

LG to sell 55-inch TV using new ultra-thin tech

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For flat-panel TVs, the choice for years has been between plasma and LCD. In the coming year, there'll be another choice, at least for those prepared to spend big.

LG Electronics Inc. says it's planning to sell a 55-inch set based on organic light-emitting diodes, or OLEDs. The Korean company is set to show it off at the International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, which starts Jan. 10.

Samsung Electronics Co., LG's Korean rival, will also reveal a nearly market-ready OLED TV at the show, according to three people with knowledge of the matter. They spoke on condition of anonymity because Samsung has yet to make an announcement. Its website says CES announcements will come Jan. 9.

Tim Alessi, director of home electronics development at LG's USA arm, said its set will likely go on sale in the fourth quarter. The company isn't revealing the price.

Paul Gagnon, an analyst at DisplaySearch, estimates that OLED sets will start out above \$5,000.

The screen technology is in use in high-end smartphones and provides deeply saturated colors and high contrast. However, it's been very difficult to make larger screens with consistent results. In late 2007, Sony Corp. started selling an 11-inch OLED TV for about \$2,500, but it never followed it up with a bigger model.

Since then, LG and Samsung have shown prototype OLED TVs at the annual CES show, but haven't revealed any marketing plans.

Apart from providing improved picture quality, OLED TVs can be very thin. LG's set will be 4 millimeters thick (3/16ths of an inch) and weight 16.5 pounds.

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