

Planar takes the fight to InFocus

DLP PROJECTOR
PLANAR
PD7010

★★★★★

£ 1100

FOR

Excellent black depth, leading to good contrast for the price; lush colours; small; cheap

AGAINST

Not especially bright; remote is on the fiddly side

VERDICT

A strong budget debut: this is a quality HD-Ready projector for a very attractive price

The new InFocus? Not quite: this is actually an all-new Planar projector

LOOK FAMILIAR? It ought to: Planar's development team includes several ex-InFocus engineers, so it's no surprise the company's new PD7010 DLP projector looks similar to the acclaimed InFocus IN76.

Of course, they always say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and given the IN76's sheer

"The Planar has terrific black depth and strong reproduction of blacks"

brilliance, we can't blame Planar for its dedicated following of fashion.

That said, the Planar has cut a few corners next to its rival: it does without the clever, useful plinth that adorns the IN76, and its basic remote control and onscreen graphics are notably less user-friendly.

Still, there's nothing at all wrong with the Planar's underpinnings. It includes an HD-Ready 1280 x 720 Texas Instruments DC2 chipset, and (unlike many rivals), also uses TI's proprietary video scaling and deinterlacing. The socket fit is up to

scratch at this price, with HDMI and DVI included, and it'll accept all HD resolutions up to 1080i.

Some of you might bemoan the absence of 1080p support (or, indeed, native 1080p resolution), but let's be realistic: this is a very affordable projector. It's also a very good one, with terrific black depth and strong delineation between various dark hues. It readily deciphers the murk of oft-used test DVD *Training Day*, and copes just as comfortably with the ultra-rich hues and cartoonish texture of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

True, compared to an equivalent LCD design, such as the excellent Panasonic PT-AX100E (£1375), you might find the Planar lacking in overall brightness, but so long as you stick to using it in a properly darkened room, you'll be fine.

Shiny curves appeal strongly

This is a strong debut projector. It's not quite as user-friendly as the class best, but it's competitive on performance and notably cheaper and, despite its somewhat-derivative styling, it's also a looker. At the price, you can't really go wrong.



ALSO CONSIDER ?

PANASONIC
PT-AX100E

★★★★★

£1300

March 2007

This LCD design stands up against the best that DLP can offer at the price... and wins

INFOCUS
IN76

★★★★★

£1400

March 2007

This remains a great projector with an impressive array of talents; easy to set up, too