





Hold On To Your CTS!

Scott Jochim and company
are building your ultimate
home-cinema experience

BY JOEY ROBERT PARKS

Now pay attention, cinema fans. Custom Theater Solutions is about to engage your home-theater experience like 007. Consider the following scene from Tomorrow Never Dies, where Q – played wonderfully by actor Desmond Llewellyn – is showing some complex gadgets to James Bond.

Q: “And here’s your cell phone. Talk here, listen here.”

James Bond: “So that’s what I’ve been doing wrong for all these years?”

Scott Jochim (“yo-kim”), creator and co-owner of Custom Theater Solutions, has been doing it right for the past 12 years. Through what he calls “experience engineering,” he’s been designing, building and installing experiences around the world and it’s unlike anything you’ve ever seen or felt.

When I first spoke with 32-year-old Jochim on the phone, I detected an air of arrogance. A few days later, we met in person at a coffee house in downtown Tempe. With his sandy-brown, shoulder-length hair, slight beard, dark jeans, abstract artwork t-shirt and silver pinky-ring, he blended seamlessly into the crowd. It wasn’t that easy picking him out from the ASU students circulating around us.

We shook hands and when he smiled, I realized the arrogance I sensed on the phone was actually ultra-confidence. (His suave, yet completely approachable attitude surfaced again for the photo shoot of this month’s A2Z cover.) I found Jochim to be quite genuine, highly engaging and a lover of words. In conversation, he’s very focused and an attentive listener; unless, of course, you’re a Bond girl – and as a single man, he’s allowed. There’s a kid in him—who else would have a conference table built out of 10,000 Lego’s?—, but when the

geek in him bursts out, it’s usually in smooth, mature, well-tempered managerial smarts.

THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH, BUT THREE ARE

Jochim is proactive and futuristically inventive, completing usable technology years before other companies. For example, long before the tablet PC hit the streets, he’d built a working version and was actively shopping it to investors. At 19, he wrote The Auction: A Guide to Government Sales, which was eventually picked up and published by Gemini Publishing. In 2000, he designed and built a sensory, virtual reality experience for Cancer patients. He’s been on the cover of Wired magazine and was listed among Wired’s Top 100. His inventions were featured several times over the years in Popular Science, TIME, POST and Business Week.

And Jochim knows something about Bond, too. You can have Savile Row suits, “Shaken, not stirred” martini’s and the seductive Bond girls, but 007 would be nothing without his weapons, vehicles and gadgets. As the creative director of the three-member CTS team, Jochim has been discovering creative uses for complex little gadgets of his own. CTS may be a new company, but the three personalities that make it possible come from extensive histories and specialized backgrounds. Without them, the experiences you’re reading about wouldn’t exist.

Jack Jacobs is a construction consultant. He’s been in the business 35 years and is typically wearing sandals, shorts and a t-shirt. He sports a goatee and when you hear his voice you’ll think he’s got an accent in there somewhere. “Actually,” said Jacobs. “I’m a Phoenix native. I’m in charge of CTS custom construction and serve as the official Director of Operations.” After an accident years ago in the field, you won’t find him swinging any hammers, though. “I oversee the construction



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and facilitate gathering all the components our clients will need for what their budget will handle.”

Steve Acker is in Dockers, short-sleeved polo and brown dress shoes with tassels today. He’s the resident Rocket Scientist and Director of Engineering at CTS. “As an electrical engineer, I’ve designed and assembled bomb fuses, built and launched a hundred Iridium® satellites for the global satellite phone system and installed internet surfing, traffic reporting GPS systems in your Audi. I’m also the CTS technical guy for motion seating. “Prior to CTS, I spent over 20 years at Motorola, but I still do some “for eyes only” work for General Dynamics.” By the way, Steve is younger than Jack, but also has a goatee (apparently, facial hair is a requirement to be part of the CTS-three).

THE SEAN CONNERY OF EXPERIENCE ENGINEERING

What qualifies Scott Jochim to define your home-theater experience? One might as well ask 007 what qualifies him to use all those gadgets he gets from Q. Other steps came first, however. A sight, sound and smell simulator of Jochim’s was showcased in the July 1997 issue of *Business Week* that enabled someone to experience a vacation without physically going anywhere. “Say you’re on the train to Disneyland,” explained Jochim. “At the same time, you’re scuba diving in the Galapagos Islands, or you’re racing cars, or hang-gliding. You see it. You hear it. You smell it. You get the experience without the high expenses.”

While I liked the idea as much as the next person, it sounded a lot like Total Recall to me. Was it believable? “Then again, kids love cartoons, don’t they?” he replied. “They believed the toys were alive in Toy Story. We want to feel we’re some-

where we’re not. A spa does this. Disney does this. A great novel does this. Why shouldn’t our homes?”

The Department of Education hired Jochim to create a lab for kids to learn about environmental and spatial technologies, but when the teachers and students got more excited about the tools (to build their own virtual reality walk-through) than the end-user game (a

★★★★★
“WHAT IF YOU COULD HAVE A RIDE IN YOUR HOME THAT WAS AS EXCITING AS UNIVERSAL STUDIOS’ SPIDERMAN AND BATMAN RIDES.”

tour of Machu Picchu), he shifted his focus to selling the tools that teach learning by doing. Jochim didn’t anticipate the reaction to the tools, but it was a significant lesson in something he’s gotten very good at – creating tools people want, even before they know it.

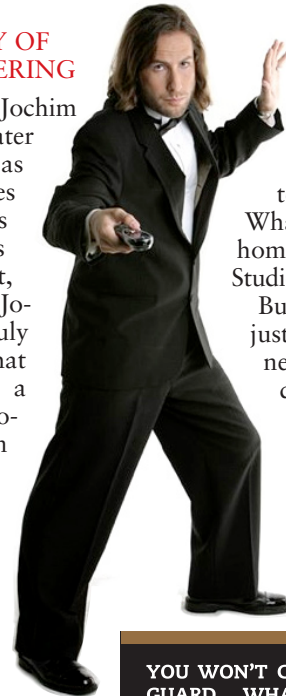
Scott Jochim has designed and built rides and sensory theaters in the US and across the globe: from Times Square in New York City, to Scotland, Ireland and the London’s Gatwick airport. Then he got to thinking, “What if you could have something at home that was better than Harkins or AMC theaters? What if you could have a ride in your home that was as exciting as Universal Studios Spiderman and Batman rides.”

But to create an experience, you don’t just wait for it to happen. “Take Disney,” says Jochim. “The experience doesn’t start when the ride starts. An environment is introduced while you’re standing in line. Music is playing, objects are all around you, maybe some actors, too. This ‘building up’ gets you involved. You want to tap into the senses to deliver an experience through sight, sound,

taste, touch and smell. What is French bread or fresh-baked chocolate-chip cookies without the smell?”

That experience creates emotion.

Emotion fuses with your surroundings and an experience is created. CTS, at the leadership of Scott Jochim, is not just bonding plastic with metal; they’re designing, building and installing an experience, right inside your home. Said Jochim, “We’re not attached to any specific technology or electronic stock for home movie theaters. We want the best and most effective delivery system for your home and your budget. We don’t necessarily always know the best TV or projector, but we can find the right people who know. If you want



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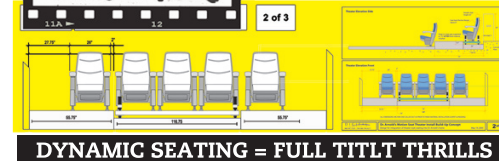
“Right. Now pay attention, 007. I want you to take great care of this equipment. There are one or two rather special accessories...”

– Q, The Spy Who Loved Me

In order to give the public what it really wants, CTS first considered their previous innovations: ride films, pneumatics, hydraulics and all sorts of expensive, heavy, maintenance-unfriendly systems. Then they discovered electric actuators. When a signal is sent to the actuator, a metal foot pushes it forward. Reverse the signal and it shrinks. It only moves a couple inches, but it can move a lot of weight, quickly and very safely. Jochim explained: “It’ll give you up to two G’s of acceleration! With two actuators and a center pivot point, you get a two-axis system of movement (pitch and roll). With



MOTION ACTUATORS



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★★★★★
“FOR EXAMPLE, TAKE THE OPENING FRAMES OF THE MATRIX. THE IMAGE ZOOMS INTO, AND THROUGH, THE GREEN NUMBER ‘0’. AS IT DID, MY SEAT ROCKED AND SWAYED, AS IF I’D BEEN PUSHED OVER AN UNDERCURRENT OF WATER FLOWING BENEATH THE SEAT... WHOA...!”

strategically located rubber bushings in the chairs, adding a fourth-axis of movement called-believe it or not-“Heave”.

With so many possibilities, how does CTS program all the movies into the system? “Exactly,” said Jochim. “Somebody has to sit in a room and code all that stuff, ‘Wait, there’s a car wreck, “Let’s raise the right side of the seat up 2”, the left side down 1”, then give it a vibration.’ It didn’t

make sense for us to do all the coding. We’ve done that before and we’d never be able to keep up with movie demands.” So they found a company in Canada, that was already doing it for arcades, as well as making their own chairs. “But a single seat of theirs costs \$20,000. With CTS, you get three seats for just under \$17,000 at a one-third the cost per seat. We can use regular theater seats, a couch or custom CTS rumble seats to sit on the platform,” explained Jochim.

The seats, mounted on a platform with all the electronics inside the platform are programmed with something called, ‘motion codes’. “When you need motion codes for the latest DVD, you connect a special set-top box to your internet connection and also to your DVD player. All your motion codes will be downloaded automatically as soon as they come out. Keep in mind that the motion codes aren’t part of the actual DVD, so it doesn’t matter if your movie is rented, store bought or downloaded from the internet. The system will automatically find the specific motion code for that movie and cue it up in real time.” There are already over 600-plus movie motion codes available, with more than five new movies coded every week. The CTS system also has an alternate audio feedback mode for video games and TV shows. How’d you like to really experience Monday Night Football?!

DR. YES-PLEASE-CAN-I-DO-THAT-AGAIN

As Scott and Jack explained to my girlfriend and I how the

THE ULTIMATE HOME ENTERTAINMENT EXPERIENCE AT A GLANCE



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INFINITE VARIETY OF ELITE HOME CINEMA DESIGNS



BROAD SPECTRUM OF CUSTOM ACTION THEATER SEATING



CUTTING EDGE CINEMA DECOR AND REFRESHMENT SYSTEMS



EXPERIENCE UNPRECEDENTED CINEMATIC THRILLS

What really surprised me was the high range of experiences the slightest move-

I'm about to leave the 30-foot CTS demonstration trailer parked in front of

Neither does CTS creative director, Scott Jochim, expert construction specialist Jack Jacobs and Rocket Scientist, Steve Acker. So take your CTS, movie fans and get ready to fly. ■

WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE A MOVIE FROM
CUSTOM THEATER SOLUTIONS, YOU WON'T
HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT Q. ALTHOUGH YOU
MIGHT FEEL YOURSELF WORRYING ABOUT YOUR
ASTON MARTIN EJECTOR SEAT SHOOTING YOU
- WHISH! - INTO THE AIR.

my little bungalow in downtown Phoenix. They always do this when a client is considering a CTS motion-interaction in their own home (or when you're writing an article about them). My senses are still whirling from being inside that warehouse in Backdraft with all those exploding oil drums. I'm returning from the edge of my best cinema experience ever, when I recall a conversation from one of my favorite Bond films, *Tomorrow Never Dies*:

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*Scott Jochim would like to thank:
Richard Petrillo, Petrillo Studios
Michelle Reyes and Dawn Jameson
(The Bond Girls)
The Gentlemen of
Arizona Tuxedos
Christopher Andrade,
RAMPAGE Creative Communications*