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NEC NP-V332W PROJECTOR REVIEW

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2. NEC NP-V332W Projector Review – Special Features

December 16, 2016 - Ron Jones

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The NEC NP-V332W is one model in NEC's V-series of portable projectors intended for business or education applications. It appears NEC intends for this to be their "Value" series, offering a lot of performance for the modest price. The other V-series model line-up also includes the NP-V302H and the NP-V332X. All three V-series models use DLP display technology and have a very similar physical appearance, but offer different resolutions and at price points (MSRP) ranging from $479 up to $799. The NP-V302H has a full-HD resolution of 1920 x 1080. The NP-V332W, being reviewed here has WXGA resolution of 1280 x 800 while the "entry level" NP-V332X has lower XGA resolution of 1024 x 768. Thus, what we are reviewing here is the mid-level model, both in price (i.e., $579 MSRP) and resolution, of NEC's V-series of portable projectors.

PROJECTOR REVIEWS.COM HOT PRODUCT AWARD

NEC NP-V332W SPECS

Price	$579
Technology	DLP
Native Resolution	1280x800
Brightness (Manufacturer Claim)	3300
Contrast	10,000:1
Zoom Lens Ratio	1.1:1
Lens Shift	No
Lamp Life	3500 hours
Weight	6.2 lbs.
Warranty	2 Years on Projector and 1 year or 500 hours on lamp

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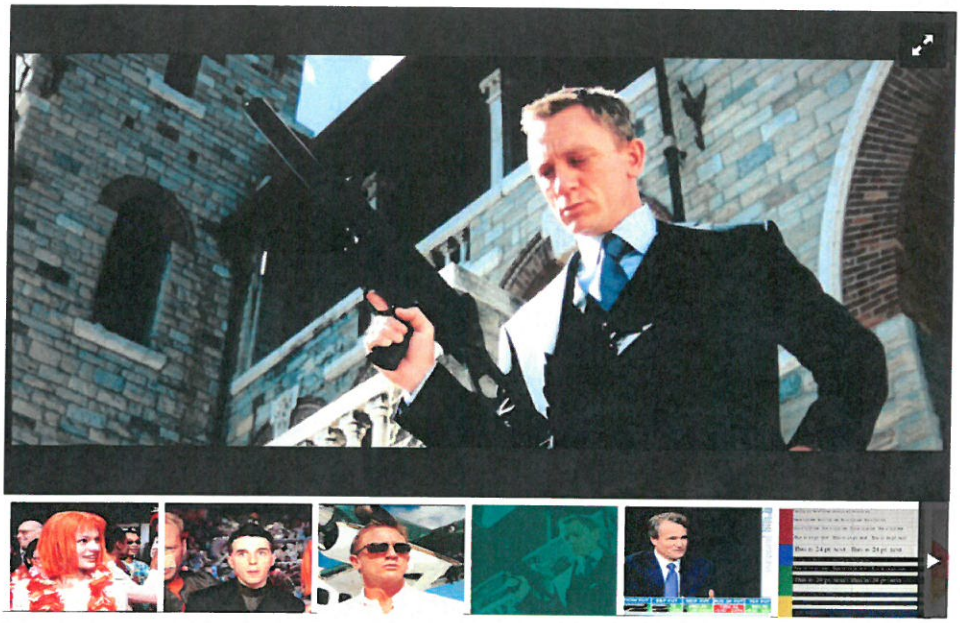
OVERVIEW



The NP-V332W is a compact, portable projector with a footprint of under 1 square foot and a weight of just over 6 pounds. While it may be much larger and heavier than the tiny Pico or Pocket class of projectors, it puts out a much brighter image with well over 3000 lumens in its brightest mode and 1150 lumens in a mode with accurate colors.

This NEC projector, and the other V-series models, lacks certain of the built-in multimedia capabilities for PC-free presentations that are found in some competing business projectors, including models in NEC's own M-series of business/classroom projectors. The NP-V332W does offer very good input connectivity and networking supporting. The built-in speaker plays loud enough for most needs in a moderate size conference room or classroom. Also providing WXGA resolution a this price point is a notable feature. Overall it is an attractive projector at a reasonable price.

This model received our "Hot Product" award for offering good features and performance at a modest price.

HIGHLIGHTS

- High brightness with 3300 rated lumens
- 1.1X zoom lens
- WXGA (1280 x 800) resolution
- Built-in wall color correction
- Built-in 8 watt speaker
- Compatible with Crestron Roomview for projector control/management
- Up to 6000 hour lamp life in Eco mode
- 3D support
- Quick Start with approx. 4 seconds to power up and display
- Good built-in wired network support for both Ethernet and HDBaseT
- Good connectivity offered including MHL via HDMI for connectivity to mobile devices
- Support for control/management via a LAN connection

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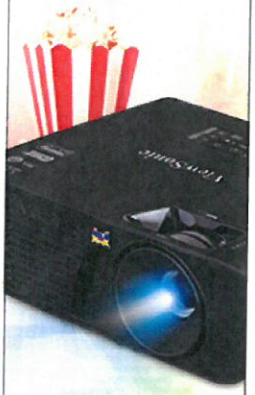

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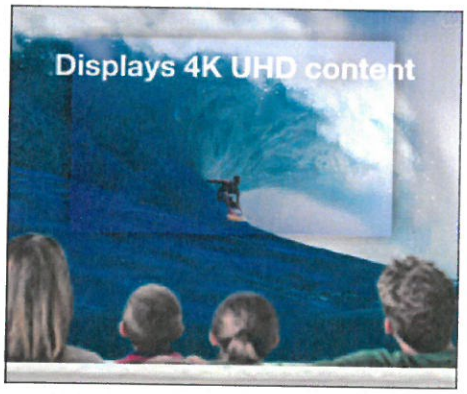

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NEC NP-V332W PROJECTOR REVIEW

2. NEC NP-V332W Projector Review – Special Features ▾

December 16, 2016 - Ron Jones

NEC NP-V332W Projector Review – Special Features: Network Support, Color Correction for Off-White Walls, MHL Support, Virtual Remote Tool

NETWORK SUPPORT

The NP-V332W has a built-in RJ45 connector supporting 10 or 100 Mbps LAN connections. This connector also supports connections to the newer HDBaseT multimedia networks. However, wireless network support is not offered with this model.

HDBaseT, also known as HDBT, has been catching on as a protocol for delivering HD resolution information over long distances (over 200 feet) using CAT5 or CAT6 cables, rather, than, for example, very expensive HDMI cables which aren't designed to run such long lengths.

NEC offers, for download, their "PC Control Utility Pro" software in MS Windows and Mac OS versions. This software allows control of the projector via a LAN connection (or via a direct serial comm. connection) . This provides control functions for such things as: Power On/Off, signal selection, picture freeze, picture mute, audio mute, error message notification, and event schedule.

The NP-V322W also supports Crestron Roomview(TM) allowing multiple devices, including the projector, connected in the network to be managed and controlled from a central computer or a controller.

COLOR CORRECTION FOR OFF-WHITE WALLS

Often the need for projecting a presentation onto a wall, blackboard (classroom) or whiteboard (conference room) may arise. To this end, NEC has included presets that change the color balance of the projected image to work with various presentation surface colors. In addition to a Blackboard preset image mode, there are wall correction color settings for projecting onto walls with Red, Green, Blue, Cyan, Magenta or Yellow tints.

MHL SUPPORT

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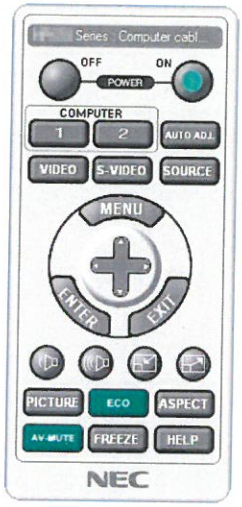
NEC's MHL/HDMI port (HDMI 1) lets you stream multimedia content from a wireless dongle (such as Roku, Google TV, Fire TV, ChromeCast, etc.), or lets you connect to other MHL enabled devices (e.g., tablets or smartphones) via an HDMI cable.

VIRTUAL REMOTE TOOL

NEC offers a software utility for MS Windows based PCs that will allow the control of the projector from the PC via a LAN connection. The Virtual Remote Tool can also be used with a serial connection to the projector. A virtual remote control is displayed on the computer's screen (as shown below) that is then used to control the projector.



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NEC NP-V332W PROJECTOR REVIEW

3. NEC NP-V332W Projector Review – Hardware Tour

December 16, 2016 - Ron Jones

NEC NP-V332W Projector Review – Hardware Tour: Appearance, Connector Panel, Control Pad, Lens, Remote Control

APPEARANCE

The NP-V332W is packaged in an attractive white case with a footprint (width and depth) that comes in at under one square foot (12.8 x 9.8 inches) and is 4 inches high. As shown in the 1st gallery photo above, the zoom lens is located in a recess toward the right side of the front panel. There is a ventilation exhaust vent toward the left side of the front panel and the IR window for the remote control receiver is located to the right of the lens. There is release for the front foot (i.e., use to tilt the projector upward) located at the bottom-center of the front panel, as seen in the 5th photo above.

The right side of the projector, as seen in the 2nd photo above, has the air-inlet ventilation grill. The rear of the projector, as seen in the 3rd photo above has the connector panel (more details on this is provided below).

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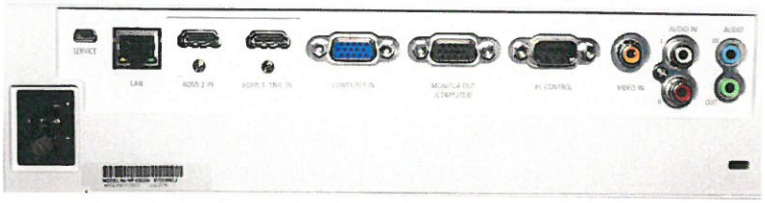
The left side of the projector, as seen in the 4th photo above, has both an ventilation inlet as well as the speaker grill.

The top of the projector, as visible in the 3rd photo above, has the projector's control pad and access to the lens focus and zoom adjustments (more information on these are provided below).

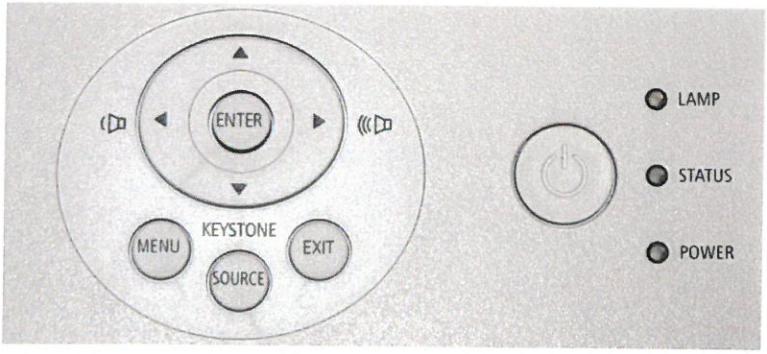
CONNECTOR PANEL



The projector's connector panel is shown in the photo above. From left-to-right there are connectors for:

- Mini-USB Service Port (for service purposes only)
- RJ-45 LAN port that also supports HDBaseT
- HDMI 2 input
- HDMI 1 input that also support MHL
- Analog computer input (VGA style)
- Analog monitor output connector
- RS232 control port
- Composite analog video input
- Stereo analog audio inputs
- Analog audio input (upper) and audio output (lower) mini-jacks
- Power connector at the bottom-left of the connector panel

CONTROL PAD



The projector's control pad, as shown in the photo above, is located on the top of the projector. It includes the essential buttons to turn the projector on/off, display and navigate the on-screen menus, to select the input signal source, to adjust the speaker volume and to adjust the keystone correction. There are 3 status lights to the right of the control pad.

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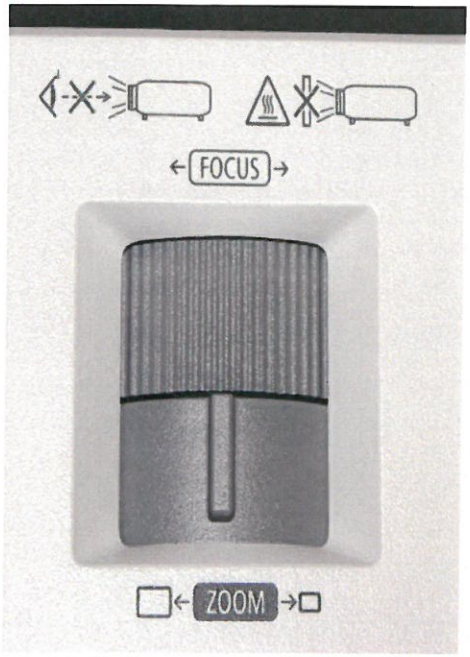


As shown in the above photo, the mechanical zoom and focus rings are accessed through a opening in the top panel of the projector. While this model's lens does offer excellent focus over the entire projected image, the zoom range is very limited at only 1.1:1. The throw ratio (throw distance to screen width) range, as listed in the NEC spec. sheet for this model, is 1.55:1 up to 1.70:1. This means for a 80 inch wide screen the projector must be located between 124 and 136 inches back from the screen. As a result, this model offers less placement flexibility, for a given screen size, than does certain competing models that offer a wider zoom range (e.g., 1.3:1).

As is typical for this class of projector, digital keystone correction is offered, but no optical lens shift.

REMOTE CONTROL

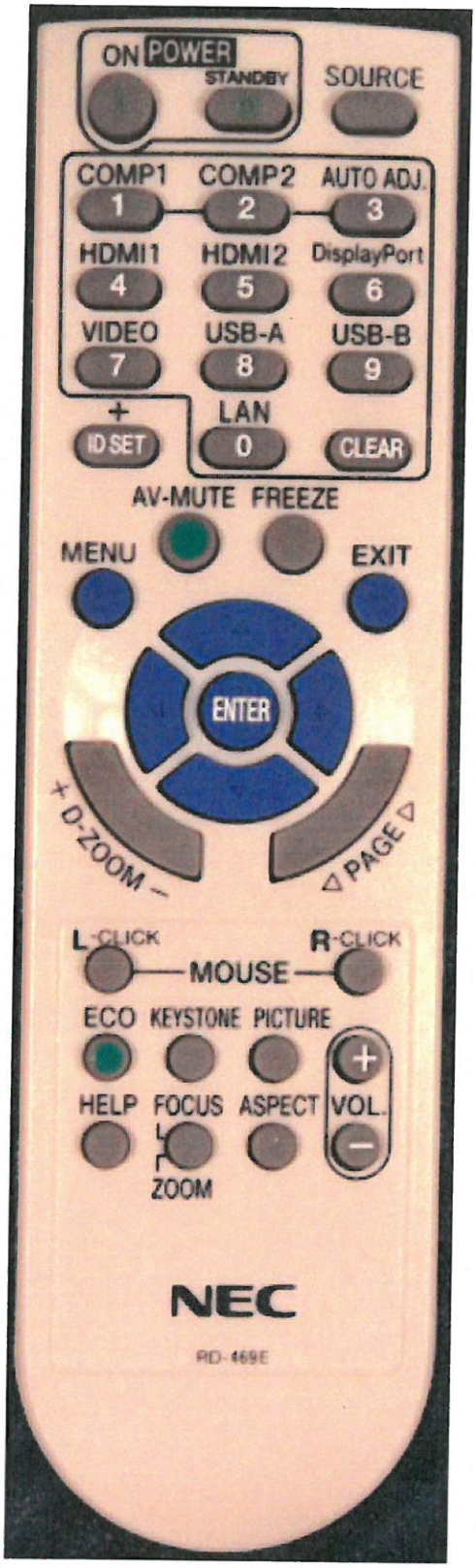
The NP-V332W's remote control is a small, white remote with mostly dark gray buttons. The Menu, Exit and navigation buttons are blue. This makes for easier to access these often used buttons in minimal lighting, but the remote has no backlight.

Buttons are appropriately grouped and allow access of many of the important functions without going to the menu. For example, while many projector remotes allow for scrolling through the various inputs, the NP-V332W's remote allows the user to individually select each video input. Scrolling through Picture modes and switching aspect ratios can be performed on the remote. There are also

buttons for image freezing, audio volume, digital zoom, help, and keystone correction.

Certain of the remote's buttons, such as "page" are not functional with this projector model.

Overall, the level of access and control available with the NP-V332W remote is very good.



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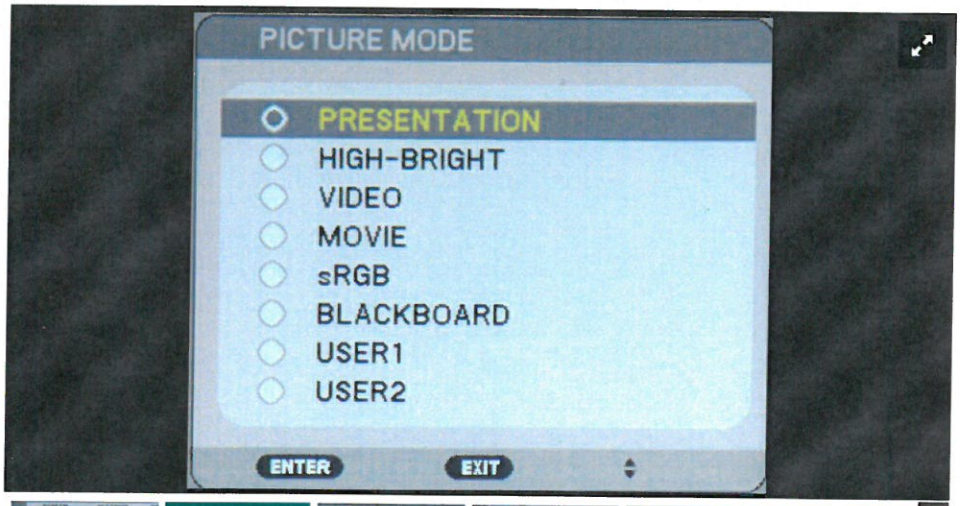
NEC NP-V332W Projector Review – Hardware Tour: Image Menu, Screen Menu, Settings Menu, Options Menu The NP-V332W has a rather straight-forward menu layout with 4 top-level menus and with more detailed sub-menus under those.

IMAGE MENU



The top-level Image (picture) menu is shown in the 1st gallery photo above. This menu has the basic picture settings for such things as brightness, contrast and sharpness. There are also sub-menus offered under certain of the items on the Image menu and photos 2 through 7 above show some of the more important of the available sub-menus. Note in the 2nd photo above there are two User image pre-set picture modes available and these are the ones intended to be used to store user customized picture setting.

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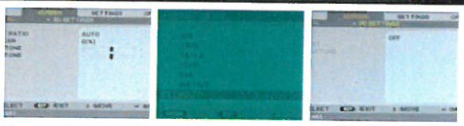
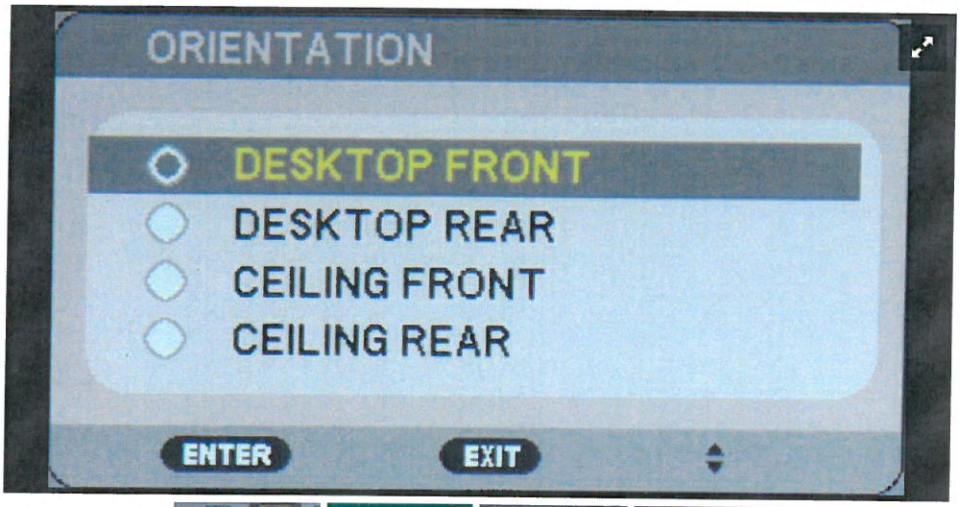
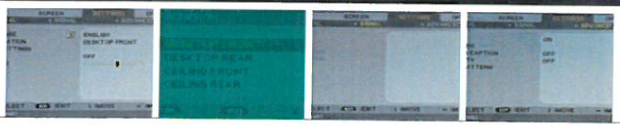


The 1st photo above shown the top-level Screen menu while the 2nd and 3rd photos show two of the available sub-menus.

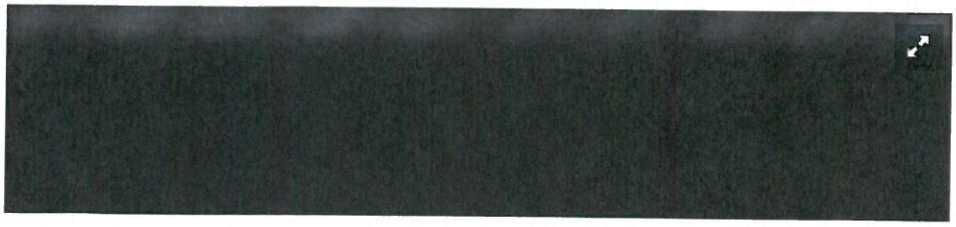
SETTINGS MENU

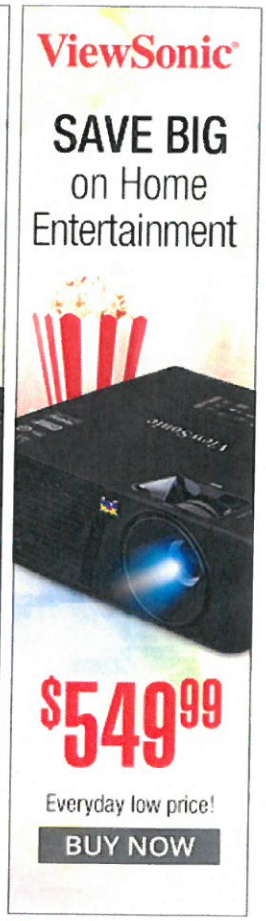




The 1st photo above show the top-level Settings menu while the remaining 3 photos show some of the more important sub-menus.

OPTIONS MENU





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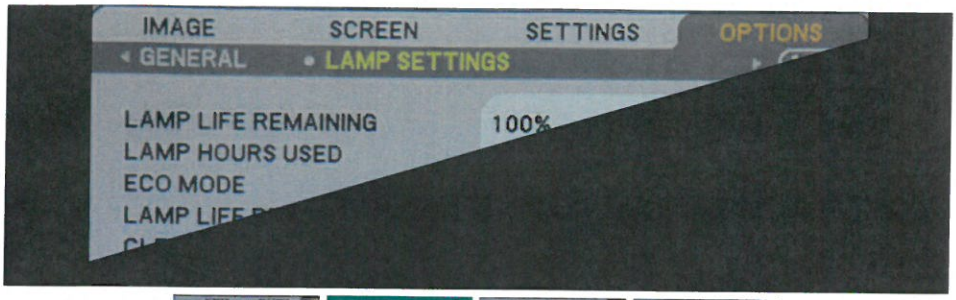

The 1st photo above shows the top-level Options menu while the 3 remaining photos show available sub-menus.

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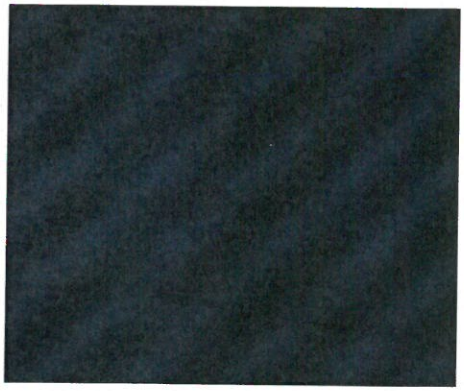

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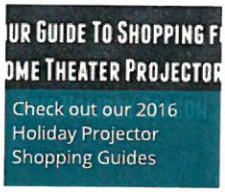

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NEC NP-V332W PROJECTOR REVIEW

6. NEC NP-V332W Projector Review – Performance

December 16, 2016 - Ron Jones

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NEC NP-V332W Projector Review – Performance: Brightness, Custom User Settings, Noise

BRIGHTNESS

BRIGHTNESS			
Picture Mode	White Lumens	Color Lumens	Average Color Temp.
Presentation	2953	N.A.	6000
High-Bright	3930	785	5778
Video	1484	N.A.	6152
Movie	1630	1107	5674
Blackboard	2914	N.A.	6032
User 1	2914	N.A.	5674
User 2*	1150*	N.A.	6517*

Notes:

* User 2 measured values were taken after calibration of the color balance to produce a color temperature of near 6500K across the grey scale. Measurements for all other picture modes were made using the factory, out-of-the-box settings.

All brightness measurements (i.e, taken at the center screen position) were made with the projector's zoom lens at it mid-point. With the very limited zoom range of this projector's lens, the brightness as compared to using a mid-zoom setting effectively did not change at maximum zoom and decreased by only approx. 4% at minimum zoom.

Brightness measurements reported in the above table were with the projector operating in normal (i.e., high lamp) mode. Setting the lamp to Eco mode reduced the measured brightness by approx. 27%.

Brightness uniformity was only fair with a measured approx. 40% drop in brightness from the center of the image to the dimmest corner of the image.

Color uniformity appeared good with projecting a full screen white test image.

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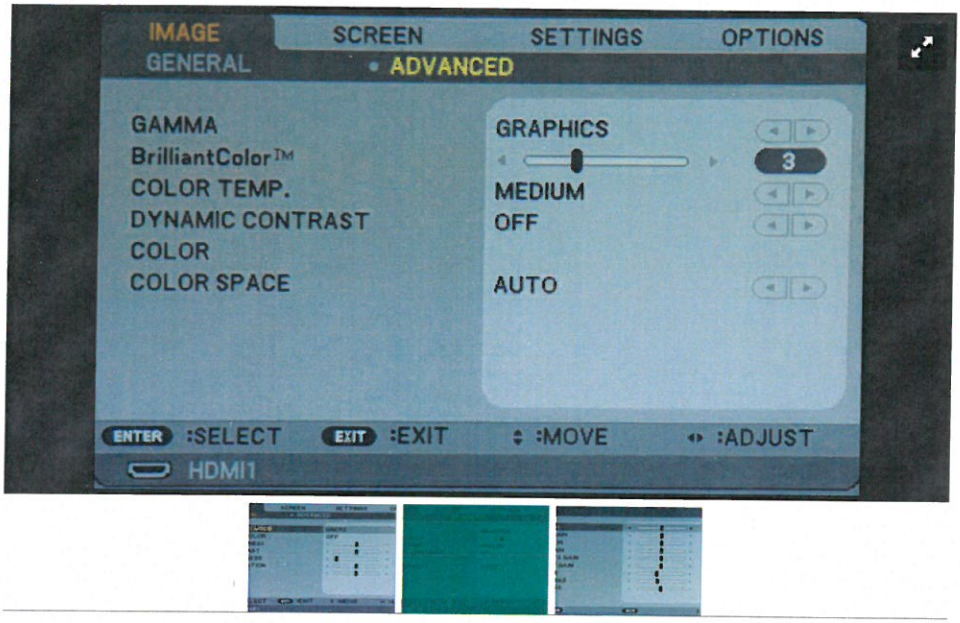
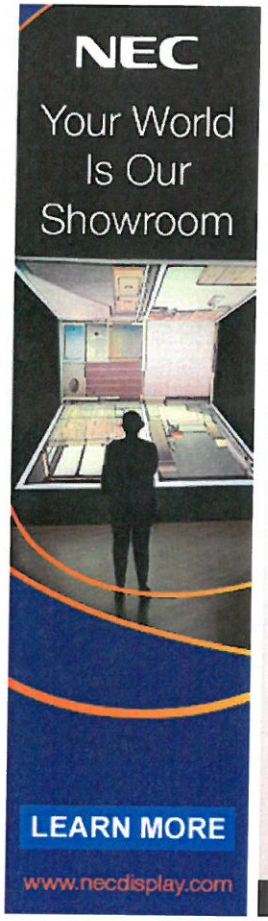
I only measured the Color Brightness (color lumens) for two of the Image Modes (i.e., High-Bright and Movie). Color brightness in the brighter color modes (e.g., High-Bright was substantially lower than the white brightness, but no more so that I have seen on certain other single chip DLP business or classroom projectors. This has to do with the Brilliant Color feature and the use of clear segment in the projector's color wheel to pump-up the brightness of whites and lighter color shades, but displaying well saturated colors too dark in comparison. For more information on color brightness see our short video on the subject – HERE.

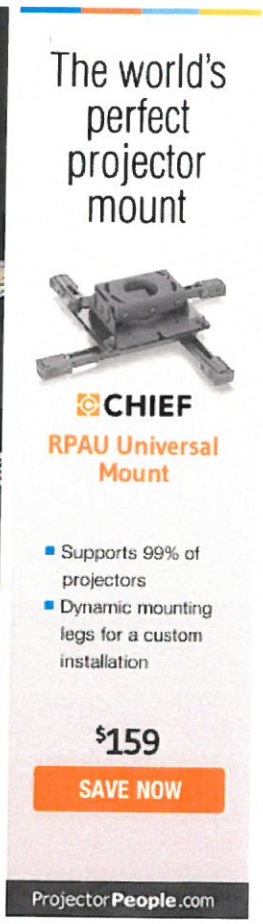
CUSTOM USER SETTINGS



In addition of the 5 pre-defined Image (i.e., Picture) modes, this projector offers two User Image Modes (i.e., User 1 and User 2). Changes to the various picture adjustments will be saved to the projector's memory for these two User Image Modes. I used the User 2 setting to perform a quick calibration of the color temperature (color balance) across the grey scale and to adjust a few of the other settings, including reducing the effect of the "Brilliant Color" feature, to obtain a more accurate picture than was available with any of the factory out-of-the-box Image Modes.

The 1st of the 3 photos in the gallery above shows the settings used for the top-level Image Menu > General. The 2nd photo shows the Image Menu > Advanced settings. The 3rd photo shows the Color sub-menu settings, that is found under mImage Menu > Advanced. I must note that on this Color Menu I found that Gain adjustments appeared to be non-functional as they did not alter the image when adjusted. However, the 3 Bias adjustments did function, but acted more ventional gain adjustments. In any case, these adjustment were sufficient to obtain good color temperature tracking at near 6500K across the grey scale as shown below.





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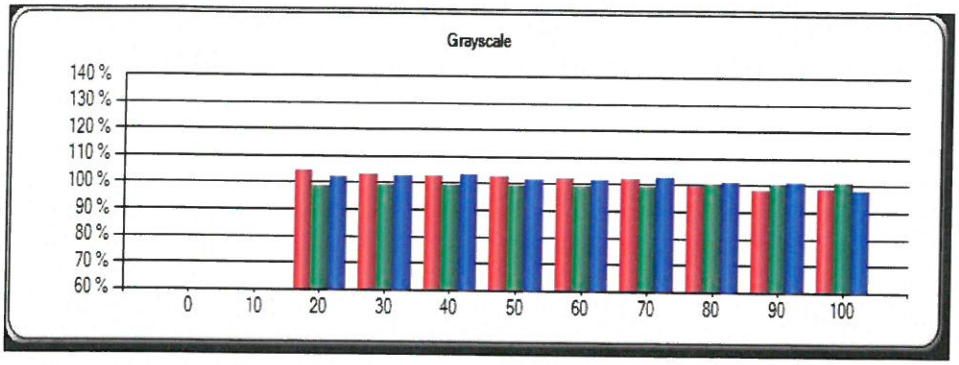

Note the optimum user adjustments for the color settings ma vary from unit-to-unit and even for a new lamp vs. one that has a few hundred of hours of run time.

NOISE

The projector's noise (mainly fan noise) is spec'ed at 35 dB in normal (high lamp) mode, which is about typical for a business/classroom projector with around 3000 lumens brightness. However, I found this projector to produce below average noise levels when operating in normal (i.e., high) lamp mode, as compared to other business/classroom projectors that I have reviewed that offer similar actual maximum picture brightness (i.e., near 4000 lumens measured brightness in the High-Bright picture mode). The noise level in Eco mode is specified at 29 dB and it does decrease noticeably as compared to normal model. The bottom line is this projector should be quiet enough for use in just about any conference or classroom environment.

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7. NEC NP-V332W Projector Review – Warranty

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The NEC NP-V332W has a 2 year parts and labor warranty for the projector itself while the lamp carries a 1 year or 500 hour (whichever comes first) warranty. Warranty service may be handled through your NEC dealer or directly with NEC. In the event the projector needs to be returned for warranty service, the owner is responsible the shipping charges to get the projector to NEC, or an authorized service center. NEC provides an toll free phone number and returns must be authorized in advance by NEC.

NEC offers an extra cost extended warranty, with either 1 or 2 years of additional coverage. Some other manufacturers offer an overnight replacement service as part of their basic warranty while this is only available as a extra cost option from NEC.

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8. NEC NP-V332W Projector Review – Summary

December 16, 2016 - Ron Jones

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NEC NP-V332W Projector Review – Summary: Summary, Pros, Cons

SUMMARY

The NEC NP-V332W offers a feature set and the performance to make it a viable contender in the very competitive under $600 business/classroom projector category. The two primary competing projector technologies in this market segment are those using DLP vs. 3LCD for their micro-display panels. Each technology has its pluses and minuses and NP-V332W is a good example of DLP technology in an affordable business/classroom projector. It measured almost 4000 lumens in its brightest picture mode, or well above the manufacturer specified 3300 value. As with many other DLP projectors of this class, the colors were rather poor in the brightest mode, but that mode could still prove useful for when forced to make business presentations in a room with excessive room lighting.

The projected image was very sharp providing for excellent readability of text and presentation slides. There was very good focus across the entire image.

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The picture modes offering the best color accuracy with the out-of-the-box settings produced fairly good results. However, using a User picture mode, along with a few user adjustments, improved the picture to "very good" status, for this class of projector (see the Performance section of this review for the custom settings that were used).

This projector offers good built-in networking support with a rear panel RJ-45 jack for connection to a LAN and also doing double duty for connection to a HDBaseT multimedia network. Wireless networking is not offered however. The projector is also compatible with Crestron RoomView (TM) for control and management. Mobile devices and various dongles supporting MHL can be connected to the HDMI #1 input port for improved connectivity/functionality.

The NP-V332W does lack built-in "PC-Free" multimedia support for giving presentations, slide shows, videos directly from an attached USB drive. This feature is found on some competing projectors, including some other models from NEC. However, in this sub-$600 price range, most projector manufacturers must omit some potential features in order to meet a target price point.

PROS

- High brightness in the brightest mode
- Very good color accuracy possible with a few user adjustments
- Very good (wired) networking support built-in
- Support for Crestron RoomView (TM) for control/management
- Support for MHL via the HDMI #1 input
- Virtual remote tool allows users to utilize virtual remote functionality from a connected (i.e., LAN or serial) PC
- Very sharp image with excellent text and graphics readability
- Offers 3D support (requires optional DLP-Link 3D glasses)
- Quick power on and supports direct power off
- Good warranty, with better that average lamp warranty, while extended warranty options are available at extra cost
- No air filter cleaning required

CONS

- Color brightness substantially lower than white brightness (typical for DLP projectors of this class)
- The best out-of-the-box picture modes produce a color accuracy a little below that of typical 3LCD based business/education projector (i.e., requires user adjustments to improve)
- No built-in support for PC-free presentations from USB flash drive or internal memory (as found on some competing projectors)
- No wireless network support
- Remote has no backlight making to difficult to use under dim lighting conditions.

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