

Phase Technology's Teatro V3.0 Sound Bar Speaker System

Rating: ★★★★★ **Sweet Performance from an Affordable Speaker Package**

In the span of a few years, flat panel televisions have changed home entertainment. The sales growth of flat panel TVs has also spawned the development of sound bars, one-piece speaker systems that make a great cosmetic match for a flat panel TV and serve the same purpose as the left, center and right channel front speakers in a home theater system. Some critics, however, might question the audio performance of sound bars. Can a sound bar reproduce music and movie sound as well as separate speakers? I tested the new Phase Technology Teatro V3.0 sound bar, Teatro II surround speakers and FL-10 subwoofer to find out.

Teatro V3.0 Features

Phase Tech has been designing and manufacturing speakers since 1955 and is now part of a larger group of manufacturers, the MSE Audio Group. The Teatro V3.0 sound bar is one of their newest models.

The Teatro V3.0 Sound Bar is a two-way speaker with three 5.25" VDT (Vapor Deposited Titanium) woofers and three 1" soft dome tweeters in a single enclosure.

It's actually a three-way speaker because each side of the sound bar has a midrange driver facing out and angled slightly backwards towards the wall to produce a wider soundstage and increase channel separation. Phase Technology calls it SFE (Spatial Field Expander). SFE employs a combination of phase and frequency control designed to achieve a wider front soundstage.

The Teatro V3.0 also incorporates Enhanced Voice Technology (EVT), an equalization circuit that boosts appropriate midrange frequencies to improve movie dialog.

The Phase Tech Teatro comes with a two-

piece bracket for wall mounting and leveling the sound bar beneath a flat panel television. The Teatro Surround II surrounds are bipolar speakers with one 5.25" polypropylene woofer and two 1" soft dome tweeters facing outward. They are designed to be placed on the side or rear wall in a home theater system.

The FL-10 subwoofer combines a 10" front-firing long-throw woofer with a down-firing 10" passive radiator. A 250-watt servo-controlled amplifier powers the sub.

My review system consisted of the Teatro V3.0, a sound bar, two Teatro Surround II speakers and the Phase Technology Power FL-10 10" powered subwoofer. The package has a suggested retail price of \$1575.00.



Testing the Phase Tech Teatro V3.0

In what could be an unfair challenge, I tested the Teatro V3.0 sound bar with a front video projector and a 100" wide SMX screen, much larger than a 40-60" flat screen TV. I reasoned that if it performed well with a large projection screen, smaller flat panel TVs would be a snap. I was correct.

I confess to a pre-conceived bias about the performance of sound bars, and the simple fact that a sound bar favorably competed with separate left, center and right speakers was a surprise. It would be reasonable to assume that a one-piece speaker system with small enclosures might sound boxy or lack sufficient separation, but my experience with the Phase Tech sound bar was the opposite.

With movie sound or multichannel music, the Phase Technology Teatro V3.0 system produced a wide soundstage, and an enveloping soundfield with excellent dialog clarity, bass depth and dynamic range, blowing away my assumptions.



Real World Performance

I'm in the middle of the hit Fox series '24' on DVD (Dolby Digital 5.1), packed with action, gunfire and explosions, all good tests for a speaker system. The Teatro system easily handled all of the action with unexpected clarity and dynamic range. Even more important is dialog, often a center channel speaker's weak spot, but not with the Phase Tech. The Teatro's Enhanced Voice Technology feature reproduced dialog with good articulation and definition even during congested action scenes.

The intense action scenes in Valkyrie (United Artists), an action thriller based on the true story of an attempt to assassinate Adolf Hitler, are enough to push any speaker system to its limits. The Phase Tech system seemed to effortlessly reproduce the wide dynamic range of the DTS-HD Master Audio soundtrack.

Multichannel music sounds best when the speaker system creates a soundfield with a strong sense of envelopment between front and rear channels as I heard in Sting's 'Seven Days', a DTS multichannel CD. When downmixed to stereo sound, the Teatro sound bar had good left-right channel separation.

For \$150 Phase Technology will make a custom grille to fit the width of any flat panel TV. The photograph below is a custom-made grille.

Conclusion

The Phase Tech Teatro V3.0 sound bar, the Teatro II surround speakers and FL-10 subwoofer offer strong audio performance and great value. The sound bar produced outstanding sound quality even with a 100" front video projection screen. The Spatial Field Expander and the Enhanced Voice Technology are effective features that widen the soundstage and improve dialog intelligibility. Phase Technology employs useful technology in the Teatro V3.0 that delivers impressive audio performance.

The system sounded very well balanced with movies and music, stereo and multichannel sources. Its medium-sized enclosure is also a neat cosmetic match for flat panel televisions ranging from 40" to 60".

TV isn't home theater without the audio and the Phase Tech Teatro speaker system is one of the best ways to enjoy dynamic home theater sound with a flat screen TV.



Reviewed by: Gary Altunian

Specifications

Teatro V3.0 Sound Bar

- Woofers: Three 5.25" VDT drivers
- Tweeters: Three 1" soft domes
- Frequency response: 55Hz ñ 22kHz (+/- 3dB)
- Sensitivity: 91dB
- Impedance: 4 ohms
- Dimensions (W x H x D): 40" x 7" x 4.5"
- Weight: 25 lbs.
- Finish: Satin Black
- Price: \$800

Teatro II Surround Speakers

- Woofer: 5.25" Poly Driver with Butyl Rubber Surround
- Tweeters: Two 1" soft domes
- Frequency response: 70Hz ñ 20kHz (+/- 3dB)
- Sensitivity: 90dB
- Impedance: 8 ohms
- Dimensions (W x H x D): 11" x 9.25" x 5"
- Weight: 10 lbs.
- Finishes: Matte White, Matte Black
- Price: \$425/pr

FL-10 Powered Subwoofer

- Amplifier: 250-watt servo controlled
- Woofer: 10" Polypropylene
- Frequency Response: 26Hz ñ 150Hz
- Dimensions (W x H x D): 12.5" x 16 3/8" x 18"
- Finish: Black Rosewood Laminate
- Price: \$550