

SOUND & VISION

From Spotlight test report, "Plasma Panorama," in May 2005 S&V.
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in the lab

	VIZIO	HP	PIONEER	PANASONIC
COLOR TEMPERATURE (before/after calibration)	(Normal/User)	(Warm/User)	(Low/Low)	(Warm/Warm)
Low window	9,814 K/6,606 K	9,558 K/7,478 K	6,449 K	6,334 K/6,444 K
High window	9,970 K/6,442 K	8,027 K/6,614 K	6,331 K	6,814 K/6,594 K
BRIGHTNESS (after calibration)	35.3 fTL	37.3 fTL	36.4 fTL	34.8 fTL

The Pioneer and Panasonic TVs measured very close to the standard 6,500-K grayscale spec with their Low and Warm color temperatures, respectively. Grayscale tracking on the Pioneer was accurate enough that calibration wasn't required. After calibration, the Panasonic's grayscale tracking measured within a very respectable ± 300 -IRE window. The Vizio and HP, meanwhile, measured within a $\pm 1,000$ -K window — relatively poor performance. (Calibration needs to be performed by a qualified technician with specialized equipment, so discuss it with your dealer before purchase, or call the Imaging Science Foundation at 561-997-9073.)

Color-decoder error varied slightly among the four TVs, with the Vizio's — 10% red being the largest deviation. Picture overscan also varied consider-

ably. The HP measured 0% on its DVI input but 4% on all other inputs. On the Vizio, overscan averaged around 3%. The same applied to the Panasonic, while the Pioneer averaged around 2%.

Sequences on a Silicon Optix test DVD also showed a wide variance in 2:3 pulldown, or the sets' ability to handle standard 480i images originally shot on film. The HP and Pioneer performed best, measuring in the 10° to 20° range on a Jaggies test pattern and showing good performance on one of the Detail tests. The Pioneer showed occasional progressive-scan upconversion hiccups with movie DVDs, however. Performance of both the Panasonic and Vizio was well below that of the other two TVs on these tests.

— A.G.