

Playing with an E-Ink Watch

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My good friend Sriram Peruvemba of E-Ink sent me a Phosphor Brand Watch with an E-Ink display in it. I used the opportunity to get a reaction from my friends and colleagues and see if I liked it myself. I am a hard-core analog-watch man, and feel that the hands of a watch evoke the cycles of the day as they tell the time, an analog representation of the day in microcosm on my wrist. (Phosphor does have an display-based watch with hands, the Ana-Digi, that uses the display to create different backgrounds.)

The face presentation is a bit over-the-top, as the designer obviously wanted to not only create a watch, but make a demonstrator for the technology. The version I have has a digital time display over a month calendar showing the date. If you are into big watches, as is currently the fad, the watch looks pretty cool. You can change the text/background color polarity yourself, but the watch switches display

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Published on Electronic Component News (<http://www.ecnmag.com>)

polarity every minute, I guess to remind you its turned on, since it doesn't have a second display.

Reactions to the watch were mixed. My wife didn't like it but due to my dragging every bit of tech I get in front of her eyes she's a bit allergic to gaudy technology demonstrators. She did not positively that the designer at least had the brains to go with classic steel case and rubber strap. Most of the others I showed it to thought it was very striking looking, and several guys wanted to know where I got it.

As for the E-Ink display, it did not disappoint. Curved under the watch crystal, the presentation reminds one that the display tech is bendable and flexible (to a degree). There was a minor manufacturing flaw, a tiny fold under the crystal (visible in the top left corner of the watch in the picture above), but I was not sure if that was an oversight or that I got a cosmetic "second" as my demo model. It does remind one that the display is a thin sheet under the crystal, a mixed blessing in this case (no pun intended).

The display was easily legible in any lighting you could read in, but has no internal lighting so some ambient is needed. The curved surface caused some odd reflections, but that was more due to the shininess of the crystal over it so I did not blame that for the display.

So overall, the Phosphor E-Ink Watch is a nice technology demonstrator, and not a bad watch in itself. For more info, visit <http://www.phosphorwatches.com/> [1]

Source URL (retrieved on 04/02/2015 - 4:13am):

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[1] <http://www.phosphorwatches.com/>