

Latest in TVs: Much higher definition, and prices

September 3 2012, by Mike Snider

Get ready for a whole new case of TV envy. In stores later this year will be new big-screens, known as 4K TVs, that up the ante on HDTV with four times the resolution of sets now.

Prices expected to be \$20,000 or so will limit 4K sets initially to the well-heeled. "Like the very early days of HDTV, with those kinds of [price tags](#) it will likely take up to 10 years to build any kind of [mass market](#)," says Myra Moore, president of Digital Tech Consulting.

But setmakers are counting on 4K to jump-start the [TV market](#) - after years of falling prices and profits. DTC expects TV sales to be about flat in the near term, with 1 percent growth this year and 2 percent in 2013, even with 4K.

[Sony said Wednesday](#) that it will join the fray with a Bravia 84-inch XBR-X900 4K LED TV this year.

The 4K label is from the nearly 4,000 pixels of horizontal resolution (3,840 by 2,160), or more than 8 million pixels total. Current HDTVs offer up to 1,920 by 1,080 resolution, or more than 2 million pixels.

The 4K allows pristine video, even on very large displays. "The quality, the depth and color of the picture, it really is amazing," says Phil Molyneux, Sony Electronics' COO.

The 84-incher is Sony's largest TV. It has 10 built-in speakers and also

delivers 3-D video viewable with cheaper, lighter passive 3-D glasses. One European retailer has priced it at 25,000 euros (about \$31,000).

Rival [LG Electronics](#) showed an 84-inch 4K display this year at the [Consumer Electronics Show](#) and announced last week that it will go on sale in [South Korea](#) next month for the equivalent of about \$22,000.

LG and Sony will announce U.S. pricing and dates next week at a home tech show in Indianapolis.

Initially, there will be little 4K content to take full advantage of the set. But Sony's set will be able to upscale video from a source such as a [Blu-ray player](#) to near-4K quality.

Sony, which has 4K [digital projectors](#) in more than 12,500 U.S. [movie theaters](#), has a 4K camera and home projector on sale as well.

Also, classic films are being remastered for 4K and some TV series, including CBS' "Made in Jersey," are being shot in 4K.

So was the Taylor Swift video "We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together."

But until the 4K content pipeline is flush, "we will be on the 'classic chicken-and-egg timetable' with 4K sets," Moore said.

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