

Big Screen TVs Are Becoming Big Focus Of American Life

(NAPSA)—The ratings are in—the public thinks television is a prime channel for togetherness and recreation.

More than 50 percent of Americans say that their favorite ways to spend an evening are watching TV and videos and spending time with the family, according to a recent Gallup Poll.

It's no wonder that home entertainment purchases are booming and TV screens are growing by leaps and bounds. According to the Consumer Electronics Association, Americans tripled their spending on home theater systems to nearly \$1 billion a year between 2000 and 2002 and sales of consumer electronics products are projected to soar to a record \$99.5 billion this year.

Even traditional analog televisions are growing at a rapid rate; approximately 52 percent of all analog TV sales in 2003 will be in home theater screen sizes of 25 inches and larger.

No longer just a tube in a box, today's TVs are constantly evolving, with high-definition television (HDTV) projected to replace analog television by the end of 2005. And a host of options continually unfold, including direct-view TVs, LCD TVs, sleek, flat plasma monitors and cinema screens with their 16:9 aspect ratio (or width-to-height proportion)—a far different look from the traditional 4:3 ratio for TV screens.

"No matter what model they choose, Americans value the TV as a family and leisure focal point, and seek ways to integrate it into an attractive, relaxing room setting," says Doug Krieger, design director for Sauder. "Fortunately, form follows function in today's entertainment furnishings, with designs geared specifically for the full range of television options including 36-inch and 40-inch



Critics claim this lean, clean credenza from Sauder's Euro-inspired Premier Line creates a hip yet practical viewing area.

models, 60-inch flat screen sets and cinema screens."

Krieger offers several tips for harmonizing the TV viewing center with the rest of a home's decor.

- Don't settle for anything less than a perfect fit, Krieger advises. "From trim corner stands to room-spanning home theater units, there's a furniture size and room style match for every television," he notes. Check out Sauder's Web site—www.sauder.com—for a complete guide to finding the right-sized and right-styled furniture for your model.

- Check for safety as well as good looks. Width, depth and weight are all factors that must be considered. A TV that is too large or too heavy can create a safety hazard. Also, because contemporary TVs tend to be more front-heavy than traditional models, furniture should be designed to protect against tipping.

- Select a furniture design and finish that will enhance the room's

decor. A host of contemporary and traditional designs allow entertainment components to blend gracefully with any decorating scheme.

- "Seek multi-tasking furnishings that hold more than the television," Krieger advises. Sauder's sleek Premier Line Entertainment Credenza, for example, boasts drawer, cabinet and shelves in one compact unit.

- Consider furniture with built-in flexibility. Sauder's Lockport. Entertainment Center for large-scale TVs, for example, is expandable, allowing for a future of ever-widening screens.

- Incorporate electronic games and home videos into viewing sessions for variety and for increased family interaction, Krieger suggests.

"There's no limit to the shared good times that today's technology can foster," he says, "and creating a congenial family viewing center can add to the comfort and pleasure of at-home leisure."