

Sharp improves wall display technology

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Sharp's "i3 Wall"

(AP) -- Walls, ceiling and floors will turn into wall-to-wall imagery with Sharp's new technology that has minimized the gaps between displays, allowing them to be used like high-tech tiles.

The Japanese maker of Aquos flat-panel TVs showed Monday a massive screen like the ones at [movie theaters](#), except that it was made of thirty 60-inch [liquid crystal displays](#) mounted next to each other.

The space in between each [display](#), which still shows up as dark lines crisscrossing the screen, has been reduced to just 6.5 millimeters (0.26 inches) - the thinnest in the world for displays of that size, according to Osaka-based [Sharp](#).

Previously, such lines were far thicker at 40 millimeters (1.6 inches), appearing like black frames around each display.

Sharp's "i3 Wall" (pronounced "i-triple wall") systems will go on sale mainly to businesses in Japan in August and later this year in the U.S. and Europe, targeting showrooms, shopping malls and airports, officials said.

The whole setup, including software to convert video and images for i3 Wall, costs 50 million yen (\$550,000) each. Sharp hopes to turn it into a 100 billion yen (\$1 billion) annual business over the next several years.

Sharp's Fujikazu Nakayama said the displays were clearer and brighter than other ways to show expansive images such as rear-projection and plasma displays.

At a Tokyo hall, Sharp also demonstrated 24 displays packed side by side on a floor. If underwater images are played in a restaurant, diners will feel as though they are floating above water, said Moriyuki Okada, another Sharp executive.

"We will be able to create museum-like spaces," he said. "We hope to see this develop into many possibilities."

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