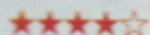


OFFICE PROJECTOR

OPTOMA EH320UST



£1,462 inc VAT • From projectorpoint.co.uk

VERDICT

A versatile ultra-short-throw projector with a useful optional interactivity module

ULTRA SHORT-THROW projectors are great for rooms where space is tight, as they create a huge image without needing to be miles away from the projection surface. The Optoma EH320UST creates a 2m diagonal image from just 45cm away, which is one of the shortest throw distances we've seen.

At the maximum throw distance of 59cm the projector produces a huge 2.54m image, and it looks super sharp at any size thanks to the 0.65in DLP chip's 1,920x1,080 Full HD resolution. The 4,000 lumen lamp is incredibly bright and easily overcomes overhead lights.

Colours aren't particularly vibrant, however. The projector prioritises brightness and contrast for easy viewing in even the most difficult environments, which means bright colours appear a little washed out. The BrilliantColor setting is switched on by default, and you'll want to keep it at its maximum for the most eye-catching colours. We found that the Bright colour preset offers the best overall image quality, although Presentation mode is less harsh on the eyes and is probably a better bet for longer stints. Text on presentations is easy to read, though, and the claimed 20,000:1 contrast ratio means even darker images are pretty well presented too.

WATCH YOUR BACK

The projector lens is mounted near the rear of the unit, which means all the connectors are at the front. This keeps cable mess to a minimum as you can easily route cables away from the projector without obscuring the lens. The projector can be wall or ceiling mounted or placed on a table, although considering its large size and 5kg weight, mounting would be preferable.



The EH320UST is extremely versatile when it comes to connectivity. It has two HDMI ports, two VGA ports, a composite connector, two 3.5mm audio jacks, a network cable for monitoring and a USB port. The USB port is only for connecting a computer to control the projector – you can't use it to play media or open files natively, although this is hardly an issue for an office device.

We were very disappointed with the EH320UST's sound quality in our tests. The 16W speakers were able to reach high volumes but there was almost no bass presence and high-frequency sounds such as speech caused some distortion and rattled the projector's plastic housing. If you're in a larger room and you want to fill it with sound, you'll need to invest in separate speakers. At least fan noise is reasonably quiet – at 28dB it's definitely audible but is muffled by the chassis and isn't a distraction.

LIGHT TOUCH

The EH320UST is available with an optional interactive TouchBeam module, which you can mount to any projection surface to turn it into an interactive touchscreen. The TouchBeam module is powered by the projector and connects to your PC or laptop over USB. In effect it acts as a separate input device and has multiple touch points, so you can use your fingers (or the supplied pens) to perform multitouch gestures or have multiple contributors drawing on the screen at once. Setup is a little complicated and we had to perform some fiddly manual adjustment to get everything working, but after the initial setup the only time you'll need to mess with calibration options is if the projector or

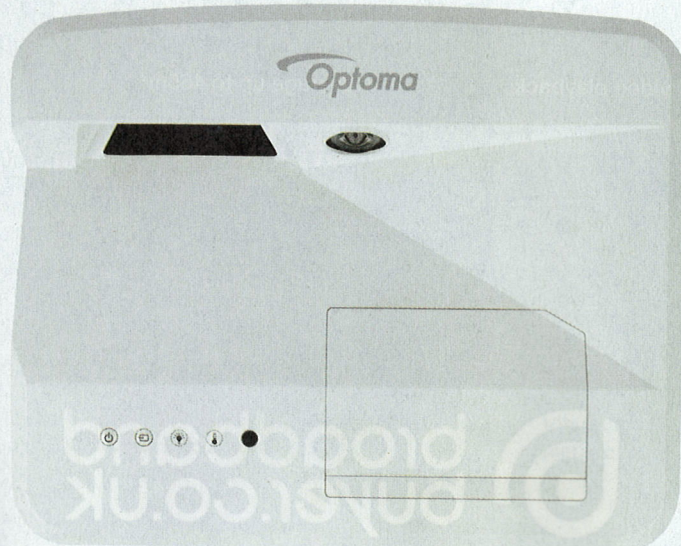
projection surface is knocked and moves slightly.

The touch module produces a curtain of infrared light, which is detected by a sensor on the projector. A touch is registered wherever the beam is broken, which means any completely flat surface is suitable. Touch inputs were very accurate, even when several people were drawing at once. The sensor sometimes ran into problems when two users got too close to one another and it became slightly confused as to which touch point belonged to which person. The projector and TouchBeam module are sold together as the EH320USTi for £1,662 including VAT. The extra £200 makes the module a pretty expensive addition, but for presentations and meetings it could be very useful. Optoma doesn't supply or recommend any specialised whiteboard software, although we found Microsoft Office 2013 and MS Paint perfectly usable.

The Optoma EH320UST is a versatile projector that fits into the tightest spaces. With plenty of inputs and a bright lamp, it's suitable for use in any office, although this versatility is offset by a slight lack of colour vibrancy. The optional interactivity features are accurate and fun to use, and our only real reservation is with the disappointing speakers, as you'll need to buy an external set.

If you want a short-throw projector for the living room, Optoma's GT1080 is a better option, with vibrant colours and optional 3D making it perfect for movies and games.

Michael Passingham



SPECIFICATIONS

PROJECTOR TYPE Single-chip DLP • **NATIVE RESOLUTION** 1,920x1,080 • **VIDEO INPUTS** 2x HDMI, 2x VGA, Composite • **LAMP LIFE** 3,000h • **LAMP BRIGHTNESS** 4,000 lumen • **SIZE** 99x385x310mm • **WEIGHT** 4.9kg • **WARRANTY** Three years RTB • **DETAILS** www.optoma.co.uk

CONNECTION PORTS

VGA x2



Composite



HDMI x2

