

# NEC displays help Jim Jordan Photography & White Cross Productions portray a superior image

**Facility:**

- Jim Jordan Photography / White Cross Productions

**Vertical:**

- Photography

**Location:**

- Los Angeles, CA / New York City

**Challenges:**

- Ensure color accuracy between monitors and through to printed page for some of the most recognizable faces in the world

**Solution:**

- 27" NEC MultiSync PA272W

**Result:**

- The color accuracy and lifelike appearance have helped Jordan create tighter bonds with his celebrity clientele

**Date:**

- Summer 2013

When you first hear Jim Jordan's life story, it sounds like one that would take place in front of the cameras in Hollywood rather than behind one. A surfer and skater in his youth, the California native is now one of the world's most renowned and sought-after celebrity and fashion photographers.

His work has graced the pages (and covers) of trend-setting magazines such as Elle, Vogue, Marie Claire and Vanity Fair. He has created memorable ads and catalogs for J. Crew, Levi, Straus & Co., De Beers and many more. And the celebrities!

Jordan has captured the images (figuratively as well as literally) of A-listers from Charlize Theron to Leonardo DiCaprio, Jessica Alba, Drew Barrymore, Mila Kunis and many others. Whether in his studios in Los Angeles and New York or an exotic, tough-to-get-to location in the farthest reaches of the world, his clients trust him to create just the right shot, with just the right mood, to show off people and/or products at their absolute best.

A big part of the reason these well-known faces put their trust in Jordan is his commitment to getting every detail just so. Which makes sense given his beginnings in the business.

Jordan started in high school as a model scout, bringing fresh new faces to the attention of various modeling agencies. He introduced prospective models to Greg Glassman, a neighbor who operated a photo studio and who would go on to found the CrossFit exercise empire. Jordan would do the hair and makeup, and Glassman, would shoot the photos.

His experience there led to a 15-year career doing hair and makeup on shoots with well-known photographers such as Herb Ritts, Helmut Newton and Peter Lindbergh. Jordan worked with the likes of Cindy Crawford, Elizabeth Taylor, Sophia Lauren and Farrah Fawcett.

During this time, he indulged his own interest in photography, sparked by the gift of his first camera from Glassman. Jordan took shots between the official photography sessions, impressing his actor and supermodel subjects who encouraged him to find an agent to help him get work as





a photographer. They also recommended his photographic prowess to the companies that were hiring him to art direct the shoots.

Jordan's first big break came when J. Crew hired him to shoot a catalog. Success there led to meeting more people, leading to more shoots and helping him build the business to where it is today.

Jim Jordan Photography employs seven full-time employees in Los Angeles and four in New York. In recent years the company has added commercial and multimedia creation to its portfolio, helping individuals and companies create unique, cutting-edge brand images. A separate company, White Cross Productions, provides talent management for actors, directors, makeup artists and others.

One of the biggest reasons Jim Jordan Photography has been so successful is the trust Jordan and his team earned from the people with whom they work. Whether it's how an actor or actress will look on a magazine cover or how a brand will be portrayed to its customers, a lot rides on the final outcome. Jordan and his team take great care throughout the process and use the best equipment for the results they want to achieve.

## The Challenge

Getting an image just right in the demanding world of celebrity and fashion photography is a painstaking effort. It starts with using high-quality cameras, such as the Leica S system that is used for all studio shoots and as the Canon EOS 1DX for location and other shoots. Jim only trusts Lexar memory cards to capture his images. The images then go through extensive retouching, editing and refinement using Wacom Intuos5 tablets on Apple Mac Pro workstations with multiple graphics cards. All of the files are stored on Seagate hard drives in a sophisticated RAID system.

"A lot of work goes into every still image as well as every frame of a multimedia production," Jordan says. "Color correction and calibration using the Spectra View II system is a big part of

what we do. A subtle difference in hues can have a profound effect on the finished image. Celebrities and supermodels are very protective of how they look in a photo shoot or commercial because their faces and bodies are their livelihoods. If they're unhappy with what they're seeing when they come in to review the images, it can be disastrous for us."

The Apple 27-inch cinema displays Jim Jordan Photography was using were fine within the studio. But problems arose when images were sent out for traditional printing.

"Despite all our best efforts, it was difficult to get the images on our display screens to match the print versions," Jordan says. "No matter what we tried or how often and carefully we calibrated them, they didn't quite match. The displays simply didn't cover enough of the color spectrum."

Employees working on video playback also noticed some motion artifacts, especially in scenes with lower light. While they might not show up in the final production, Jordan knew it would be better if they could eliminate the distraction while they were working on turning raw footage into the final production.

Convinced that there had to be displays that could solve these issues, he began researching various monitors on the Internet. It wasn't until he went to a photography conference, however, that he found the answer to his requirements.

## The Solution

While at the convention, Jordan stopped by the NEC Display Solutions booth to look at the 27-inch MultiSync® PA272W display that his research had identified as a potential solution. The PA272W color-accurate display is built on GB-R LED



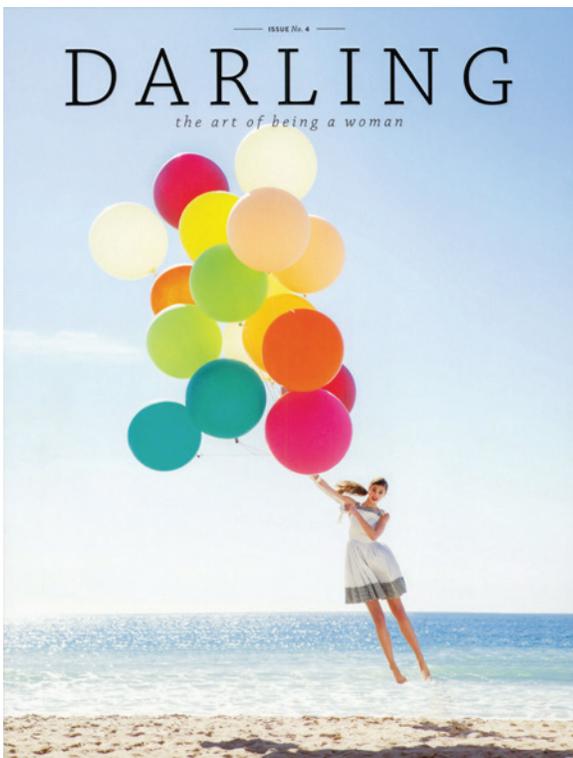
backlights to provide a wider color gamut and more color control than a conventional white LED backlight.

Its 10-bit wide color gamut AH-IPS LCD panel delivers the accurate, vibrant colors professionals such as Jordan require. The PA272W also includes the time-saving features common to the MultiSync PA Series displays, including the ability to load ICC profiles to emulate custom color spaces and easily match prints. In addition, the PA272W consumes 37 percent less power than comparable CCFL backlights, allowing Jordan to go greener and save money while producing superior results. After watching the demonstration, Jordan contacted NEC to obtain two monitors to test in his studio. He became an instant fan.

“The color accuracy is amazing,” Jordan says. “The NEC PA272W has a wider color spectrum than other displays we’ve tried, and the colors translate accurately from the screen to print. There are no compromises. When a printed piece comes back, you can hold it next to the display and the two are identical. We’re now getting what we’re seeing, which makes it easier for us to obtain the results our high-profile clients want.”

It isn’t just the accuracy that has impressed Jordan and his team, however. It’s also the performance, even in the most demanding circumstances.

“The contrast ratio is higher than on other displays, which means we’re seeing more details in the images than we’ve ever seen,” he says. “Everything is crisper, more three-dimensional and lifelike. There are no visual or motion artifacts during video playback. Watching high-definition movies on them is an incredible experience – it’s like watching the action through a window rather than on a display screen.”



The color accuracy and lifelike appearance have helped Jordan create tighter bonds with his celebrity clientele. He has always invited them to his studio to review the results of a photo or video shoot. Now, the experience is even more impressive.

“When models and actors come in to the studio, we show them the results before and after retouching,” Jordan says. “I love to see the expression on their faces when they view the results on the PA272W. They are just blown away by what they’re seeing and always ask me where they can get one of these monitors. These are people who make their livings in large part on the way they look. Our ability to make them look great builds a relationship that keeps them coming back to Jim Jordan Photography.”

Of course, achieving those results initially is one thing. Keeping them is another. In a busy studio such as Jordan’s, the displays run for a long period of time each day. Normally, that would mean having to perform frequent recalibrations to keep the displays running at peak performance levels and in sync with one another. Jordan says that isn’t the case with the PA272Ws.

“We don’t have to recalibrate as often as we did with our old monitors,” Jordan says. “We do it roughly once a week, whether they need it or not -perhaps twice a week for a very large project. It’s very easy to do, too. The software is very intuitive, which means we can make adjustments quickly and get back to work right away. NEC’s technical support is great, too. We haven’t had to use it much, but when we’ve needed it they’ve been very helpful and friendly. You don’t often find that level of service, especially with technical products such as these.”

Another aspect Jordan appreciates is the adjustability of the workstations. For example, there is a great variation in height between some of the employees. The PA272W allows them to adjust the height and angle of the display to one that is comfortable for each of them. He is also impressed by how solid they are.

“These are very robust displays, much more so than our old ones were,” Jordan says. “When you pick it up you can feel it has a very high build quality overall. That’s important in a busy studio such as ours.”

Outside of all the performance aspects there was one other feature that sold Jordan on the PA272W – the fact that it is available in white.

“My entire studio uses a white color scheme, from the front office all the way to the back rooms,” Jordan says. “That aesthetic is very important to our image. It gives us a unique feel and helps set the mood for our clients. Having the displays match that color scheme, especially with their clean and simple lines, helps tie the room together. Honestly, the displays are so good we would use them even if they were black. But having them in white is definitely the icing on the cake. They’re just a great fit all the way around.”

Jordan hasn’t been shy about sharing his experiences with the PA272W either. While the world of celebrity photography is highly competitive, there is also a collegial feel among its practitioners. When one finds something good, he or she shares it with others in the profession.

“I’ve put the word out on our social media channels, especially Twitter and Instagram,” he says. “I show them off and talk about them at the many photo expos I participate in. When a magazine or company comes in to do a case study, they always want to know about them. I also conduct four photography workshops each year, and I’ve been featuring them in there as well. Each of us has a responsibility to share information with others and help advance the state of the art. The NEC PA272W is one of those tools that, in the right hands, can really make a difference by adding a little more beauty to the world.”

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