

Technology Review

Your FVFS Guide to Shopping for Technology Buying equipment online: How reliable is it?

Looking for a **DVD projector**, but not sure where to start? This column should help you find the right equipment for your purposes.

Several film societies have found that online specialist **JustProjectors.com.au** can be a good place to begin. Not only do they sell a very wide variety of high quality DVD projectors and related equipment, but they have a very helpful, well-organised **Buyer's Guide** that dedicates a full page to the needs of each of 6 types of venues: home theatre, school, business, church, multi-use, pubs and clubs.

For example, on the "**Home Theatre**" page the Guide tells you what brightness level you'll require, what you'll need to know about image quality, what native aspect ratio is (plenty of

helpful terminology tips!), whether you should ceiling-mount the projector, what inputs/connections you should use, what else to look for when buying, and what projectors are recommended for each kind of venue.

The website also has a separate "**Projector FAQ**" and a page on choosing the right screen. And if you still have questions – and of course you will -- you can also phone to talk to someone knowledgeable for advice about your specific digital projection needs.

If you're unfamiliar with the requirements of digital projection, this is a good place to start your search. And, perhaps, complete your search!

Shopping for your film society equipment (and other stuff) online at www.eBay.com.au

Try it! It's safe and reliable. And, like most marketplaces, fabulous fun just to browse!

Can I find a DVD projector or a 16 mm projector on eBay?

Maybe. Probably. eBay doesn't stock things. It's a place *to* shop, but it's not *a* shop or a warehouse. It's "merely" a marketplace where those who have something to sell can offer it to the world. And if you like what's being offered you might be able to buy it.

You do that by placing a "Bid" on the item at those Sellers who are selling by "Auction". Or

by directly purchasing it from those Sellers who are selling using the "Buy It Now" method.

Is anyone on eBay selling DVD projectors at the moment? Let's have a look.

I'm at www.eBay.com.au, I enter the words *DVD Projector* into the "search field" at the top of the eBay website and click the blue "Search" button. eBay searches all its Sellers and creates a list of things. It's a big list. Five pages worth.

I can "narrow down" the list in all sorts of ways. All the narrowing down methods and criteria are shown in the left hand column. For instance: Sold only in Australia, priced between \$1 and \$500, Only the brands InFocus and Epson etc.

Next to those items taking bids I see what's been the highest bid so far and when the bidding closes. Whoever offers the most money for the item by the date bids close gets the item.

I click on one of the DVD projectors displayed. That takes me to a page with photos, technical details, explanations of payment methods and delivery methods and fees.

But what I *first* want to see is the *reputation* of this Seller! Reputation, according to who? Not University professors. Not politicians or bureaucrats. Not self-appointed watchdog groups. Your reputation as a Seller is determined by (drum roll): Customers!

Right, there's the information. I can see how *many* previous customers this Seller has had, the *rating* they each gave him, and even what they've *said* about him. This bloke has made 1,667 sales. His reputation is 99.5%. Pretty good. In the last 6 months he's gotten 654 positive customer reviews and 6 negatives.

Now just think about it. If you were a Seller on eBay, what would matter to you more than

anything else in the world? And what would you fear most? Answer: Happy Customers versus Unhappy Customers. Right? Darn right! Customer praise means you'll get more customers. Customer criticism means fewer or zilch.

But be on your best Buyer's behavior, because Buyers get rated by Sellers as well! (*Anonymous: Hey, that sucks!*) No, it doesn't. It's a free market! A two-way street! Everyone takes responsibility. Reputation is everything in the free marketplace. That's your best guarantee for safe online shopping!

And, in case you're wondering: Yes! Of course you too can become a Seller on eBay! "Both a Buyer and a Seller be!"



November 2005: Original Hollywood sign SOLD through eBay for \$450,400

EX-RENTAL EQUIPMENT?

Feeling Lucky? Check for ex-rental DVD Projectors at places like TR Vidcom!

During 2007 and 2008 the FVFS sold 10 DVD projector packages -- assembled by Ian Davidson -- to affiliated film societies. The DVD projectors in these packages were ex-rental units sold by TechRentals in Blackburn, now known as **TR Vidcom**.

If you're looking for a DVD projector, TR Vidcom is one place to check for a quality bargain. While they

do not always have ex-rental DVD projectors available, you never know when you might get lucky!

PS: For more information on how to put together a DVD projector package for your film society, see [Information Sheet #18](#) on the FVFS website:

<http://www.fvfs.org.au/ideas>