

*The Elite The Influential The Excellent*

2009 TechHome®



Mark of Excellence

# MARK OF EXCELLENCE

## TIPS FOR PREPARING A STRONG ENTRY

### Questions?

Contact [markofexcellence@CE.org](mailto:markofexcellence@CE.org) for more information  
or visit [www.CE.org/markofexcellence](http://www.CE.org/markofexcellence) for details.

Presented by



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## AWARD CATEGORIES

### Supplier (Products)

### Integrator (Projects and Companies)

### Training and Support Programs (Suppliers and Integrators)

Each TechHome Mark of Excellence Award category has a judging team comprised of integrators, manufacturers, members of the trade press and industry consultants. Sub-scores are totaled to determine a final score. The top scoring entries in each category will be named TechHome Mark of Excellence Award Finalists. The entries with the highest score in each category will be named TechHome Mark of Excellence Award Winners.

The general tips below along with the judges criteria listed below will help you craft your best entry.

#### General Entry Tips:

- Answer the questions as clearly as possible and provide straightforward, informative photographs or illustrations.
- When preparing your entry, focus on providing substantive information, not on creative formatting or typefaces. Entries will be given a standardized look before the judges see them.
- Make sure the product, project, system or technology is available to U.S. consumers or has been shipped and/or completed no earlier than January 31, 2007 and no later than December 31, 2008. It must be obtainable by the customer or must be available for the resale by the manufacturer's system integrators.
- Take advantage of both the video and photo upload features!

## SUPPLIER

**Judges score SUPPLIER entries based on the following criteria:**

1. The product's innovative features compared to the marketplace.
2. The unique or improved benefits and features for the homeowner.
3. The benefits to the integrator in terms of integrator-friendly integration processes, system diagnostics, and maintenance.
4. How well the product embodies the principles and goals of residential integration applicable to the product category.
5. The product's contribution to a homeowner's improved lifestyle and convenience.
6. The quality of the product, in terms of ergonomics, industrial design, aesthetics, user friendliness, intuitiveness, and system operations.
7. The product uses open architecture that provides easy interoperability with other vendors' systems and equipment.
8. The product provides the homeowner with operational savings, such as lowering the cost of utility bills.

## SYSTEM INTEGRATOR

**Judges score INTEGRATOR entries based on the following criteria:**

1. How the installation meets the customer's desired needs.
  - Identify the customer's needs and how they were addressed.
  - Identify how well the systems and components integrate physically and aesthetically into the architecture.
2. Demonstration of how clever or innovative the systems integrator has been in applying fresh technology and systems to the structure.
3. Key functions and features that contribute to the improved quality of life and ease of use
  - The special requirements that the systems design addresses.
  - Unique needs met by the installation (i.e., assistive technology, health aids, etc.).
  - How the installed systems positively affect quality of life.
  - For multi-unit system entries, note how leisure time was enhanced.
4. Ease of use.
  - The installation should be intuitive.
  - The design should allow clear operation of the system. (Example: Controls are located where expected and operation does not require instruction or knowledge; built-in help screens, if appropriate, are provided.)
  - Documentation provided to the owner at the completion of the project.
5. Customer feedback on the performance of the system
  - Customer testimonials
  - Acknowledged professionalism of the integrator (Note: For Builder Home of the Year entries, sales or publicity directly resulting from this installation will be considered.)

## BEST GREEN PRODUCT, SERVICE OR CORPORATE POLICY

**Judges score BEST GREEN PRODUCT, SERVICE OR CORPORATE POLICY entries based on the following criteria:**

The product's innovative features compared to the marketplace.

1. The environmental improvements, benefits and features for the homeowner.
2. The benefits to the integrator in terms of integrator-friendly integration processes, system diagnostics, and maintenance.
3. How well the product embodies the principles and goals of residential integration applicable to the product category.
4. The product's contribution to a homeowner's improved lifestyle and convenience.
5. The quality of the product, in terms of environmental efficiency, energy reducing, ergonomics, industrial design, aesthetics, user friendliness, intuitiveness, and system operations.
6. The product uses open architecture that provides easy interoperability with other vendors' systems and equipment.

7. The product provides the homeowner with energy savings/operational savings, such as lowering the cost of utility bills.

## **COMMUNITY HOME OF THE YEAR**

**Judges score BEST COMMUNITY HOME OF THE YEAR entries based on the following criteria:**

1. How the relationship between the system integrator and the builder benefited the community
  - Ways in which the integrator and builder worked together to meet the needs of the customers
  - How they worked together during the design process
2. The planned technology within the community.
  - How the integrator and builder promoted the installed technology
  - The types of technology used within the community
  - The technology upgrades within the community
3. How the integrator and builder worked together to sell and/or promote the additional technology features to the home owner.
4. Project Profile
  - Number of planned phases, sections and building units
  - Number of units completed to date
  - Standard base technology package
  - Various technology upgrades
5. Customer and partner feedback on the community
  - Customer testimonial
  - Builder testimonial
  - Acknowledged professionalism of the integrator

## **BEST UNIVERSAL DESIGN HOME**

**Judges score BEST UNIVERSAL DESIGN HOME entries based on the following criteria:**

1. How your solutions provided for *equitable use* of the home by people with diverse abilities.
  - Provides the same means of use for all users
  - Provides for equitable privacy, security, and safety for all users
2. The specific features of your solution that provide for *simple and intuitive operation*.
  - Eliminates unnecessary complexity
  - Consistency of user expectations
  - Provides a wide range of literacy and/or language skills
  - Delivers effective prompting and/or feedback during and after task completion
3. How your integrated solutions provide *tolerance for user error*?
  - Provision of fail safe features
  - Arrangement of solutions to minimize hazards and errors when operating the most used elements and features.
  - Provision of necessary warnings of hazards and/or errors.
4. How your solution provides for operation with *low physical effort*?

- Allows user to maintain neutral body position
- Use of reasonable operating forces
- Minimizes repetitive actions
- Minimizes sustained physical effort

5. How your solutions address *size and space* issues for the user.
  - Provision of clear line of sight to important elements by seated and standing users.
  - Comfortable reach to system components by all users
  - Accommodates variations in hand and/or grip size
  - Provision of adequate space for the use of assistive devices and/or personal assistance.
6. Customer feedback on the performance of the system and the service of your company
  - Customer testimonials
  - Acknowledged professionalism of your company
  - Support provided by your company to the customer

## **BEST DIGITAL CONVERGENCE PROJECT**

**Judges score BEST DIGITAL CONVERGENCE PROJECT entries based on the following criteria:**

1. How CE/IT solutions were implemented to meet the customer's desired needs.
  - Identify the customer's needs and how they were addressed
  - Identify how well the systems and components integrate physically and aesthetically into the architecture.
2. Demonstration of how clever or innovative the systems integrator has been in applying progressive CE/IT technology solutions into the project.
3. Key functions and features that contribute to the improved quality of life and ease of use
  - The special requirements that were solved with CE/IT convergence solutions.
  - Unique needs met by the installation (i.e. distribution of content, remote access, etc...)
  - How the installed systems positively affect quality of life.
4. Ease of use
  - The intuitive features of the user interfaces in the system
  - The user interface should be designed to provide for self guided operation of the system(s)
  - Operation documents provided to the owner at the completion of the project
5. Customer feedback on the performance of the system
  - Customer testimonials
  - Endorsements of the professionalism of the integrator throughout the entire project (i.e. builder, architect, other trades)

## **BEST GREEN PROJECT**

**Judges score BEST GREEN PROJECT entries based on the following criteria:**

1. How the installation meets the customer's desired needs.
  - How the systems enhanced the energy efficiency of the home.

- What aspects of the system operation and installation helped reduce energy?
  - How the systems and components were integrated physically and aesthetically into the architecture of the structure.
2. Demonstration of how the operations and installation helped improve environmental impact and energy loss throughout the systems to the structure.
  3. Key functions and features that contribute to the improved quality of life and ease of use
    - The special requirements that the systems design address
    - Unique needs met by the installation (i.e., assistive technology, health aids, etc.).
    - How the installed systems positively affect quality of life.
    - For multi-unit system entries, note how leisure time was enhanced.
  4. Ease of use.
    - The installation should be intuitive and energy efficient.
    - The design should allow clear operation of the system. (Example: Controls are located where expected and operation does not require instruction or knowledge; built-in help screens, if appropriate, are provided.)
    - Documentation provided to the owner at the completion of the project.
  5. Customer feedback on the performance of the system
    - Customer testimonials
    - Acknowledged professionalism of the integrator (Note: For Production Home of the Year entries, sales, or publicity directly resulting from this installation will be considered.)
  6. Key functions and features that contribute to the improved quality of life and ease of use
    - The special requirements that the systems design address
    - Unique needs met by the installation (i.e., assistive technology, health aids, etc.).
    - How the installed systems positively affect quality of life.
    - For multi-unit system entries, note how leisure time was enhanced.
  7. Ease of use.
    - The installation should be intuitive.
    - The design should allow clear operation of the system. (Example: Controls are located where expected and operation does not require instruction or knowledge; built-in help screens, if appropriate, are provided.)
    - Documentation provided to the owner at the completion of the project.
  8. Customer feedback on the performance of the system
    - Customer testimonials
    - Acknowledged professionalism of the integrator (Note: For Production Home of the Year entries, sales, or publicity directly resulting from this installation will be considered.)

**CONVERGENCE INTEGRATOR OF THE YEAR**  
**Judges score CONVERGENCE INTEGRATOR OF THE YEAR entries based on the following criteria:**

1. Company
  - The company's strong community image
  - Leadership role in promoting digital convergence within the community and region
  - Awards and press coverage the company has received
  - Local or national press coverage of the company
2. Company Profile
  - How long the company has been in business
  - CE business growth and stability
  - IT business growth and stability
  - Growth through sales, mergers and/or consistent trends
  - How much repeat business and referrals make up their business.
3. Customer Relations
  - The company's CE/IT marketing program.
  - Whether the company advertises in local or national trade journals or press
  - The company's portrayal of CE/IT convergence solutions through:
    - Company Website
    - Brochures
    - Showroom
    - Outreach to architects, builders, and other trades.
  - Customer Care
4. Technical Range
  - Integrator skill levels in CE & IT subject matters
  - Company certifications to endorse CE & IT skill sets
  - The range of work provided (design, consulting, installation, and/or marketing)
5. CE & IT Industry Participation
  - Membership in CE & IT industry trade associations
  - The company's participation in industry public speaking events
  - Involvement in industry standards works, committees, and charitable programs.
  - Participation in other industry training events
6. Project Profile
  - Average size of projects
  - Number of projects with in a year
  - Type of projects
    - a. Retrofit
    - b. New Construction
    - c. Custom Homes
    - d. Production Homes
    - e. "Spec Homes"

## **TECHHOME INTEGRATOR OF THE YEAR**

**Judges score TECHHOME INTEGRATOR OF THE YEAR entries based on the following criteria:**

1. Company Profile
  - The company's strong community image
  - How the company rates as a regional area integrator.
  - Awards and press coverage the company has received.
  - Local or national press coverage of the company
2. Company Profile
  - How long the company has been in business.
  - Growth through sales, acquisitions, and consistent trends
  - How much repeat business and referrals make up their business.
3. Customer Relations
  - The company's marketing program.
  - Whether the company advertises in local or national trade journals or press
  - The company's Web page.
  - The company's showroom
  - Development of repeat business and a referral service program.
  - Customer Care
4. Technical Range
  - Integrator skill level
  - Company training and technical support to their customers
  - Formal integrator training
  - The range of work provided (design, consulting, installation, and/or marketing).
5. Project Profile
  - Average size of projects
  - Number of projects with a year
  - Type of Projects
    - Retrofit
    - New Construction
    - Custom Homes
    - Production Homes
    - "Spec Homes"
6. Industry Participation
  - The company's involvement in the industry (TechHome committees, programs, divisions, councils, etc.)
  - Involvement in industry associations
  - The company's participation in industry public speaking events
  - Involvement in industry standards work, committees and charitable programs.
  - Participation in other industry training events

## **TRAINING AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

**Judges score TRAINING AND SUPPORT entries based on the following criteria:**

1. Product applications and distinct benefit to the target audience:
  - A training that is more than an extension of sales.
  - How well real life applications and obstacles are covered.
  - Relevance of the content to the needs of the target audience.
2. Direct benefit to the promoting business revenue:

- How the training and/or support program promotes industry growth.
  - How the content relates to a holistic integrated home concept.
  - How well the program relates to the big picture of the integrated home
  - Content based on professional standards.
  - How the program helps lay a foundation for the success of new products or systems
3. Professional Level Content:
    - Reliable, easily maintained, and easily replicated solutions.
    - Content that addresses the financial aspects of integration technologies.
    - Path students can follow to increase their knowledge.
    - A one-page summary, outline, or curriculum of the program
  4. Student Feedback and/or Retention
    - Student survey results.
    - Exit or follow-up exam results.
    - Statistics on the number of events/programs sold, viewed, and/or accessed.
  5. Distinct benefit to integrators and/or customers:
    - How the program facilitates a higher level of customer satisfaction
    - How the program helps streamline the process of specifying, ordering, installing, programming and/or commissioning the systems
    - How the program improves the after-installation or ongoing support of the systems and/or customers
    - How the program make as difference in the cost to the customer and/or the profitability of the integrator
  6. Feedback and/or Repeat Business
    - Provide statistics on the number of participants, online visits, calls, etc.
    - Provide participate survey results.
    - Provide sales number comparison: before and after the implementation of the program.