
Market Analysis

Social Research

Feasibility

Evaluation

Consulting

Fact file

One in five Sydneysiders who are thinking about moving house say their main reason is that they need more living space inside. (APP+Environmetrics)

New houses in capital cities are 20sqm larger than new houses in country areas. (ABS)

One in ten Sydneysiders who are thinking about moving house say their main reason is that they need more yard space. (APP+Environmetrics)

Digital, plasma, laser

Australians are famous for embracing new technologies. New technologies for the internet and television are almost tripping over themselves as the latest whizz bang treat is eclipsed while it is still catching on.

Take plasma screens. These fabulous big screens have been a major source of Harvey Norman profits in recent years, especially as sports events like the Football World Cup have triggered sales.

But just as the 'catch up' crowd thinks it might be time to upgrade to a plasma screen, we hear about the arrival of the laser television that promises to be half the price, twice as good, and use a quarter of the electricity of conventional plasma and LCD TVs.

Laser screens are due on the market in 2007 and they may be worth waiting for. This might put a dent in plasma sales.

In the mean time, other technologies beckon. Digital television? About 18% of Australian homes have one and they are selling at the rate of nearly 8,000 a week.

Broadband is booming – access increased 130% in the past 12 months.

The ABS reports that 42% of households have cable broadband and 46% have access to ADSL2+ services.



Broadband opens the possibility for new services that use ultra fast broadband connections (8+Mbps) to deliver HDTV via a set top box that connects directly to the web and delivers what the trade calls IPTV.

Predictions are that by 2010, 22% of television households worldwide will be HD-ready. The figure will be 59% in the US, 66% in Japan and 30% in Western Europe.

New residential developments and savvy home designs will give owners the flexibility to integrate unimagined technologies for decades to come.

4 basics for the big screen experience at home

1. A big room. The big screen experience needs a room that is big enough. We find the family room near the kitchen is the most popular room for watching television in new homes. For 60 inch widescreens, the couch needs to be about 2.5 metres away.

2. A blank wall. Design the space with TV viewing in mind and look to provide two alternative layouts. If the blank wall faces a wall of windows, daytime viewing will require good window coverings.

3. Power and cables. Lots of powerpoints for all the extras, plus a cable access point. Better yet, provide cable ducts that allow for future flexibility.

4. Sound control. While open plan designs feel light and spacious, you'll wish you could close the door on the TV at times. So, look for ways to close this area off from the rest of the house when something else is going on.



Where do the children play?

Leisure

Arts + Culture

Travel + Toursim

Housing

Communication

The 90s saw a wave of gentrification hit the inner suburbs of Sydney, as upwardly mobile couples sought the lifestyle and convenience of inner City life. Rundown terraces were renovated, cafes and gift shops sprang up and some very ordinary places became ever-so desirable. The property boom of the early Noughties broadened the definition of 'Inner Sydney' as real estate agents and property buyers looked for the next 'it' suburb.

The stereotypes of these new residents were the young, trendy singles and couples looking for a good time – working hard, playing hard



and wondering if there was enough room for a plunge pool in their tidy courtyard.

But nothing stays the same and many of these freewheeling couples have settled down and had kids, resisting the urge to move back to the suburbs in favour of the advantages of living close to the City. Environmetrics has come across this emerging demographic in a range of projects and noted the impact on government planning in the inner west.

Where can we squeeze in some local parks and playgrounds? How can we provide more places in childcare and schools? What impact will the increasing car dependency of these new families have? How will this mini Inner City baby boom shape our City in the future?

By 2020 there will be one-third more cars on the road.

(ABS)

57% of all dwellings need repair. (ABS)

35% of new homes in Melbourne are infill. (ABS)

New life on the streets

A recent survey of US architects suggests a move towards closer integration of house designs with their setting. This is reflected in designs that put the house close to the street and send the garage to the rear. Windows, courtyards and verandahs overlook the street.

The survey also notes trends towards neighbourhood designs that favour more diverse communities by including a mixture of dwelling types such as higher-density, shop-tops and studios along with big family homes.



These trends are apparent in new developments in Australia though few have gone as far as Tullimbar village, in the Illawarra, in articulating this new direction.

Tullimbar is expected to be home to 5,000 people. The 1,500 dwellings will range from "live work" apartments and terrace houses to large residential home sites and a retirement village.

Tullimbar is designed around a village centre and 65% of Tullimbar's 5,000 residents will live within 500 metres of it, creating a sustainable, walkable community (www.tullimbarvillage.com.au).