the connections I need to interface the iPort with any stereo amplifier or preamp, the surround-sound processor or receiver in a home theater system, or the controller for a multiroom audio system. Sonance offers a variety of easily interchanged ports that adapt the iPort for any iPod model except the new Shuffle.

To make my iPod work with remote controls, I must add an accessory: the \$49 naviPod from TEN Tech-

nology. The naviPod consists of a remote control and a module that snaps onto the top of my iPod. The iPort communicates with my iPod through this module. (Without the naviPod, you must use the controls on the iPod to select tunes or pause the music.) You or your installer can easily program a universal remote with the naviPod remote commands, and your installer can program the commands into a multiroom system keypad or a touchscreen remote.

Wanting to wring the most from the iPort, I order a naviPod from Apple, which turns out to be a mistake. When I later check out TEN Technology's site (tentech.com), I find that a new version called the naviPro eX is available. The eX adds the ability to skip to the next or previous album or playlist on the iPod, as well as perform the shuffle play and repeat play functions

common on CD and DVD players. And it costs the same as the naviPod. Oh, well—I suppose being a pioneer always has its price.

Regular readers of *Robb Report Home Entertainment* know by now that music servers such as Audio ReQuest provide far more

functionality, allowing you to choose songs, artists, genres, etc., through a TV screen or a touchscreen display. But those devices require that you copy all of your music onto the server—a task iPod users have already gone through once. For an iPod fanatic, the iPort is a much simpler and more convenient solution. With little effort and expense, I can now enjoy my iPod music through the state-of-the-art speakers and amplifiers that populate my home theater; through the ceiling speakers in my lounge, bedroom, and office; and through the outdoor speakers on my patio. I can think of few products I have tested that offer so much convenience and listening pleasure. HE

The iPort's back panel (below) conceals its mounting screws. Sonance provides dogleg-style attachment devices like those on in-wall speakers. The bottom piece can be changed to accommodate different iPod models.





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