

Sony to roll out 3D TVs in Japan in June

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Models display a new Sony 3D television in Tokyo. Sony said Tuesday it would start selling 3D televisions in Japan in June, aiming to ride a new wave of interest in the technology thanks to recent movies such as sci-fi blockbuster "Avatar".

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The Japanese giant said its first 3D liquid crystal display TV models would hit the Japanese market on June 10, with a price tag of about 350,000 yen (3,535 dollars) for a 46-inch version.

Viewers will wear electronic glasses that open and close rapidly in time with images designed for the right and left eye, creating a three-dimensional effect.

Sony said its overall television business would shift into high gear in the fiscal year to March 2011, targeting sales of more than 25 million liquid crystal display TVs -- up two thirds from its forecast for this year.

It aims for 10 percent of the sets to be capable of viewing 3D images.

The next 12 months are "really a year when we think we can attack," Yoshihisa Ishida, senior vice president in charge of Sony's home entertainment business, said at a press conference.

Sony has been caught off guard in recent years by innovative new products such as Apple's iPod and Nintendo's [Wii](#), but it has high hopes for 3D televisions.

The TVs are key to chief executive Howard Stringer's goal of converging Sony's strengths in electronics, such as Bravia televisions and PlayStation game consoles, and content generated by its movie studio and music label.

Blockbusters such as James Cameron's science fiction 3D opus "Avatar" have fuelled the buzz around images that appear to jump out of the screen.

But many experts think consumers are unlikely to rush to buy the premium-priced 3D TVs due to the need for special glasses and because many people have already upgraded to high-definition sets in recent years.

Sony is lagging behind some rivals. Panasonic plans to launch a [3D TV](#) in the United States on Wednesday, ahead of its rollout in [Japan](#), as it goes head-to-head with South Korea's [Samsung Electronics](#).

Sony has not yet announced a launch date for 3D TVs outside Japan.

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