

PRINT ARTICLE

Tom Curnin · Dec 31, 2020 · 5 min read

Home Theater vs. Media Room

What's The Difference? What Are The Challenges? We Explain Below.



We love home theaters. They can bring the cinematic experience home without the crowds, high ticket prices, and questionable concessions. The parking is easier at home too. Many people ask us about building a home theater, and others ask us about installing media rooms. In some cases, people that ask about home theaters really want a media room, and the opposite also happens. Is there a difference between a home theater and a media room? Yes. Home theaters tend to be purpose built highly engineered rooms. Media room tend to be multipurpose rooms. Both can deliver excellent performance. The important point is that that end product fits your lifestyle and entertainment preferences.

Bravo AV Makes it Easy
You might have many decisions to make on whether you want a media room, a home theater, or something in-between at your home in the New Vernon area. But you won't have to worry about figuring it all out. Bravo AV has the expertise to be your partner every step of the way – recommending a design and layout, specifying all the equipment, discussing the trade-offs with you, and ultimately putting it all together and bringing your media space to life. Get in touch with our team of media room and home theater design experts by clicking here or by chatting live with us below. We look forward to hearing from you!

Taking A Closer Look
However, we can differentiate between home theaters and media rooms. The terms help define some of the features that may be most important to you. There are three major factors that influence a media room: Video quality, Audio Quality and Aesthetics.

Criteria for Acoustical Performance (Audio Quality)
Audio Performance Requirements (please choose one):

- Excellent (suitable for critical music listening; near-studio quality)
- Very Good (good for film soundtracks; OK for music but not suitable for critical listening)
- Adequate (subordinate to aesthetic criteria)

Criteria for Video Performance (Image Quality)
Video Performance Requirements (please choose one):

- Excellent (image nearly film quality; accurate rendering of colors & hues; compatible with pending High Definition TV)
- Very Good (image quality still above average; color rendering is still good but not a priority over décor; capable of displaying High Definition TV images albeit with minor reductions to absolute quality)
- Adequate (subordinate to aesthetic criteria)

Criteria for Room Aesthetics (The Look)
Aesthetic Requirements (please choose one):

- Excellent (Very high level of fit and finish; top grade material used extensively)
- Very Good (High level of fit and finish some top grade material used as accents)
- Adequate (Subordinate to Audio and Video Quality)

- Additional Questions**
- When you do watch TV, do you sit and watch or do other things at the same time?
 - What is your vision for this room?
 - What is the size of the room? (H x W X D)
 - How far away will you sit from the TV?
 - Is this new construction or a renovation where the wall will be open?
 - How much ambient light is in the room and how is it controlled? Do you want automated shades?
 - Do you want automated lighting control?
 - Do you play video games? (Play station, Xbox, Wii etc)
 - Where do you want the equipment located? Do you want the equipment hidden?
 - Do you enjoy listening to music beautifully reproduced?
 - What type of music do you like?

The answers to these questions help to narrow down what entertainment setup might work best for you. If you are thinking about upgrading to a home theater or media space in your New Vernon-area home, the answers to these questions will help guide the design of your media room. Just as there are no right or wrong answers to the questions above, there are no hard and fast rules to home theaters versus media rooms in our book – the right solution is the one that works for you. Read on for our view on considerations for media room design.



New Jersey Home Theater Installation

The Home Theater
What are the things that make a home theater? Generally, it will be an environment more focused on watching films and other longer form content. The seating will lend itself to that, with comfortable lounge-style chairs that may recline, and individual seats similar to commercial movie theaters. Most people will be seated while watching instead of standing or otherwise milling about. The screen will be big of course, but the seating will also be optimized to avoid any problematic viewing angles – with the right design, every seat is the best in the house. Many home theaters use tiered seating, so that front rows don't block the view. Home theaters might have themed décor to mimic the experience of commercial theaters. Especially popular is design that evokes the ornate movie palaces of the past. Soft materials are also used to absorb sound reflections which help in tuning the audio. And since theaters are dark places, actual home theaters will be dark places to watch to keep the focus on the movie. Often these rooms are purpose-built in a lower level windowless basement space. If there are windows, they are likely to be well covered most of the time with heavy window treatments. You might think: What about the screen and the sound system? We would say those might vary too, but in reality, they might be similar. You might want the huge projection screen and thirteen-speaker Dolby Atmos sound system in a media room or a dedicated home theater – and they might pose particular challenges – but that does not necessarily define the space.



The Media Room
The media room might just be a similar space that is for more than only watching cinematic-quality material. The media room might utilize with a large screen flat panel TV – sizes go beyond 90 inches now – as they are better for rooms with windows and ambient light. On the other hand, for the diehard sports fan, the media room might have three or more TVs to keep track of all the NFL games simultaneously on Sundays during the season. The media room may have a mix of seating. There may be sofas and individual chairs, and the seating may be optimized for both socializing and viewing. The media room might have a small kitchen area in the back for drinks and snacks. The space might also double as a game room, with pool tables, ping pong, foosball, and even vintage arcade games. And the entertainment might be on – like a big game – while people are sitting, standing, playing, eating, and otherwise having a good time. However, there's nothing that says that the media room won't have a projector. The media room could be in the same windowless lower level, or it may have picture windows in an upstairs bonus recreation room. To manage the light with a projector, it might employ motorized shades that lower on command for a movie.

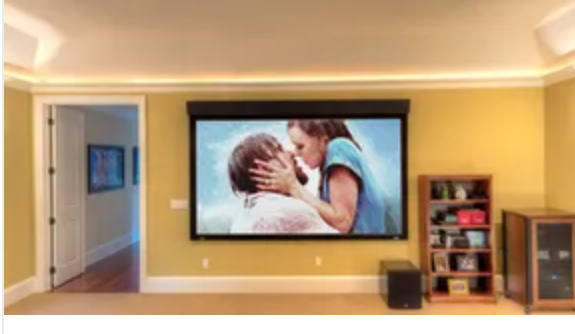
Which is Best for You?
Depending on what you care the most about will drive critical aspects of the media room or home theater design. If you want the full cinema experience, you want the darker room with every seat having the perfect viewing distance and angle. If you care deeply about immersive sound, you will want to optimize it with careful room design, material and décor selection, and acoustic treatment. With a media room, you may have a more open space without four flat walls in a rectangle. Windows may mean you have to manage the ambient light to watch movies. Media rooms give you a more flexible space while still providing an excellent audio video experience. For additional resources, please visit our website's Knowledge Center. Here, you will find dozens of articles relating to Bravo AV's services. Additionally, you can check out our photo gallery to explore our previous work. Bravo AV is proud to be an HTA (Home Technology Association) Certified Installation Firm and professional AV experts. Tom Curnin, the owner of Bravo AV, is a CEDIA Professional Designer, a certified THX Level 1 home theater professional and a member of the Home Acoustic Alliance trained to Level II. You can contact Tom directly at (908) 953-0555 or through email at tom@bravoav.com. on Tuesday, 30 April 2019. Posted in Media Room Design New Vernon, NJ, Media Room Design

Home Theater | media rooms

f t in e Home Theater • Media Rooms • Home Audio


192 views

Recent Posts See All



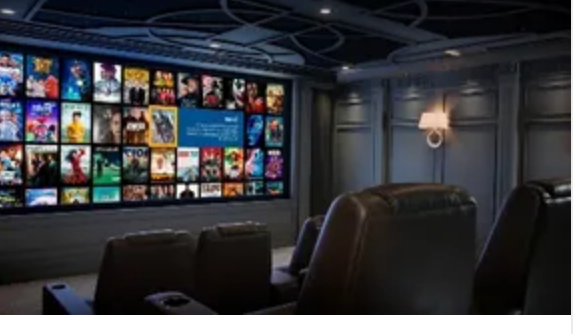
The Ultimate Investment: Why a Home Theater is...

7



Home Theater Projectors: Your Questions Answered!

63



Who makes the Best Movie Server?

669 2

What brings you to Bravo AV of New Jersey, and how can we help?

In order to help you in the best way possible please provide your phone number and town. Your number will not be used for solicitation. Your town is important in order to make sure we can provide the outstanding local service we are recognized for.

Name	Town
Email	Message
Phone	SEND

<
>

<p>Knowledge Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Audio Home Automation Home Theater Lutron Lighting Motorized Shades Media Rooms Multi-Room Audio Outdoor Shades Outdoor Speakers Outdoor TV Sonos Speakers Surround Sound 	<p>Our Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Audio Home Automation Home Theater Theater Seating Landscape Lighting Lighting Design Luxury Private Cinemas Media Rooms Mirror TV Motorized Shades Multi-Room Audio Outdoor Entertainment Centers Outdoor Lighting Outdoor Shades Outdoor Speakers Outdoor TV Projectors RadioRa 3 Surround Sound TV Installation WiFi Window Treatments 	<p>Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focal Kaleidescape Lutron Lighting Lutron Shades Meridian Nest Samsung Savant Sonos Sony TVs Sony Projectors TKG 	<p>Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About Blog Contact Design Build Process Featured Projects Knowledge Center Partners Privacy Policy Showroom Team Home Theater Guide 	<p>Contact</p> <p>80 Morristown Rd. Bernardsville, NJ 07924</p> <p>Click To Email Us</p> <p>Tel. (908) 953-0555</p>
--	--	--	---	--



LEAVE US A
★★★★★
REVIEW!

Hours

Mon. - Fri. 9am - 6pm
or by appointment