

Epson EB-Z8000WU

Plenty of life in LCD yet.

Text:\Paul Newton



HAVING WORKED PRIMARILY WITH DLP projectors over the years I have developed a somewhat jaundice attitude towards LCD projection. I've had a lot of negative experiences with trying to colour match LCD projectors in the past. The polarisers seemed to age quite quickly (due to heat) which resulted in terrible discolouration across the panel which turned colour balancing into an all-night exercise.

The EB-Z8000 is the latest 6000 ANSI offering from Epson. The native resolution of the panel is 1920 x 1200 (WUXGA). The projector is powered by two 330W UHE lamps with a power consumption of just under 900W. The chassis and overall design of the EB-Z8000 is sleek and neat – this projector would not look out of place in a modern boardroom or lecture theatre. It's not a bad size for an 6000 ANSI LCD projector of this brightness (dimensions of 534mm x 734mm x 167mm and weight of 22kg) and has a low operating noise level compared with its DLP cousins.

The six available lenses provide a wide range of projector placement options, and are easily interchanged with a bayonet-style connector.

ON THE MENU

The Epson engineers have created a great menu system that's very straight forward to use – there's no real chance of getting lost in there, which is a refreshing change. I felt very comfortable navigating my way through all of the menus. I had an image on screen and was playing with the colouring and geometry settings within five minutes. I used my MacBook Pro laptop that has a matching WUXGA display for testing this projector. The colour reproduction is pretty impressive. I changed my colour profiles a few times and the projector responded well. I use a desktop with lots of grey content and hatching, and the reproduction was stunning. Fast moving content also performed well via the HDMI/DVI and the standard video connectors. The

images seemed very stable, crisp and with no noticeable interpolation.

Composite video looked pretty average; but so it should when stretched to fill a WUXGA panel! I didn't have the equipment on hand to test HD component but would have liked to have tried.

PLENTY TO TWEAK

I am not usually a fan of keystone adjustments, as I've always preferred to position the projector in its correct location, but I really like the way you can adjust the four corners of the image separately in addition to the traditional H and V adjustments. Aspect ratio adjustment is equally simple, with easy-to-use with controls quite similar to my LCD TV at home: Normal, Auto, 16:9, Full, Native or Zoom. Colour control is very responsive. You can select between six different presets (Dynamic, Presentation, Theatre, Photo, Sports, sRGB) or you can adjust individual colours using the Custom option.

While most projectors look good out of the box, I would like to see what this projector looks like with a few hundred hours on its lamps, panels and polarisers (saying that, the generous four-year warranty certainly allays most fears). I'd also like to see what it would be like matching two of these units together, but unfortunately there was only one preview unit available. That said, the EB-Z8000 is a good performer. I was pleasantly surprised at the image quality and brightness of this model. My only previous exposure to Epson projectors had been with very small (sub 5000 ANSI) projectors, and this was a long time ago, so overall, I'm impressed.

There are a host of 'permanent install' features such as security/password options, PC remote control, auto power off and auto-locking, as well as LAN and AMX connectivity. There is one final feature that I like; there is no cool down delay when you are finished. When you power down you can unplug the cables and avoid the usual five-minute wait. ⚡

PRODUCT DETAILS



Epson Australia: www.epson.com.au or
1300 130 194
Price: \$25,995 (inc GST)