

# WIRELESS WHOLE-HOME AUDIO

Whether you want to play the same song, or a different tune for every room, the new Sonos speaker systems bring audio home without the wires—no strings attached!

*By Ann Zimmerman*

Audio Innovations in Hailey and its owner, Jess Goitiandia, are the Wood River Valley's authority on home automation and entertainment systems. Audio Innovations is a retail showroom, system designer, programmer, installer, and a source for service and reprogramming when adding new electronic components.

Since opening for business in 1992, Goitiandia has served as a guide through the tangle of new products coming into the market. From that perspective, we asked him about the new Sonos Wi-Fi speakers. Some commentaries claim that they create a truly connected wireless home audio system. What is his experience with the speaker system's operation and performance, and are they truly wireless?

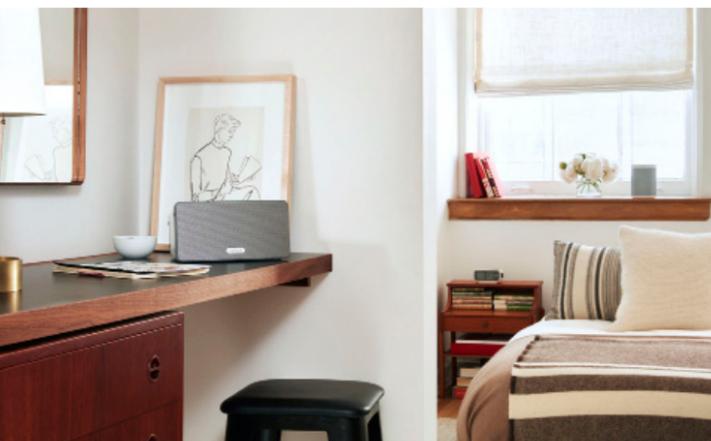
## WIRELESS HOME SOUND SYSTEM

"The term speakers is really insufficient for Sonos," Goitiandia begins. "It is a wireless home sound system for music, movies, and television. You can stream music from your device, like a phone, to the Sonos unit. However it is best to stream directly from the Wi-Fi to the Sonos speaker. That means streaming can't be interrupted like it commonly is on a phone."

He goes on to explain that users control the speaker through the Sonos Connect app. The app is loaded to a phone or device like an iPad, and controls access to a variety of online streaming services like Apple Music, Pandora, Spotify, and more. "Independent reviewers are impressed with the ease of control through the app, and I agree. It's easy to synchronize



Play 1 speakers are perfect for an office and True Play tunes the speaker specifically for the room's acoustics.



Versatile Play 3 speakers fit anywhere: mount it or place it on a shelf upright or horizontally.



Play 5 fills larger rooms with full sound and rich bass.

rooms to play the same song, or to play something different through some or all of the speakers," Goitiandia explains. He notes that the Sonos Connect app is compatible with iOS, Android, Windows, and MacOS. He adds, "Most competing systems do not offer apps for desktop or laptop computers."

"There's quite a choice in speakers, and selection depends on whether they will be used for television or home theaters, or just for music. Some people just start with one speaker and add on, and we have other customers who buy the system for the whole house." According to Goitiandia, Playbar (or Playbase for TV) uses nine speakers to add full theater sound for television, and it can also stream music. With the addition of a subwoofer for deep base tones and two Play 1 speakers, it creates 5.1 Surround Sound. "If someone doesn't want Surround Sound, the Playbar can create sufficient sound for one large room."

The quality of sound depends upon the size of the speaker, the size of the room, and the reflective qualities of the room. Sound from the same speaker can easily vary from room to room. "This is where another Sonos innovation makes these speakers standout products: all speakers have Trueplay, custom speaker tuning," Goitiandia explains. "Using a phone with a microphone, the software determines the sound reflection off the walls, furniture, and other surfaces, and then it makes precise acoustic adjustments for optimal sound for where the speaker is placed. I can easily hear the improvement, and the technology will only grow more intelligent over time. This means that improved software will continue to improve the speaker's sound quality, and if the speaker moves to a new spot in the room or a different room, the sound can adjust. Traditionally, the sound quality is set in the factory and never alters."

Sonos offers four choices in speakers. The smallest is Play 1. As Goitiandia describes, "It has excellent sound quality, and it takes two Play 1 speakers to achieve stereo. The Play 1 speakers are also the models to complete the 5.1 Surround Sound." The next size up is the Play 3, which upgrades to stereo and can be tilted on its side or mounted. The deluxe Play 5 an even higher sound quality including a heavy bass. For theaters and those who like a heavy bass, there is also Sub.

"A Play 1 is usually more than adequate for a bedroom or small office or den; the Play 3 is often placed in kitchens and has the ability of fitting on shelves either vertically, lengthwise, or mounted, and Play 5 is for larger rooms. They all are moisture-resistant and work well in a covered, protected patio setting."

"I would say the one shortcoming of Sonos is that there is no voice control through Siri or Alexa, but I have heard from Sonos that it is coming." And, Goitiandia adds, "The app is so simple to use, I don't think anyone will have difficulties, and we are here to help."

#### LOCAL CONNECTION

Sonos wireless speakers and sound systems can be found at Audio Innovations, where Goitiandia or one of his well-trained crew can walk customers through selection and operation. "It's our goal to link the best, most exclusive, and technically advanced products with homes and homeowners in the Wood River Valley," he says.

A native of the area, Goitiandia founded his business in 1992 after completing his university studies in robotics. The showroom allows customers to browse equipment and products and is also a convenient place to pick up connectors, cords, and supplies. Goitiandia's technicians design, install, program, and service products as well. "Audio Innovations works with anything electrical where craftsmanship, pride, and installation matters," he asserts. "We do the wiring ourselves, program, and can integrate operations with a single controller that is easy to use."

It's a local business dedicated to personal service. ■

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