To select the projector best suited for your needs, first start by answering these 4 simple questions:

1. How many people will be present?

This helps determine the size of the projected image that's required for everyone to easily view the presentation. As the number of people increases, the image must also get larger. When the image expands, the projected light is spread out across a greater area. This reduces the apparent brightness of the projector.

For projectors, brightness is measured in Lumens. Therefore, as the number of viewers increases, the numbers of required Lumens will most likely increase as well. Most consumer-grade projectors have between 800 and 2200 Lumens. Projectors above this range are significantly brighter and will produce a much crisper image. By knowing the approximate amount of people in attendance, you can figure out the appropriate number of Lumens needed, as well as the optimal screen size for your presentation.

2. How much ambient light will there be?

A dark room will provide the best image regardless of projector brightness. However, most presentations require some lighting for note taking, eye contact and audience interaction. Listed below is a general guide to selecting a projector based on lighting conditions:

- 1000 - 1400 Lumens with very little or no ambient light
- 1500 - 2000 Lumens with dimmed ambient light
- 2100 - 3500 Lumens with normal ambient light

For outdoor presentations during the day, the projected image will be much less visible. If you must present outside, it's recommended that your screen be completely in the shade.

3. What information will you be projecting?

The type of material you're presenting will determine the appropriate native resolution for your projector:

- SVGA resolution projectors (800x600) are best for displaying large text or less detailed images.
- XGA resolution projectors (1024x768) are the most common and are compatible with the vast majority of PCs and DVD players. They're best for showing detailed PowerPoint slides, normal sized fonts, and high quality images and videos.
- SXGA (1280x1024) and SXGA+ (1400x1050) resolution projectors are appropriate for displaying engineering drawings, digital photography, HD applications or other images of a highly detailed or technical nature.

4. What is the resolution of the computer or DVD player you will use?

Keep in mind that the best resolution for your projector is the resolution of the computer you intend to use with it. If you typically use a notebook computer with XGA resolution, you will want a projector with the same native XGA resolution in order to get the sharpest and cleanest image. Similarly, if you normally use a computer with higher than XGA output, such as SXGA+, you will get the best picture from a projector that has the same native resolution.

To check the resolution of your compute for Windows operating systems:

1. Find the Windows CONTROL PANEL
2. Click on DISPLAY
3. In the "Display Properties" window, click on the SETTINGS tab
4. Your computer's resolution will be displayed in a slide ruler area entitled "Screen Resolution"

To check the resolution of your compute for MAC operating systems:

1. From the Apple Menu select "Control Panels."
2. From Control Panels, double click on "Monitors."
3. Click on "Options" from the Monitors window. A new window will appear with the current resolution highlighted.

Hopefully this gives you some insight into selecting the ideal projector for your needs. If you'd like more information, feel free to contact us any time and we'll be more than happy to help.