LG Kicks Off CES With 1.4-Meter 'Ultra-HD' TV

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LAS VEGAS (AP) — LG unveiled a 55-inch (1.4-meter) TV that sports "ultrahigh-definition" resolution with four times the sharpness of regular HD television sets, kicking off what is likely to be a mini-obsession with the latest super-clear format at the annual International CES gadget show.

The model announced Monday is the smallest in a 2013 lineup that includes 65-inch (1.6-meter) and 84-inch (2.1-meter) versions. But the smaller size — and smaller price tag — begins the parade of TV makers that are seeking to bring ultrahigh definition to the masses.

Also known as "4K," ultrahigh-definition screens are 3,840 pixels wide and 2,160 pixels tall, or more than 8 million in all. The higher resolution will let TV screens get larger without degrading picture quality, though initially the price tag will limit those sets to technology's early adopters.

LG said the 55-inch and 65-inch versions will be available later this year in the U.S. No price was announced, but it will be less than $10,000. The 84-inch version that went on sale late last year cost $20,000.

For a few years, though, there won't likely be a mainstream standard for getting native ultra-HD movies and TV shows to the screen either by disc or broadcast.

LG Electronics Inc. said these new TVs will have upscaling technology that takes images of lesser quality and renders them in high detail. The Korean electronics maker also said it has formed an ultra-HD content agreement with Korea's top broadcaster, KBS, and is seeking out deals with other global content providers. The company offered no specifics.

LG said that with an ultra-HD TV, it will be possible to play phone games with very sharp resolution and in 3-D. The company said it has been possible to hook up smartphones to the TV to play games with current sets, but the resolution isn't good.

Along with the lineup of higher-resolution TVs, LG unveiled a new Magic Remote, which acts like a wand that is sensitive to motion and is used to navigate on-screen menus. LG said the new model responds better to natural speech and can be controlled with a single finger rather than "very tiring arm gestures." It also lets you change the channels by writing numbers in the air.

The company also touted the ability to tap different devices so they can share data. With that capability, you'd be able to see what's inside your refrigerator while shopping, and you'd be able to monitor how clean your house is getting with cameras on a robotic vacuum. Washing machines will also have such capabilities.

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