LG Kicks Off CES 2012 Early With New TV Tech

LG's 55-inch OLED television is only 5 mm, or less than 0.2 inches, thick.

CES is almost here, but about 2 weeks ago, LG couldn't wait to start dishing about its 2012 products for the TV space. On deck: a huge OLED TV and lighter, more stylish 3-D glasses.

First off, LG plans to unveil a 55-inch OLED TV, the world’s largest to date. While LCD screens require back-lighting (often LED based) to display an image, OLEDs generate light on their own. Because of this, LG’s TV display measures 5mm, or less than 0.2 inches, thick. This also means that the OLED panel diodes can be switched on or off — thus using less power than a comparable LCD, whose back-light units need to always stay on.

The LG display reportedly has a 100,000:1 contrast ratio (which is a measure of the brightest and darkest images the TV can produce). The average LCD display has a 1,600:1 contrast ratio.

“Although OLED technology is seen as the future of TV display, the technology has been limited to smaller display sizes and by high costs, until now,” Sang Beom Han, CEO of LG Display, said in the announcement.

We could definitely be seeing OLED tech gain popularity in a wider range of products, from giant TVs down to tablet and smartphone displays. In 2010, LG showed off an ultra-thin 15-inch OLED display that cost a whopping $2,000. The price of LG’s 55-incher hasn’t been released yet, and although costs for OLED technology have dropped, you can bet this TV is still going to be pricey.

But that’s not all LG has up its sleeves.

On Monday, LG also announced it will debut a new collection of 3-D glasses designed by Alain Mikli. There are three models: the F310, which features curved

lenses for greater comfort; the F320, which is a clip-on design meant to be used with Film Patterned Retarder (which is used in CINEMA 3D displays) technology; and the Alain Mikli F360, a sporty design that covers most of the wearer's face.

The F310 is 20 percent lighter than LG's previous 3-D glasses design at 0.48 ounces, and the F320 is 25 percent lighter than previous clip-on styles at 0.19 ounces.

All of the glasses can be worn to view both LG 3-D TVs and in theaters that use RealD 3-D technology.

Although smart TV sales outpaced purchases of 3-D sets this year, LG did see a spike in 3-D TV purchases, from 7.6 percent in the first quarter of 2011 to 14 percent by September.

LG blames chunky, uncomfortable 3-D glasses as the main reason for poor 3-D adoption thus far. Competitor Panasonic feels Hollywood is to blame. Although having to wear glasses to enjoy 3-D at home is still a nuisance, I fall more with the latter reasoning. But with enjoyable, high-quality, family-friendly 3-D flicks like *Tin Tin* and *Hugo* hitting the small screen

sometime in 2012, maybe consumers will start ponying up and donning glasses to enjoy them at home.

LG hopes that buyers will be enticed by lighter, more stylish 3-D glasses.

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