

# New Qualcomm chips promise phone video in Ultra HD

January 8 2013, by Peter Svensson

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TV makers are trotting out sets with "Ultra HD" resolution at the International CES electronics trade show in Las Vegas this week.

Few video cameras record at that resolution, which is four times higher than regular high definition. But [Qualcomm Inc.](#), a leading maker of chips for cellphones, says it has a solution: With its chips, smartphones could be recording video in Ultra HD as early as this year.

Paul Jacobs, the CEO of the San Diego-based chipmaker, revealed a lineup of new chips in a keynote speech Monday, ahead of the opening of the show.

The topline model, the Snapdragon 800, has 75 percent more horsepower than Qualcomm's former fastest model. That makes it fast enough to record and playback Ultra HD video, the company said. It doesn't consume more power, so the battery life should be the same.

Qualcomm is sending out samples of the new chips right now. It will ship them in volume in a few months, so they could show up in gadgets on store shelves this summer.

The 800 chips are for premium phone models and tablets, much like Qualcomm's current top-line chips are used in flagship phones like the LG Optimus G and HTC Droid DNA.

Smartphone displays have been getting sharper and bigger, but

Qualcomm doesn't quite envision them having as many pixels as the new 84-inch (213-centimeter) and 110-inch (279-centimeter) ultra-[high definition TV](#) sets.

The maximum resolution for a display with a Snapdragon 800 is slightly lower than Ultra HD, but higher than regular high definition. That means the [Snapdragon](#) 800 chip can play back video recorded in Ultra HD, but won't be displaying all the recorded detail.

In a similar way, many of today's smartphones can record "1080p"-resolution video and play it back, but have displays that don't show the full recorded resolution.

Qualcomm's biggest competitor when it comes to making "brains" for smartphones, [NVidia Corp.](#), on Sunday revealed a new "[Tegra 4](#)" chip that will be able to play ultra-HD video.

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