

**CONSUMER'S  
EDGE**



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**Sweet switch**

It's dark out, you're inside your house, and there's something walking around in your backyard.

Wouldn't it be nice if you could turn on your landscaping lights without stepping outside?

The Remote Controlled Power Outlet from CableOrganizer.com lets you control outdoor or indoor lights and appliances with the touch of a button. The receiving unit plugs into any standard, three-prong outlet. A splash guard protects the plug from the weather. The transmitter, powered by an included 12-volt battery, has a range of up to 40 feet.

The device comes in two versions. The basic unit costs \$10.50. Units that also include a timer cost \$11.99. More information and ordering at CableOrganizer.com or call (866) 222-0030 toll-free.

**Who's repairing your home?**

As spring turns to summer, many homeowners will start thinking about home-improvement projects. A proportionate number of con artists will be thinking about ways to get those homeowners to part with their hard-earned money.

May is National Home Improvement Month, and ServiceMagic.com, a company that

pre-screens home-improvement professionals, has a free Web site to help find them.

ServiceMagic.com conducts background checks on names submitted to ScreenAPro.com and contacts the firms for a 10-point screening process. The checklist includes everything from searches for criminal records to insurance and state licensing requirements.

"Every year, homeowners are reminded to do their homework when it comes to hiring someone for home improvement, but many people aren't familiar with the right questions to ask," David Lupberger, ServiceMagic.com's home improvement expert,

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said in a news release. "With Screen-A-Pro, homeowners can now have someone do that homework for them — for free."

**Best support**

When it comes to technical knowledge, solving computer problems — and keeping callers on hold as little as possible — Apple's tech support received the best scores for both laptop and desktop systems in a recent Consumer Reports survey.

The latest annual tech survey, conducted by the Consumer Reports National Research Center, sifted through subscribers' experiences with 10,000 computers.

Tech support typically solved problems for only 60 percent of respondents. Apple users, however, reported a success rate of more than 80 percent.

Other companies that garnered praise in the survey included Lenovo, which was outstanding at problem solving for laptops, and Dell, which was above average for both laptops and desktops. Two computer tech support desks to steer clear of, ac-

ording to Consumer Reports: HP and Compaq offer inferior support.

The full report is in the June issue of Consumer Reports. Or click on to ConsumerReports.org.

**Buy Lines**



"Poverty is not socialism.

To be rich is glorious."

**DENG XIAOPING (1904-1997)**

Chinese communist leader  
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