



Audio Visual Systems

## **16:10 Widescreen Projection – The Way of the Future**

Widescreen projection has been a feature of the domestic AV market over the last 10 years but has crept into the education market and exploded of late. More and more, teachers and presenters are coming to realise that they can make more of an impact with wide powerful images and as such the widescreen projector is becoming more apparent in the average classroom.

For some time now, the standard TV/projector screen size ratio has been 4:3, whereas widescreen displays introduce a much larger 16:10 format. Ergonomists' have been recommending widescreen for a long time, because it is thought that human vision is better adapted to width than height. It is said to offer a more 'natural' view, especially when you consider that we see in a kind of widescreen with our eyes. With widescreen you can see approximately 33% more compared to the more conventional 4:3 format.

Widescreen projection offers more width in the image over the standard 4:3, which from a desktop point of view means more windows open at one time or more aspects (i.e. toolbars of a software application that can be visible at the one time). More horizontal space also allows users to use a larger surface to project wide spreadsheets, presentations, corporate videos and allow more interactive whiteboard space.

It seems with all the inherent advantages of widescreen projection and the increasing amount of widescreen laptops appearing in classrooms, the next big decision to face the school community is whether or not to stick to the current 4:3 format or branch out into 16:10. Of course there might be some issues faced with the more conventional 4:3 format. For instance if a 4:3 projector is installed in conjunction with an Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) and they were to plug in a 16:10 laptop then they would have to do one of two things. The first would be to adjust the video properties of the laptop to ensure the image fits well on the IWB – a nightmare for most IT Managers let alone staff who are not so technology savvy. Or alternatively they would have to allow for the projector to 'letter box' (a process by which the widescreen image would need to transfer into standard format whilst preserving the image's original aspect ratio) This would drastically reduce the space on the IWB, which is particularly an issue for a standard size IWB, as the area to work with would only continue to get smaller.

However, with that latest generation of IWB recently released, the issue of decreased board space would diminish. Unlike conventional Interactive Whiteboards the 2Touch is 1.2 x 2.4m in length, making it horizontally longer than most out on the market. The extra board space for teachers is invaluable, and coupled with a widescreen projector it can prove to be an innovative addition to the classroom.

Considering all these factors it would appear that widescreen projection is seemingly the way of the future for many classrooms throughout Victoria. With the new range of widescreen projectors recently released onto the market and readily available, schools have at their disposal a tool which offers them more horizontal space and a larger surface in which to gauge their pupil's attention – even in the smallest of classrooms.

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