

# Panasonic leans on 'Avatar' movie for 3-D pr blitz

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Japan-3-D TVNO SALES, CREDIT MANDATORY, EDITORIAL USE ONLY

(AP) -- "Titanic" director James Cameron has signed on with Panasonic Corp. to promote new 3-D TVs.

The deal disclosed Friday comes as Cameron and Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp. are aiming to break new ground with the release of "[Avatar](#)," a movie shot entirely in 3-D.

At the same time, Panasonic is making a big push to get consumers excited about three-dimensional viewing in the home - excited enough to buy new flat-panel sets and new Blu-ray disc players. Consumers will have to wear special glasses to experience the 3-D effect.

Panasonic is planning to start selling 3-D TVs next year. Rivals, including Sony Corp., which has its own movie division, and Samsung

Electronics Co. of South Korea have shown prototypes and may offer similar products. It's not clear how much 3-D TVs would cost.

The manufacturers face a problem in that 3-D content is scarce. There's also no agreement on a disc or broadcast format to bring the content to TV sets, though the industry group behind the [Blu-ray disc](#) may be close to finalizing a standard.

Several animation films are already being shown in theaters in 3-D, along with a handful of live-action movies. "Avatar," set for release Dec. 18, will be the first major live-action Hollywood film debuting worldwide in both 2-D and 3-D.

"I believe 3-D is how we will experience movies, gaming and computing in the near future. 3-D is not something you watch. It's a reality you feel you could step into," Cameron said on video.

Panasonic is hoping its collaboration with Cameron will give its brand an edge as a 3-D leader, and give the company ideas for technological improvements for home TVs, said General Manager Masayuki Kozuka.

"We want to get global interest rolling," he told The Associated Press. "For people to want to watch 3-D at home, the movie has to be a blockbuster."

[Panasonic](#) plans to have several trailer-vans driving around in the U.S. and Europe next month with large-screen 3-D TVs inside showing "Avatar." In Japan, footage from "Avatar" - a science-fiction romance set in a futuristic jungle inhabited by creatures evocative of Cameron's "Aliens" - will appear in ads for 3-D TVs. Cameron developed a new computer-controlled 3-D camera system for the movie.

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