

DIGITAL PROJECTORS AND FLATBED SCANNERS											
Digital projectors											
Details	Last month's position	First reviewed	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Brightness (Ansi lumens)	Lamp life (hours)	Lamp power (Watts)	Replacement bulb	Weight	Maximum resolution	Dimensions (width x depth x height)
 1 Toshiba TLP-551 01932 828 828 www.toshiba.co.uk	1	Jun 02	£2,895	3-year	1,100	2,000	270W	£250	3.9kg	1,024x768	260x295x96mm
 2 Optoma EP753 01923 691 800 www.optoma.co.uk	NEW	Sep 02	£2,499	3-year	1,600	2,000	200W	£289	2.9kg	1,024x768	277x225x85mm
3 Eizo IX421M 01483 719 505 www.eizo.co.uk	2	Jun 02	£2,440	3-year	1,000	1,000	130W	£230	1.5kg	1,024x768	230x177x48mm
4 NEC LT150Z 0845 940 4020 www.nec.co.uk	3	Jun 02	£2,867	3-year	1,000	1,000	135W	£313	1.5kg	1,024x768	243x196x53mm
5 Panasonic PT-LC75 0870 100 464 www.panasonic.co.uk	4	Jun 02	£2,495	2-year	1,200	1,200	160W	£210	2.8kg	1,024x768	310x243x86mm
Flatbed scanners											
Details	Last month's position	First reviewed	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Maximum scanning area	Interface connection	Supported operating systems	True colour bit	Graphics/optical character recognition software		
 1 Canon CanoScan D1250U2 08705 143 723 www.canon.co.uk	1	Aug 02	£101	1-year	A4 (216x297mm)	USB 2.0	98/Me/2000/XP	48bit	Adobe Photoshop Elements/ScanSoft OmniPage Pro		
 2 Umax Astra 4500 0870 906 4400 www.umax.co.uk	2	Aug 02	£68	2-year	A4 (216x297mm)	USB 1.1	98/Me/2000/XP	48bit	MGI PhotoSuite SE/TextBridge 2.0 SE		
3 Visioneer OneTouch 8700 01483 445 480 www.visioneer-europe.com	3	Jan 02	£83	1-year	A4 (216x297mm)	USB	98/Me/2000/XP	48bit	MGI PhotoSuite LE/TextBridge Pro		
4 HP Scanjet 4400 08705 474 747 www.scanjet.hp.com	4	Aug 02	£89	1-year	A4 (216x297mm)	USB 1.1 or parallel	95/98/Me/NT/2000/XP	48bit	ArcSoft PhotoImpression/HP PrecisionScan Pro		
5 Visioneer OneTouch 8920 01483 445 480 www.visioneer-europe.com	5	Aug 02	£127	1-year	A4 (216x297mm)	USB 1.1	98/Me/2000/XP	48bit	Adobe Photoshop Elements/TextBridge Pro		

DIGITAL PROJECTORS

1 Toshiba TLP-551

Toshiba's superb TLP-551 holds on to the number one spot for another month. In truth, this projector's success is due to the incredible screen size: whether you want to watch a DVD movie or impress potential customers with an outstanding presentation, this is the only projector that can fill an entire wall without needing a mile of floor space in front of it.

For sharply focused images and storming colour depth, the Eizo and NEC projectors have the advantage, but the Toshiba's 1,100 Ansi lumens more than atones for this. The TLP-551's 3.9kg frame isn't ultra-portable, but the extra size does allow Toshiba to add some new features, including a visualiser arm to display documents and photographs. Due partly to the 3.4mm manual focusing, the camera image is also surprisingly sharp.

The Best Buy Toshiba TLP-551 certainly isn't the cheapest of projectors, but for quiet operation, amazing results and the extra functionality of the visualiser arm, we can't recommend it enough.



FLATBED SCANNERS

1 Canon CanoScan D1250U2

Canon stays at the top of the chart with the D1250U2, due to its excellent image quality and speedy interface. Canon has embraced the new USB 2.0 technology and the results are worth it. Where USB 1.1 scanners averaged around three and half minutes to scan an A4 colour document at 600dpi (dots per inch), the CanoScan romped home at 49 seconds. The resulting scans also needed little correction. Colours were vibrant and the detail of the original photograph was retained. Setup was simple and, although the supplied driver wasn't certified for Windows XP, it worked flawlessly. The software package is generous, comprising a copy of Adobe Photoshop Elements and ScanSoft OmniPage Pro. The D1250U2 handily features a locking mechanism that will prevent damage to the unit during transit. To make the most of this scanner, though, you'll need a USB 2.0 interface.



DIGITAL PROJECTORS

2 Optoma EP753

Optoma is making a concerted attempt to become a significant force in its own right and, if the EP753 is anything to go by, its chances of success are pretty high. The Optoma's 1,600 Ansi lumens makes it perform well in the boardroom, while the combination of a 600:1 contrast ratio and smooth DLP (digital light processing) technology results in fantastic image quality. Pictures are as colourful and vibrant as the text is clear and focused, and the low 32dB noise level ensures that the EP753 fades into the background. The Optoma might not have the big screen capabilities of the Toshiba or Eizo's ultra-portable case, but if you want fine performance this Recommended device is an excellent choice.



3 Eizo IX421M

The IX421M is blessed with exquisite visual appeal and the Eizo's 1.5kg frame marks it out as one of the most portable models in the charts. The image is incredibly sharp, with text and graphics all beautifully defined. Aided by the excellent 650:1 contrast ratio, the colour scheme is similarly vibrant, although particularly well suited to darker shades. The brightness of 1,000 Ansi lumens may seem fairly miserly compared to some of the other projectors, but the value-for-money Eizo is proof that there's far more to a strong image than a high brightness rating.



4 NEC LT150Z

The NEC LT150Z drops to number four this month, despite delivering probably the best image quality here. It has native XGA (1,024x768) resolution support, but this can be increased to 1,280x1,024 with minor deterioration in image quality. Even when the lamp is switched to a lower power mode, though, fan noise is high. Neither is the NEC LT150Z cheap, and the Eizo almost matches it for image quality. Nonetheless, for unmatched images and the ultra-portable PC Card option, the NEC is definitely worth a look.



5 Panasonic PT-LC75

The PT-LC75 isn't as readily portable as some of its rivals, but it performs with credit in most other areas. The menu system is lengthy, if rather old-fashioned in style, although the slimline remote control is very much a creation for the 21st century. Screen size isn't as generous as the Toshiba's and there's a slight dilution of colour compared to the NEC and Eizo models. But it has a good set of hardware specifications, and the 400:1 contrast ratio and brightness rating of 1,200 Ansi lumens are competitive. The Panasonic's price tag is extremely balanced, particularly taking into account the low running costs.



FLATBED SCANNERS

2 Umax Astra 4500

Umax may not have embraced the new USB 2.0 interface, but the Astra makes the most of its older USB 1.1 technology. The 4500 can't match the speed achieved by the Best Buy Canon on the 600dpi (dots per inch) A4 image, but it proved competent elsewhere. A colour photo at 300dpi took just 21 seconds, with 600dpi taking a further 15 seconds. The resulting scans, however, were slightly dark. The Umax Astra comes with a good software bundle and there's even a lock and stand included. Combine the 4500's low price of £68 and its surprisingly fast USB 1.1 interface and you can see why the Astra holds on to its Recommended award – a great option for those on a budget.



3 Visioneer OneTouch 8700

Visioneer's OneTouch 8700 holds on for another month at number three. Couple the optical resolution of 1,200x4,800dpi (dots per inch) with 48bit colour depth and you get crystal-clear quality combined with speedy delivery. However, you won't see the benefits of a faster interface such as USB 2.0. The 8700 will please both novice and advanced users: you can stick with one-touch scanning or opt for detailed gamma and colour correction. This isn't the prettiest or smallest scanner on the market, but its landscape shape makes it easy to house.



4 HP Scanjet 4400

HP combines good image quality with value for money. The Scanjet may not be the fastest scanner available but, if you're prepared to wait, the results won't disappoint. Scanning a colour photo at 300dpi (dots per inch) took 27 seconds, but upping the resolution to 600dpi added an extra minute to the time. Even line art was a struggle; where other scanners averaged 30 seconds at 600dpi the 4400 limped in at one minute 37 seconds. Setup was simple thanks to the included quick-start sheet. On the software front, the bundle is generous in quantity but less so in quality.



5 Visioneer OneTouch 8920

The OneTouch 8920 resembles the 8700 but offers more features – for a price. If you're interested in scanning transparencies and negatives then this is ideal as it includes a built-in transparency adapter. Software support is good, and speed wise the 9820 held its ground despite only offering USB 1.1. Colour photos took 19 seconds and 50 seconds at 300dpi (dots per inch) and 600dpi respectively with a colour A4 document taking 32 seconds at 300dpi.

