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the future is here

Technology buffs, prepare to be mesmerised as **Eileen Tang** takes you on a tour through the home showroom you've always dreamed of finding.

IT'S the trendiest nightclub you'll ever set foot in – except it's not a nightclub.

5thCorner Technology Lounge is a funky new business in Woolloongabba showcasing the latest and greatest in home-automation technologies, including advanced music distribution systems, lighting and appliance control systems, home theatres and sophisticated security and surveillance.

5thCorner director Kelly Weijers started the business three years ago with her husband, Marc.

Back in those days, she would meet with clients on-site, giving in-home consultations.

"They didn't know what they were getting," she says. "There was nowhere you could experience it. They just had to trust us."

So the idea for the dedicated Gabba showroom was born. The Weijers trusted their instincts so much so they sold their house to fund the venture.

Kelly says the space allows them to show clients the technologies in action.

She says the showroom tells a story. On one end of the scale, it shows how home-automation systems can be discreet and blend into the walls and ceilings. At the other extreme, there's a "machine room" with hard-core speakers and other exposed technology.

The most reassuring thing is that 5thCorner provides a 24-hour support system, but Kelly is quick to point out that it's rarely required.

One of the most affordable technologies is the Sonos System, which costs around \$2000. It stores music on a hard drive and allows you to listen to different songs in different parts of the house, using what Kelly describes as a "totally kickarse remote control".

It is a leading music distribution system because it has the

ability to update itself, which means you won't need to buy an upgrade package every two to three years.

Having said that, Kelly says she also wants to offer something to the middle market. 5thCorner has done preliminary research and discovered that other home-automation businesses target high rollers so there is a gap in the market for 5thCorner.

Plugging another hole in the market, the Weijers set up 5thCorner with dual purposes in mind. By day, it is the home automation showroom but by night it becomes a boutique venue for functions and product launches.

For example, 5thCorner recently hosted the launch of the Epson 1080p projector, providing catering, DJs, a bar and even people in panda costumes.

5thCorner Technology Lounge is open from 10am-4pm Monday to Friday at 18 Deshon St, Woolloongabba. Phone 3891 2102 or visit www.5thcorner.com.au

