

Sony to sell ultra-HD '4K' TV set in US stores (Update)

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This undated image provided by Sony shows an ultra-HD '4K' TV set. High-definition TVs roughly quadrupled the resolution of the sets that came before them. Now, the industry is poised to do it again as Sony says its U.S. stores will, by December, sell a TV set with four times the resolution of today's best HDTVs. (AP Photo/Sony)

(AP)—High-definition TVs roughly quadrupled the resolution of the sets that came before them. Now, the industry is poised to do it again.

By December, U.S. stores will sell a TV set with four times the resolution of today's best HDTVs, Sony Corp. said Wednesday. The set

will measure 84 inches (213 centimeters) on the diagonal, making the screen area four times as large as the common 42-inch set.

Executives said Sony will reveal the price of the set next week.

There is, for now, very little video content available that can take advantage of the higher resolution. With some work and know-how, a computer connected to the set can display video in the ultra-HD "4K" resolution. The set will also do its best to "upscale" TV, DVD and Blu-ray movies, so they look better.

Phil Molyneux, chief operating officer of Sony Electronics, said the situation was no different from the launch of the cassette tape, the CD or the DVD.

"We always get this question when we launch beautiful new technology: Where's the content?" Molyneux told journalists at an event in New York. "Did we bring the content to market? Yes, we did."

The exact resolution of the set is 3,840 by 2,160 pixels. It's known as "4K" because it has nearly 4,000 pixels on the horizontal edge. That compares with 1,920 by 1,080 pixels in "1080p" sets. More pixels allow TV makers to make bigger screens without compromising sharpness.

Sony makes digital projectors operating at 4K resolution for movie theaters.

The TV industry has been looking for a technology that will get consumers to upgrade their HDTV sets. Sales are slumping after an initial wave of upgrades from standard-definition sets, and 3-D sets attract only a small number of consumers.

Apple Inc. has slowly been quadrupling the resolution of its devices,

starting with the iPhone 4 two years ago. This year, it released iPads and MacBooks with ultra-high-resolution screens.

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