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What's the Best 2-Way Remote? Integrators Weigh in

Integrators weigh in on their favorite low-cost two-way universal controllers.

Jan. 27, 2009 — by [Julie Jacobson](#)

It can sometimes be hard to distinguish between a "universal remote" and a "home controller."

Increasingly, traditional handheld remotes are being used to operate lighting systems, thermostats, multiroom audio, media servers and more, all in addition to home theater.

Like never before, integrators can choose from a variety of handheld devices that offer two-way communications for metadata and control — without costly processors at the back end.



All these options prompted CE Pro to ask integrators, "What is your favorite low-cost, two-way universal controller?" (We considered only solutions under \$3,000.)

We heard from nearly 100 CE pros. [Click here to see what a few had to say.](#)

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Crestron TPMC-4XG Remote with QM-RMC controller

Most integrators know Crestron as a high-end provider of expensive touchscreen-based control systems, but dealers can actually start with an entry-level Crestron solution and expand the system at the client's discretion.

The TPMC-4XG remote is WiFi-enabled for two-way access to Web- and PC-based content. The unit supports Windows SideShow technology for launching PC-based gadgets. It also includes native support for wireless streaming video from a variety of IP cameras and servers.

Highlights:

- WiFi
- 3.5-inch touchscreen
- Windows SideShow-enabled
- Native support for IP cameras
- Low-cost controller: QM-RMC, a "compact" Crestron 2-series controller with IR, Serial and IP
- MSRP: \$2,690 for remote and controller

Dealers Say ...

Steven K. Sumners, Sound Insights, Jensen Beach, Fla.

"I can put together a QM-RMC and a TPMC-4XG for the same price as some of the other [remote control] systems ... and would work better in the long run.

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"This system controller gives you two RS-232 connections and a common IR connection for component control. Besides control of your TV, receiver and Blu-ray player, you have access to the Internet via a browser built into the TPMC-4XG.

"You also have the ability to add additional components, like an iPod dock, lighting control and HVAC control, with the ability to see direct feedback on the handheld remote."

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