



From Birchwood to Beethoven

Open-plan living and clean minimalist lines can be hard to achieve. However one architect took an innovative approach to banishing AV clutter in this modern barn conversion

“When I came across the barn it already had planning permission to knock it down and build from scratch,” explains the owner of this unusual building. “But when I saw the wonderful Northampton Stone and beautiful original exposed beams, I decided rescue it, and make it a truly remarkable home.”

A key part of the new interior is the birchwood panelling, which extends from floor to roof height in the main living area. The craftsmen studied the grain carefully during installation, meticulously matching each piece, with the result that even the doors of the built-in storage form part of a seamless whole.

Although the client was keen to have the benefit of a home entertainment system, he was wary of breaking up the clean lines of the interior by cluttering it with too much visible equipment, particularly conventional ‘wooden box’ speaker enclosures. Keeping the rest of the equipment out of sight was easy enough, as it was all tucked away in one of the integral cupboards. “The architect suggested that we look at Amina Invisible Loudspeakers” the client recalls. We were surprised and delighted when Amina told us they can be fitted within the wood panelling without any visual impact! Although the vast majority of Amina installations see the units plastered over once they are in situ, the installation of the loudspeakers into the wood panels at the barn turned out to be straightforward. Once the position for the speakers was decided, the appropriate panels were removed and the template of the speaker scribed out on the back. The wood was then routed out of the back of the panels, leaving 2mm of material.

For this installation, the Amina units were literally stuck into place with specialist wood adhesive, with pressure applied to ensure a good bond. Once the adhesive had set, the speakers were wired up to the amplifier and the system was ready. “The speakers are used across a wide mix from opera and classical to home cinema and they sound quite extraordinary,” the client offers. “The detail in the sound is unlike anything I’ve heard from conventional speakers and the way they fill the whole space is truly phenomenal.”



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