

Your spoken wish is Avoca's command for its voice-activated music system

From a couch, the kitchen, or the back deck, a VIP Music Edition user can scroll through a music collection using a hand-held wireless controller and intuitive voice commands to access and play favorite tunes

Fast facts

Corporate profile

Founded in 2001 in Ottawa, Avoca's US\$3990 VIP Music Edition systems includes a slot-loading Music Player for CD or MP3 input, and the unique hand-held "Say it-Play it" handheld controller, dubbed the Music Companion™, can be used anywhere in a home, without a direct line of sight to the player.

"We are focused on delivering the most effective and satisfying end-user experience with voice control. Avoca technology and products provide customers with end-to-end user interface solutions that make digital media systems easier to use," said Iain Scott, Avoca President.

Why Ottawa

Avoca has tapped into homegrown talent, attracting top-notch senior executives from a few of Ottawa's most successful companies, including SiGe Semiconductor Inc., Mitel Networks Corp., PortalSphere Inc. and MOSAID Technologies Inc. With this talent guiding the company, the Avoca team is well-positioned to conquer the Digital Entertainment (DE) space.

Business advantage

Avoca takes music out of CD and digital (computer-based) collections and provides high definition audio output (digital or analog) to a user's stereo system, allowing the rediscovery of collections and the revival of memories tied to songs. Because of the handheld control device, users are free to wirelessly roam the house, searching and selecting from their personal music collection at their leisure.

Taking CD collections off of shelves, Avoca Semiconductor Inc. uses voice control & search technology to enable music enthusiasts to access their favorite tunes quickly through a unique wireless interface. Ottawa-based, Avoca's US\$3990 VIP Music Edition systems includes a slot-loading Music Player for CD or MP3 input, and the unique hand-held "Say it-Play it" handheld controller, dubbed the Music Companion™, can be used anywhere in a home, without a direct line of sight to the player.



Canada's Innovation Capital

Avoca makes building an entertainment library easy because lossless digital copies of music are automatically made and stored in the built-in hard drive as CDs are played. The "Say it-Play it" interface on the wireless controller responds to simple, intuitive voice commands, such as "Play The Beatles", "Set to Volume 8", "Display by Genre", and "Queue Across the Universe". Voice control makes browsing music collections fast and convenient, without having to scroll through menu trees.

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Why Ottawa

With over 1,800 companies concentrated in the National Capital Region, Ottawa offers a wealth of experienced employees to new companies. Avoca has tapped into homegrown talent, attracting top-notch senior executives from a few of Ottawa's most successful companies, including SiGe Semiconductor Inc., Mitel Networks Corp., PortalSphere Inc. and MOSAID Technologies Inc. With this talent guiding the company, the Avoca team is well-positioned to conquer the Digital En-

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Using embedded speech technology developed by IBM Corp, Avoca's Media Control Platform™ technology is based on the latest phonetic recognition algorithms, ensuring accuracy and instant response to any voice, despite variations in tones and accents.

ertainment (DE) space. Avoca is also active in the local tech community. In 2006, the company won an Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Ottawa Section Award for developing its voice interface platform solution. In 2007 Avoca was chosen as one of the winners in the competition for Canada's Top 10 Technology Companies, a program sponsored by the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation (OCRI).

The company's Vice President of Marketing & Sales, Peter Fillmore, also serves on OCRI's Entrepreneurs Edge, a training program that is helping to lead Ottawa's next generation of business executives.

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Ensuring universal use, the Avoca player has an easy-to-read screen and does not use small buttons or thumbwheels. This allows any user, regardless of dexterity, to quickly and efficiently retrieve music. In addition, using embedded speech technology developed by IBM Corp, Avoca's Media Control Platform™ technology is based on the latest phonetic recognition algorithms, ensuring accuracy and instant response to any voice, despite variations in tones and accents.

"Consumers already love Avoca's new system," said Avoca President Iain Scott. "Millions of CD collections out there are underutilized, yet they contain treasured memories. Our VIP family of products provides advanced technology designed for residential living spaces, including dedicated music rooms, not the computer corner. The VIP Music Edition makes it easy to slip in a CD, play your music, and create an advanced digital music entertainment system while having fun with family and friends."

Early customers have found the VIP Music Edition a pleasure to use. "The Avoca system works like a charm!" said Larry Sargent from Ottawa, Ontario. "It provides the best audio convenience & performance I could imagine. And we all enjoy having the voice search interface."

Future growth plans

Avoca is currently focused on using its technology for music applications, however the system can be adapted to complete a variety of tasks, including adding voice control to heating and lighting functions in a house.

"The immediate application is the control of music collections, and the next step would be home automation — lighting, security, and redirecting media output to different speakers, for example," said Mr. Fillmore.

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