



Clouds and sun
Highs 64 at coast,
62 inland. C10

Wednesday

March 23, 2005

VENTURA COUNTY

STAR

Co
Va

BUSINESS

An Agoura Hills company likens its high-end home entertainment system to "an iPod on steroids." D1



ARTS & LIVING

There are quick-as-a-bunny shortcuts for making Easter breads. E1



SPORTS

Barry Bonds, chasing career home run record, he might miss the

WWW.VENTURACOUNTYSTAR.COM

Qsonix's Q100



Photos by Mike Burley / Special to The Star

The identifier provides information about the genre, artist, album art, songs, liner notes and other details related to each CD. Once the data are stored, users browse through their collection by tapping items on the screen.

Mike Weaver, vice president of sales and marketing, left, and Kelly Gamble, chief technology officer at Agoura Hills-based Qsonix, are offering a digital music server for the home that can keep track of up to 3,000 CDs.

3,000 songs, as close as a touch

Firm's 'iPod on steroids' is high-end

By Alicia Doyle
Correspondent

Music lovers can keep track of big collections with a new digital server that can store 3,000 CDs and create customized song lists with the touch of a screen.

"We call it an iPod on steroids," said Kelly Gamble of Simi Valley, chief technology officer at Qsonix in Agoura Hills.

The company has created a high-end home entertainment system called

the Q100. Designed to fit into a home entertainment rack, the two-piece unit features a touch-screen that sits on top of a CD chassis that works like a CD player.

The user slides in a disc and prompts the machine to download information on the hard drive. The Q100 then retrieves the CD's "identifier number" through the Internet — a number associated with every compact disc manufactured since the mid-1970s, Gamble said.

The identifier provides information about the genre, artist, album art, songs, liner notes and other details related to each CD. Once the data are stored, users browse through their collections by tapping items on the screen.

"You touch the song you want and drop and drag it into your play list," Gamble said.

The Qsonix target market includes individual consumers and households that purchase large libraries of CDs, downloaded music and DVDs.

From the teenager with hundreds of



The Qsonix Q100 digital music server can keep track of CDs and create customized song lists with the touch of a screen.

See Q100 on D3

Simi Valley

Volume 2,117,180,520

Volume 328,454,625

Volume 1,843,877,887

Firm has sold 25 units at \$5,495

Q100
From D1

CDs and downloaded songs to the audiophile who has invested thousands of dollars in sophisticated home entertainment systems, these consumers all face the same challenge: how to organize, manage and access their music, said Mike Weaver of Oak Park, vice president of sales and marketing.

Since the Q100 was unveiled in January at the consumer electronics show in Las Vegas, Qsonix has sold about 25 of the units — which retail for \$5,495 apiece. The company foresees growing sales in today's market for high-end home entertainment systems, Weaver said.

Huge industry

"Technology in terms of home entertainment is an \$18 billion industry," he said. "Especially in Southern California, it's a hot market."

What makes the Q100 unique is that it's so easy to use, Weaver said. Unlike some technology that requires an instruction manual or training, the Q100 can be mastered in a matter of minutes.

"Females in particular with husbands with 20 remotes — who never figure out how to turn on the television at home — love the Q100 because it's something they can actually use."

In today's high-tech world, user-friendliness is a priority, said Leon Frank of Evolution Audio Video in Agoura Hills, dealer of the Q100.

Qsonix has launched a product unlike anything on the market today, he said.

"The reason why we are unique in the audio and video field is because of companies like Qsonix," Frank said. "To be in business today, we have to handle the best products in our related fields and Qsonix has those qualifications. When a product is as good as the Q100, it will go a long way, and with the team behind it, will head for the moon."

The Q100 also learns your

music habits once you build your music library, Weaver said. If you're in the mood for bluegrass, for instance, the Q100 finds and plays the songs categorized in the genre.

"You walk up, tell it what kind of mood you're in, and press play."

You can browse through your collection visually by album cover, artist, genre or song, and build customized playlists by dragging and dropping albums and tracks with the touch of a finger.

You can also make mixes of any number of artists with instant changes between songs, and load, play and browse music simultaneously.

The Q100 was born when three tech heads with big music collections — Gamble, Weaver and their friend Doron Ben-Zby of Oak Park — were working together in proxy logic consulting. They were brainstorming ways to make more money in less time with some kind of new product.

Meanwhile, their CD collections were scattered all over their homes, garages, offices and cars.

"Out of sheer frustration we said, 'Let's tackle this music thing,'" Weaver recalled.

Music management

After searching for a product that could manage their music, all they found were personal computers.

"Even though we are technical, geeky kind of people, that's not what we wanted in our living rooms," he said.

With that, they designed the Q100 during Thanksgiving weekend in 2002 on sketchpads. In 2004, Jim Alexander of Thousand Oaks, known for successfully launching entrepreneurial companies, came on board.

"I envision Qsonix patented technology permeating the digital media world," Alexander said. "Starting with revolutionary digital media management via the scalable Q100, Qsonix will continue to deliver and install its technology into homes and businesses globally."

