

## PROJECTION

# Is Rear Projection a Good Choice for the Portable Church?

If you have plans to start a portable church, one of your biggest concerns is probably projection. From deciding which projectors you are going to need, to where you are going to place them, and what type of screen or screens to get, using projection in a portable situation can cause plenty of headaches in the early planning stages.

Think about the following scenario: you are presenting worship in a high school gymnasium, and doing a complete set-up and tear-down of all your gear every weekend. You know you want to be able to run lyrics on screen, and you are also streaming your pastor live from the main campus for the message. Since you are setting up in a gymnasium, you can use the risers for seating, as well as setting up some rows right on the gym floor in front of your stage. Whether you are running lyrics and live streaming the message on one main screen, or two smaller screens on either side of the stage, your projector(s) have to be placed somewhere. Unless you have a great relationship with the school, you can't hang your projectors from the ceiling and leave them there between services every week, and even if you could, is the risk of flying basketballs really worth it?

You could set them up on the floor, probably between rows of seats, but then you need to worry about taping down the cords to avoid

tripping hazards. Not only that, you would be taking up valuable floor space where you could have seats for your attendees. Placing the projectors on the floor also means that congregants sitting near them will have to deal with the sound and the heat they throw, and this is all before you even consider ambient light, viewing angles and sightlines!

Our question to you is this: have you considered rear projection as a solution to your dilemma?

Purchasing a rear projection system means using rear projection screens, which allow the projected image to pass through it. This typically means the image is brighter than what you would get with front-projection, where the image reflects back to the congregants from the screen. It also means that a rear projector can handle more ambient light than front projection can.

Using a rear projection system requires space behind the screens – depending on the projector you are using, at least 10 feet. If your portable space is large enough, this probably won't be an issue. Another benefit of rear projection is that you don't need to give up valuable seat space in favor of placing a projector on the floor in front of the stage. Being able to have your projectors back stage and behind the screens also means you won't have line-of-sight issues, or

congregants 'feeling the heat/hearing the hum beside them. And tripping hazards? With projector chords tucked out of the way behind the scenes, they're practically non-existent.

What happens if you move to a permanent facility?

If you are a portable church with plans to relocate to a permanent facility, it's important to look at your gear for both your current (portable) needs, as well as your future (fixed) needs. Rear projection can be a wonderful solution for fixed facility placement for all the same reasons

they work for portable churches. However, if rear projection just isn't feasible for the main projection in your planned permanent location, you could still look at using the system in your overflow room, youth room, Sunday school, or even for your next portable church plant. As with all things, purchase with purpose. Rear projectors – and the screens you need to use with them – are a great solution for many, but the cost factor cannot be ignored, especially if you think you will only be using them for a year or two while your new facility is being built. ■

### A WORD OF ADVICE...

Rear projection screens can be more prone to hot-spots, which is a bright spot that appears in your projected image. Hot-spots aren't just limited to rear projection either. They typically occur with higher gain and specialized ambient light rejecting (ALR) projection surfaces. This is often the cause of off-axis projection or trying to use a short-throw (ST) projector with an ALR material. Albeit there are a few exceptions, most ALR materials are not designed for use with "ST"-projectors. Specialty materials always present the greatest risk of occurrence so it is best to check with the manufacturer if ever you have a doubt.

*\*David Rodgers, Elite Screens*