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South Korean panel giant LG Display Co. said Monday that it logged a small profit in the first three months of the year, reflecting slackening orders from its key client, Apple Inc., during a typically slow period for consumer electronics.

Its net income for the January-March period was 3.5 billion won (\$3.1 million), compared with a net loss of 129.2 billion won a year earlier.

Although the Korean panel giant made a turnaround from a year earlier, its profit missed market forecasts.

Analysts said LG Display probably sold fewer iPhone and iPad screens, outweighing increased panel sales to LG Electronics Inc., its biggest shareholder. Hanwha Securities estimated LG Display's iPhone screen sales in the first quarter fell 42 percent from the previous three months while its iPad screen sales dropped 31 percent.

LG Display's first quarter sales rose 10 percent to 6.8 trillion won. Operating profit stood at 151.3 billion won, compared with a 211.1 billion won loss a year earlier.

The panel maker, which competes with Samsung Electronics Co. and Japan's Sharp Corp., said its panel shipments in the current period will modestly increase from the first three months.

But LG Display's outlook will hinge on demand for TVs, which accounts for more than 40 percent of LG's revenues, and demand for Apple's new products, which will be launched later this year.

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