



5 Tech Tips to Achieve Feng Shui

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October 22, 2015



Feng shui, the practice of infusing positive energy into the home, is an important part of Asian culture. Technology is often an overlooked part of that, but that's changing thanks to one builder.

Joan Marcus-Colvin of The New Home Company says the feng shui concept is desirable among California homebuyers, a notion she gathered through market research four years ago. As a result, the

company implemented it into the Lambert Ranch Community.

The New Home Company didn't overtly use the concept in its marketing technique, but they didn't have to. There is a fairly large Asian community in the area, and feng shui principles are important to those buyers or even their parents. As a result, the company hired a feng shui master to find each home's true north location, which is important for chi flow.

The New Home company also focused on tech that has a sleek design, minimizes clutter, promotes a restful sleep and indoor air quality (IAQ).

"I think it was more of an acknowledgement and a comfort level that their builder cared about their culture that we would go to the extent of having a feng shui master work with us," says Marcus-Colvin, senior vice president of sales, marketing and design.

The concept became so popular, the community sold out. Now it's being carried over into other locations with a large Asian population. One such community is Orchard Park, located in San Jose, Calif.

"I think it enhances our entire marketability of the program," Colvin says.

Orchard Park is made up of three home designs: Towns, Courts and Flats. Towns are townhomes with up to 2,123-square-feet of living space with a focus on south facing buildings. Courts feature open floorplans with maximized natural light and limited shared walls with up to 2,243-square-feet. Each Flat unit is up to 2,147-square-feet and is accessible by semi-private elevators with private entries at each residence. All are designed with feng shui in mind.

“It’s absolutely now a key part of our marketing and our planning and development,” Colvin says, noting that feng shui can’t just be an afterthought.

While the majority of feng shui principles center around placement, technology can play a role in the concept.

Tech Tips to Achieve Feng Shui:

Avoid Clutter

“Wall-acne” should take a backseat to the home’s décor. Builders should avoid installing home automation touchpads on the wall and instead get homeowners used to controlling their smart devices through their phones.

Receptacles, light switches and dimmers can also blend in. For example, Legrand’s adorne Pop-Out Outlets look as though they are part of the wall until they are revealed with a simple push. The company also makes elegant light switches and dimmers that can be offset with decorative wall plates to match any home’s design.

Tangle Free

Wires are a no-no for feng shui. Television wires can be tucked neatly in the wall with Legrand’s line of recessed television boxes, which feature power outlets and wiring pathways for Ethernet and other needed cables. These also have convenient access to the back of the television when needed.

Colvin adds that televisions and charging equipment should not be allowed in the bedroom. This is a space for rest, and the emission of energy from electronic devices can be disruptive to sleep.

Motorized shades from QMotion are wire-free. A battery operated motor is located inside the hardware itself. Users can control the shades via a remote control, app or the Touch Wand Activation feature, which is enabled when the rod is tapped by the wand. Some products can even be activated with a tug, causing the shade to glide to a fully open or preprogrammed intermediate position. Want more privacy? Simply pull the shade downward to your desired position.

Air-Chi and IAQ

Having lots of healthy air ventilation is good feng shui and will increase the chi in the area.

Ventilation also helps control moisture, which can lead to mold growth and structural damage. Whole-house ventilation systems provide controlled, uniform ventilation throughout a house.

These systems use one or more fans and duct systems to exhaust stale air and/or supply fresh air to the house.

Feng Shui Focal Points

There are many products that can act as the perfect focal point of a proper Feng shui living room, and many of them have dual functions. For example, Soundwall turns a painting or decorative chalkboard into a speaker that wirelessly streams music, soundscapes or audio commentary from mobile devices. Homeowners can choose original artwork from artists like Jay West and Bradley Theodore or upload an image of their choice.

Connectivity

In feng shui, the house is viewed as a whole, where one part is intricately connected to the other. This could be enhanced through home automation to connect home subsystems.