Although the liquid crystal display (LCD) projector is becoming the presentation-tool of choice, overhead projectors are still considered one of the most popular presentation tools in today's marketplace. Like LCD or digital light processing (DLP) projectors, overhead projectors offer many advantages while giving presentations, especially the ability to modify transparencies mid-presentation. With overhead projectors trainers can highlight important points with a transparency pen, write on blank acetate film similar to a chalkboard, disclose information progressively with an opaque cover, modify the sequence of training material to accommodate audience questions and transfer virtually any type of content to a transparency. In addition, transparency materials are relatively inexpensive and easy to prepare.

Now that you know some of the advantages of overhead projectors, let's look at some of the main features that will help you determine which overhead projector is best for you, your audience and organization. These features include: projector optics, brightness, design, portability and power. Overhead projectors generally have a single-, double- or triple-element lens. The greater number of elements in a lens determines the quality of image. In addition, the lens has different housing options: open head or closed head. Open heads allow easy focusing and cleaning of the mirror whereas closed heads reduce dust and offer greater protection for the mirror and lens. Like LCD projectors, more lumens create a brighter image. Some overhead projectors offer dual-lumen settings to accommodate various brightness requirements. How the overhead projector is used determines the size, weight and design of the tool. Let's look at some of the top overhead projector models in today’s marketplace.

Dukane Corporation is a global manufacturer and marketer of advanced technology products that include audiovisual equipment, presentation projectors, ultrasonic plastic assembly systems, plastic joining equipment and underwater location devices. The Dukane Starfire series features transportable, compact overhead projectors that have a low-profile foldaway design. Each Starfire model—SF4030, SF4010 or SF3010—includes a triplet lens configuration, ABS base, soft-start electronic power supply, 180-degree rotating head, quiet, high-efficiency fan, rack and pinion focus, and 13-inch lens focal length. Brightness on these models ranges from 3,000 to 6,000 lumens. To learn more about the Dukane Starfire series, see www.dukcorp.com/audiovisual/products/Item_Overheads.asp?Model=Portable%20Series.

Eiki International Inc. is a manufacturer and marketer of a broad range of projection technologies for education, government and business communication. Eiki has many different overhead projector models available. The Eiki 4000 ANSI Lumens Performance Overhead Projector-Reflected Transmissive (FXL) can be used in normal room light and is ideal for LCD panel presentations. Its key features include: steel frame, die-cast aluminum arm and post, triplet or singlet lenses, dual cooling fans, dual AC power outlets, transmissive optimal system and more. The Eiki 4000 ANSI Lumens Performance Overhead Projector-Direct Transmissive (EVD), on the other hand, is an inexpensive high-light projector. This overhead includes: super-bright EVD Quartz-Halogen lamp, all-steel frame, UL-listed tempered safety glass, thermal fuse, double interlock and heavy-duty three-prong power cord. For more information on Eiki overhead projectors, see www.eiki.com/Products/Classroom.aspx.

ELMO USA Corp. develops presentation technologies. The company’s HP-L1102 and HP-L3600 are the latest tabletop-type overhead projectors. Their features include: foldable arm for easy storage, 10- by-10-inch aperture, rack-and-pinion focusing, quick lamp change device, efficient open head with 360-degree rotation, stage interlock switch, safety thermal protection, forced-air cooling, and metal and ABS body construction. The HP-L1102 has a 285mm lens whereas the HP-L3600 has a 360mm high-resolution triplet lens. An optional writing roll attachment is
available for both overhead projectors. To learn more about ELMO USA, visit www.elmousa.com/presentation/index.html.

3M is a diversified technology company. Its products and services range from displays and graphics, electronics and telecommunications to products for the manufacturing and health care industries. For more than 40 years, 3M has developed and improved its overhead-projection products. The latest 3M 1700 Plus and 1800 Plus Series enhancements include: chemically hardened, break-resistant stage glass, a reengineered top cover casing for easy replacement of stage glass, a dual-element fresnel lens for screen clarity and a reengineered on/off button. The products’ durable stage glass can result in less maintenance, interruptions and repair expenses. Model 1895, for example, includes 4,300 lumens and a five-year warranty. Model 2000 is a portable overhead projector designed for professionals on the go. This overhead projector features a 1,600-lumen output lamp, a singlet 11.5-inch focal length wide-angle lens and weighs approximately 14 pounds. To learn more about 3M’s products, see www.3m.com/us/office/meetings/index.jhtml.

Vutec Corporation is a global provider of video-projection-screen technology and accessories for home, commercial, industrial and institutional markets. The company has various overhead-projector models available. The Eagle 3000 Lumen Overhead Projector is portable, weighs eight pounds and includes a reflective overhead in its own case. The Executive Overhead Projector comes with its own portable lamp charger with hard case, hi-to-low lamp switch, overheating protection, high-definition projection lens and reflective fresnel lens. The Educator, which comes in several models, is a user-friendly overhead projector with a 360-degree swivel head for left- and right-hand users, heavy-duty 17-watt fan cooling motor, carry handle and more. For more information about Vutec’s overhead projectors, visit www.vutec.com/vutec/av-products.pdf.

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