

Incorporating Technology in Interiors

By *Mary Jo Bowling* / 10/11/17 at 9:31 am / **1 Comment**

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Courtesy of Cynthia Spence Design, Inc.

Technology is an inextricable part of interior designer **Cynthia Spence's** career. She lives in and works in Silicon Valley and San Francisco, she started working in marketing for tech companies and, as an interior designer, she's become an expert on the topic. Today, she talks tech with us.



What's for you: hardwired vs. wireless

"Most of my clients are people who work in tech, and they fall into one of two camps: hardwired or wireless. It's important to determine what you want right up front," Spence says. "Hardwiring your home, using actual cables, involves a lot of equipment. Some see it as old school, but people who need fast, absolutely reliable service and an elegant interface choose wires. However, wireless is the most cost-effective and least invasive method, because you don't have to disturb the home's infrastructure."

"Wireless services allow more flexibility design-wise as you don't need to be physically linked to anything," Spence continues. "But, you do need a good router [an electronic device that links multiple computer network] for decent WiFi."

"People are often concerned about how technology is going to intrude on their interior design, and they should be. It's supposed to work like magic and not be seen," says Spence. "With a hard-wired system, you are going to end up with a closet somewhere that has an equipment-

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Property	194
San Francisco	176
Design	176
California Homes	172
Los Angeles	152
Interior Design	144



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filled rack. With a wireless system, you are going to end up with small boxes placed throughout your house. As a designer, I take that into consideration, as it's my job to think about how technology will impact the look of your home."



When it comes to security, consider going cordless

"I find there is one area where a wireless system is preferred, and that's security," Spence says. "It's because intruders can't cut a wire and disable the system."

Put your smart features in one basket

"These days, most home items can be automated, and it's important to figure that out up front too," Spence says. "And the smarter the home, the more equipment there will be. The trick is to incorporate as much of it as possible in one place so you don't have multiple apps or controls. To date I have steered my clients who want a hardwired solution toward Crestron, Savant and Control 4—companies whose technology allows you to integrate everything from audio-visual systems to lighting to security systems to climate control."



Leave room for changes

"Whatever you choose, you need to leave some wiggle room and flexibility," says Spence. "Technology changes every few years, so it pays to leave room to incorporate new developments."

Wait a moment, save some money

"In many cases, it pays to wait a moment before installing the latest, greatest thing. Prices tend to come down quickly," Spence says. "And often, technology goes the way of the Dodo. Look at home intercom systems, they are totally obsolete, but many homes still have them installed."



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