

LOWER LEVEL THEATER MAKEOVER

ELECTRONICHOUSE

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AUGUST 2007

3 THEATERS BUDGETS

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EDITORS' PICKS

Remote Control BUYING GUIDE

Epic Home Theater

SUPERWIDE SCREEN
SMOKIN' SOUND

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Electronics Set the Mark

BREAKDOWN

DISPLAY: \$39,000

Stewart Filmscreen 117-inch Screenwall with ElectricMask
Runco VX-5000d Reflection DLP projector with Vivix processor, DVI cabling, mounting hardware

AUDIO/VIDEO COMPONENTS: \$13,500

Rotel RSP1098 DD 7.1 surround-sound processor
Rotel 200-watt, 5-channel amplifier
Rotel 200-watt, 2-channel amplifier
Rotel RDV1060 DVD player
Samsung high-definition receiver
Furman IT-Reference power conditioner

SPEAKERS: \$15,000

B&W Signature 8NT speakers (3)
B&W 7NT speakers (4)
B&W ASW850 subwoofers (2)

CONTROL: \$5,500

Crestron CP2E control processor
Crestron CNPWS75 power supply
Crestron ST1700C wireless touchpanel

FURNITURE, ACOUSTICS AND ACCESSORIES: \$49,300

Wire and materials
Barcalounger black leather motorized seating (12)
CinemaTech Acoustic Room Systems acoustic treatment

LABOR (DESIGN AND INSTALLATION): \$80,000

The owners of this 12 seater had set aside close to \$100,000 for audio and video gear. That was enough to afford some of the best gear on the planet, including a top-of-the-line Runco VX-5000d projector, a Stewart Filmscreen 117-inch diagonal screen, a Rotel RSP1098 surround-sound processor, two amplifiers that would pump 200 watts of power to each of the room's seven audiophile-grade B&W speakers, and two B&W 1,000-watt powered subwoofers. Obviously, high performance was a priority for the homeowners of this media paradise. But what really brought the space up to the "level of a Mercedes S-Class," according to EDG project designer Scott Jordan, was the fact that "everything in the room was designed around the electronics—something that doesn't happen very often." EDG took advantage of the situation by selecting some of the very best gear available, positioning each piece perfectly and designing the walls, ceiling and tiered floor to maximize the performance of the every component. For example, only after selecting the appropriate size screen and positioning the speakers for acoustical perfection did the EDG designers lay out an arrangement for three tiers of seating. Then, based on the size and position of the screen and the front three B&W Signature 8NT speakers, EDG had a cabinet custom made to house the gear, which would also include rolls of special masking material for the video screen. (The masking material rolls over the top and bottom of the screen, changing its shape to accommodate different programming formats, like movies shot in 1.78, 1.85 and 2.35 aspect ratios.) The remaining B&W speakers were mounted within the studs of the newly constructed walls and covered with acoustically transparent fabric. The surround-sound processor, amplifiers and DVD player, meanwhile, were tucked inside a ventilated closet constructed specifically for the gear.

What the homeowners didn't bank on was the design, construction and finish work. They spent an additional \$80,000 to get the unfinished basement into shape, which included building risers for the seats and soundproofing the walls and ceiling. That \$80,000 also covered furnishings and accessories like custom millwork, rope lighting, and custom programming of a touchscreen remote that operates the audio/video components plus the lights and the heating and cooling system.

GRAND TOTAL: \$202,300





Entertainment with Purpose

BREAKDOWN

DISPLAY: \$33,300

Digital Projection MercuryHD projector and Faroudja DVP1010 video scaler
Stewart Filmscreen 123-inch Luxus Deluxe Screenwall
Sharp 20-inch LCD TV

AUDIO/VIDEO COMPONENTS: \$15,325

Hughes HD satellite receiver
JVC high-def VHS VCR
Krell Showcase video processor
Krell DVD player
Rotel RB-1090 380-watt, 2-channel by amplifiers (3)
TiVo digital video recorder

SPEAKERS: \$12,500

B&W Signature 8NTs (3)
B&W Signature 7NTs (4)
B&W ASW850 powered subwoofer

CONTROL: \$3,800

Crestron STX1700 touchpanel

LABOR (DESIGN AND INSTALLATION): \$30,000

This multipurpose media room boasts many of the same top-grade components, as the \$200,000-plus theater, including B&W Signature speakers, powerful Rotel amplifiers and a DLP video projector. In fact, the 123-inch diagonal screen in this space is larger than the one used in the dedicated theater featured on page 64. According to EDG designer Joe McNeill, the homeowners were able to save money by forgoing expensive design features like acoustical wall treatments and tiered seating, which are fairly standard in rooms dedicated solely to movie watching. The homeowners were also able to stay within their \$100,000 budget by building the room while their home was being constructed. Had they worked the media room into the home later, it would have been more difficult, and hence more expensive, to blend speakers, the screen and other electronics into the room design. "Plus, had we put the technology in later, it might have ended up looking like an afterthought," McNeill notes.

Thanks to good planning, the projector, speakers, subwoofers and an entire rack of components could be concealed within the walls at no extra cost. The Digital Projection Mercury DLP video projector, for example, was tucked behind the back wall so that only its lens would peek through. The front three B&W Signature 8NT speakers, meanwhile, were made to rest inside specially constructed backboxes inside the wall that flanks the screen. The 123-inch screen stays in sight, defining the media area from the rest of the rambling open-concept space, which also wraps in a dining area, a bar with a 20-inch Sharp LCD screen and a wine cellar. The LCD can present the same movie that's playing on the big screen, offering the owners more entertainment bang for their buck. A Crestron touchpanel provides access to a Krell DVD player, a TiVo receiver, a high-definition satellite receiver and a JVC high-def VCR from anywhere in the room. And, as with the touchpanel in the more expensive dedicated theater, this secondary touchpanel can also operate the lights.

GRAND TOTAL: \$94,925



