

NEC MultiSync PA322UHD – Review



Time is Money

After spending a lot of wasted time trying to work on an outdated computer I decided to respect myself by taking care of my business in a more efficient fashion. It was time to purchase a new faster computer and that would mean better time management. I'd spend some serious money on the hardware but at the same time I'd save a lot more money by getting my work done quicker. Time is money, right? No one wants to spend time looking at progress bars and it was time to take the plunge on a serious computer system.



So, in 2014, I decided to upgrade my old iMac to a brand spanking new Mac Pro computer with all the bells and whistles that a photographer could desire.

I'm set up nicely with hard drives and RAID systems from G-Technology so the only thing I needed to compliment the new computer was the right display. I searched for some time looking at several different brands including Apple, Ben-Q, Eizo, and Samsung. In the end, I chose a very reasonable compromise in size, quality, and price in the NEC PA272W 27-inch display. It was a little smaller than I had wanted, but the tradeoff was excellent colour accuracy and a non-glare screen amongst other huge leaps forward from my old iMac's screen.



Searching for the perfect display solution

Less than a year later I was approached by NEC to review the actual monitor that I had been originally coveting... Enter the NEC MultiSync PA322UHD.

Let's begin with why I wanted this display over any other one on the market. On a trip to Los Angeles in 2014, I stopped by a fellow photographer friend's studio to catch up and caught him working on another killer series of portrait images and noticed that he was working on his new Mac Pro and a brand new display. As luck would have it, it was the NEC MultiSync PA322UHD and he was raving about it. Before buying our new computers, we had discussed what we needed them for and what kind of displays we would get. At the time I was leaning towards a Ben-Q display on the advice of a business colleague but his company was doing business with Ben-Q so his advice may very well have been biased, unlike my colleague in LA who has zero ties to any computer monitor companies.

When making major equipment purchase I like to get opinions of colleagues I respect and read all the reviews I can online. Everything I was told or read about the PA322UHD was positive but was this display right for me?



On some of my upcoming photography projects, I'll also be filming video footage with a 4K Phantom 3 drone from DJI. Not having a 4K monitor to view and edit this new footage was not the end of the world but I'm now thrilled to have that capability just in time to take full advantage of it.

What is 4k/UHD?



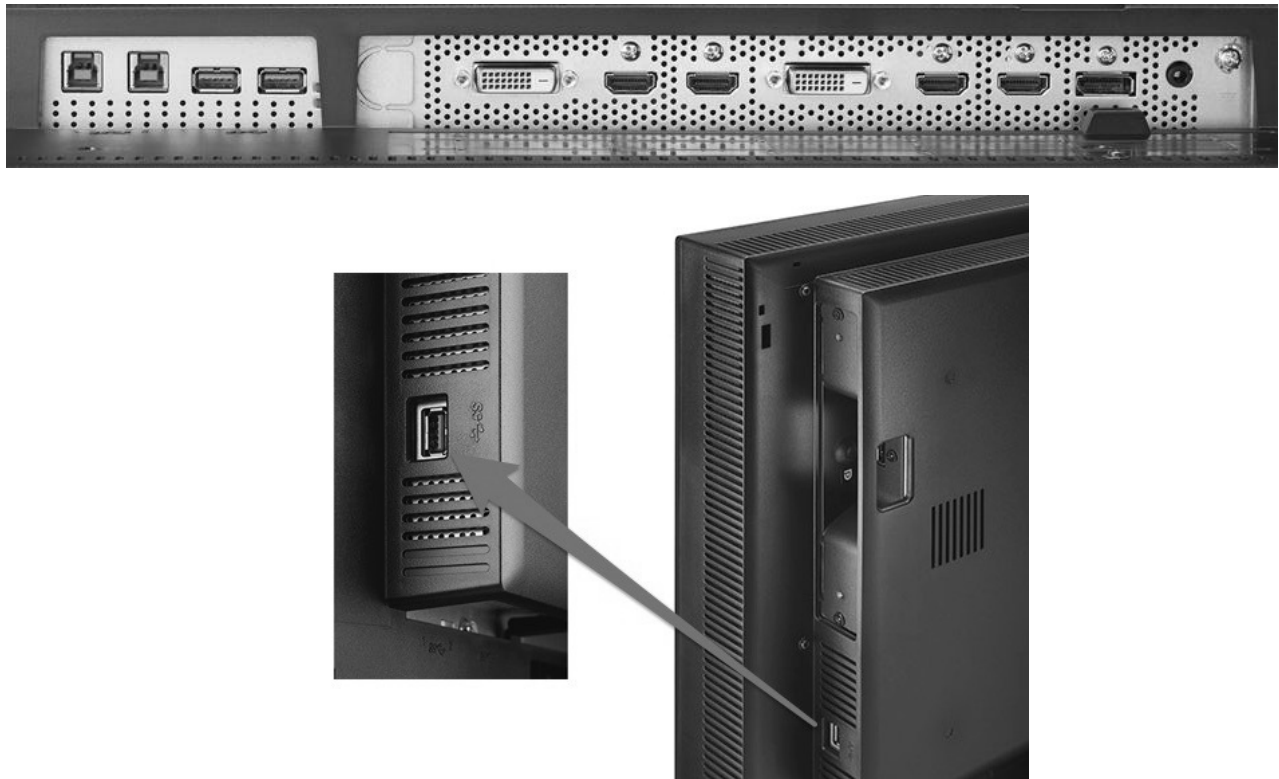
Other photography projects that I have in the works include doing more large-format fine art printing. For me to know that my prints will be the best that they can be, I either have to do them myself or trust a quality printing company with that work. I simply don't have space for a large printer in my office, nor do I want the hassle of doing the printing work myself. I spent years in darkrooms at the beginning of my career in photography and that was enough for me. Today, I'd prefer working with talented printers who do this kind of

digital printing day in and day out. I'd much rather be taking photos or editing them. For me to work with printers I need to be able to match their colour space and deliver to them, ready-to-print files in the proper colour space. Working with a calibrated PA322UHD will allow me to do just that.

ICC, ICC Baby!

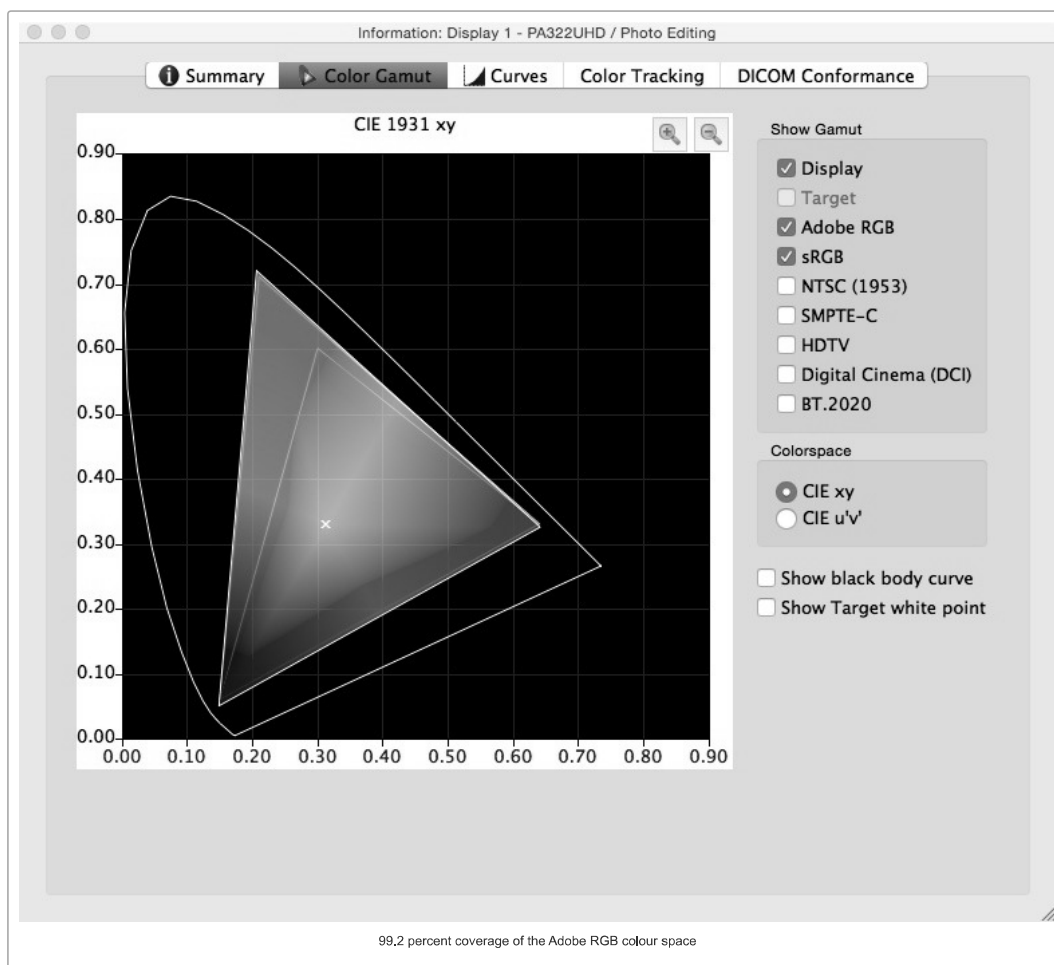
How do you load an ICC profile from my printer? Easy... Watch this tutorial from NEC:

So many ports that you'll think you're a sailor



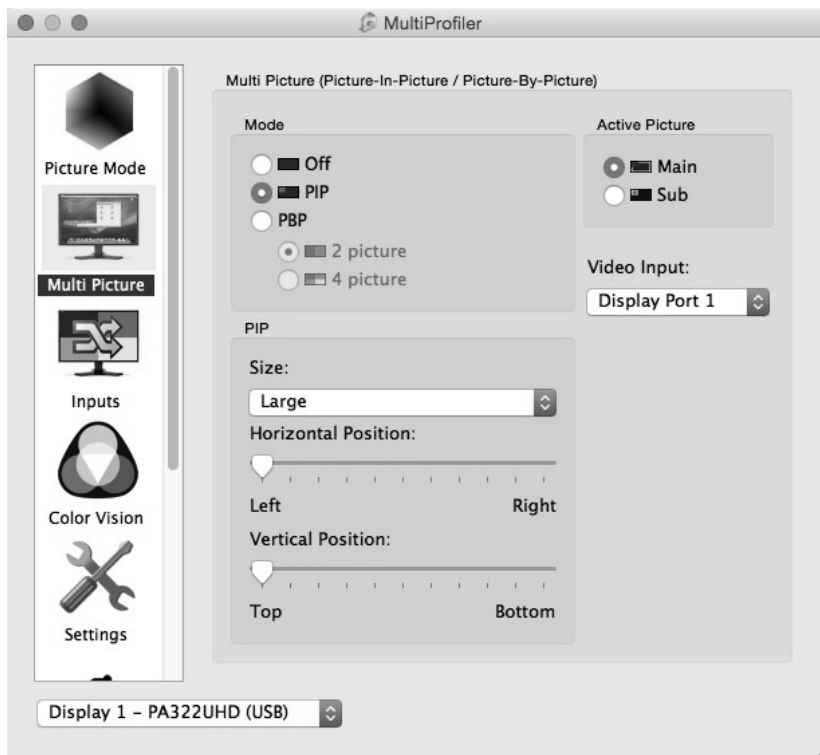
What made me want the NEC MultiSync PA322UHD?

- Size... While not everything, it sure is something and a 32" display is a perfect size for photographers.
- Resolution... 4K-UHD! 3,840-by-2,160 pixels is almost too much... Nah, I kid, it's awesome!
- I'll be working with drones on some upcoming jobs and filming in 4k so the UHD display will be the perfect way to view and edit the footage.
- 99.2 percent coverage of the Adobe RGB colour space. That's more than the human eye can see. This could be the beginning of the machines taking over!
- Anti-Glare coating. I hated the glare I'd get on my Apple display and the NEC has zero glare or reflections in my office even when I have lights on behind me.
- A gazillion I/O ports. Okay, perhaps not a gazillion but 2 upstream and 2 downstream USB 3 ports, 4 HDMI, DisplayPort, 2 DVI inputs, a headphone jack. Bonus... You get another USB and DisplayPort input on the side of the panel.
- Edge to edge sharpness, brightness, and colour accuracy.
- Tons of visual workspace... Ideal for Photoshop editing.



Other features of the MultiSync PA322UHD

- Portrait and landscape view modes. Yup, the display rotates. Not sure I'll ever edit vertical images on a vertical display but it sure is nice to have the option.
- Apparently there are two internal speakers. Nice for business types but if you're like me, you have a nice set of speakers so you can listen to music while you work.
- Users can even change the brightness of the "On" LED light on the front of the display. You can even turn it off. I dislike bright distracting lights so for me this is a very welcome small feature. The devil is in the details.
- Picture in Picture and Picture by Picture mode using MultiProfiler. You can preview side by side several images or one image in many different colour space. This means that you can preview how your colour calibrated images will look on standard consumer sRGB-only monitors that most people have. That's brilliant.



- Super crisp pixel-free viewing of photos while I'm editing.
- Two handles in the back make life much easier when trying to lift and move this large display.
- Ambient Light Sensor which will adjust the backlight and power consumption according to the ambient room lighting.
- The base of the display can easily be removed to reveal a 100mm VESA mount.
- SpectraView II Colour Calibration software and Spectra Sensor Pro allow the user to perfectly calibrate the monitor to their needs. (This kit is not included with the monitor unless purchased as a bundle).
- Refresh rates up to 120Hz (at 1920×1080) – 60 Hz at full UHD resolution.



Pros

- 4k (UHD) is awesome.
- Good software controls.
- Easy installation.

- The free MultiProfiler™ software is custom made for NEC monitors making it easy to use professional ICC custom colour profiles.
- At full resolution, there is a serious amount of screen real estate to work on.
- Anti-Glare screen.
- Incredible colour accuracy.

Cons

- Price.. Expensive but this is a case of "you get what you pay for".
- Heavy... It takes a lot of internal guts to make a professional display and these components weigh a lot. So does the stand, but I want a heavy stand for my expensive display.
- Design... Hello NEC, this is 1996 calling and we want our monitor designers back... Creatives like me want our stuff to work well and look sharp on our desks. Apple sure gets this and I wish other companies would too.

Tech Specs	
Panel Technology	IGZO technology IPS type LCD
Aspect Ratio	16:9
Backlight Type	W-LED
Native Resolution	3840 x 2160
Panel Thickness	3.9in / 100mm
Panel Dimensions WxHxD w/base	29.3 x 18.4 x 11.9in 745 x 469 x 302mm
Response Time	10 ms (typical)
Native Color Depth & Gamut	10-bit w/14-bit LUT / Adobe RGB
Contrast Ratio	1000:1
Video Inputs	2 x DisplayPort, 4 x HDMI, 2 x DVI
USB	v3.0 - 2 x up, 3 x down
Audio	3.5mm headphone output
Viewable Image Size	31.5"
Weight	45.2lbs / 20.5kg



Who the NEC MultiSync PA322UHD is for

- Professional and serious amateur photographers and retouchers
- Anyone creating 4k video
- Video editors
- Architects
- Graphic designers
- CAD users
- Engineers
- 3D animators
- VFX Artists
- High-end colouristst
- Anyone who has the budget to buy top-of-the-line computer gear

Conclusion

This is a serious monitor for serious photographers, videographers, and filmmakers. If you're a gamer, this is not necessarily for you. Sure games will look killer but the price is out of most gamers' range and there are displays with faster response time for a much lower price and better gaming experience.

I'm a photographer and not a professional reviewer, but I think that makes me more qualified in some ways to review this display... from a photographer's perspective. If you want to get all the geeky details about the MultiSync PA322UHD, allow me to recommend the very technical [review](#) over at Tom's Hardware.

NEC Resources

Alternative 4K/UHD Displays for Photographers



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