



Digital Dens

Do you have megabyte fright? Relax—your teched-out apartment knows just what you need | *By Jeff Dufour* |

If you're lucky enough to be invited to a certain penthouse unit at 22 West, the high-end high-rise condo in the West End, you'll find a home that could double as a dance club—or a recording studio. Acoustical tiles hang from the walls and ceilings, which contain multiple sets of embedded woofers and tweeters, powered by amplifiers hooked up to built-in iPod docking stations. 22 West is one example of new luxury buildings that seem like their technology features were determined by a roundtable of George Jetson, Steve Jobs and Moby.

New buildings around the Beltway are coming to the market pre-wired with multiple ports for cable, satellite and more social networks than you can shake a memory stick at. And that's just the beginning. The aural enhancements at the sonically sound 22 West party pad were made much easier thanks to the foresight of the developers and builders. By design, each unit was fully wired for phone, audio, cable and Internet. Electrical panels were installed to handle extra capacity. Each home was acoustically insulated from surrounding units, as well as street noise, and constructed with up to a foot of extra space in the ceilings, all the better for running extra wires and speakers.

Nearby, at the West End 25, the first LEED Gold-certified rental apartment building in DC, the community lounge buzzes with free Wi-Fi and HDTVs, Macs and printers in the business center and iPod docks on the cardio equipment in the gym. "Combining green and hi-tech features has been paramount for us," says Mara Olguin, vice president of marketing for Vornado/Charles E. Smith.

Common spaces at upscale condos are getting uncommonly techy. At Rosslyn's new Turnberry Tower, you can settle into a movie

HOT WIRED HOUSES

Clockwise from left: The new generation of DC condos ups the Beltway bandwidth with future-minded techy turn-ons. Hot links are built in at 22 West, 425 Mass, Turnberry Tower and West End 25.



in a surround-sound theater, loaded with all the bells and whistles you'd expect in Steven Spielberg's screening room. Patrizia Nader, Turnberry's director of sales, says that the tech boom is firmly rooted here because locals don't just want to keep up with the Joneses. "They want more. They want to make their own path," Nader says.

"We think of technology as the next level of luxury," says Julio Murillo, one of the developers of the Woodley Wardman condos in Woodley Park. "Fifteen years ago, you put in the technology and people didn't appreciate it." But now, he says, technology helps maximize small urban living spaces.

Tech is changing the way residents live. The Wardman sports video phones in each unit to control building access. 22 West offers in-wall panels that alert residents to packages, messages and lets them speed-dial a food order. At the 425 Mass apartments in Penn Quarter, a 50-inch screen behind the concierge desk tells residents their package has arrived. The Velocity condos near Nationals Park runs on the same software, a program called BuildingLink, which simplifies communications. "We're not putting sticky notes on people's mailboxes or shoving notes under their doors," said Velocity property manager Mara Looper. "We're virtually paperless now."

So what does the future hold? Fiber optics, for one. At 22 West, the building has been fiber-wired, anticipating future communications hardware. Murillo says the next step will be iPad docking stations through which residents will be able to control lighting, security and the temperature in their homes—even when they're not home. Pity the poor robot housekeepers. They'll have time on their digits. ■