

2013: The Highlights According to ECI

Written by Marco Attard
17. 12. 2013

One can apply the cliché for just about every year, but 2013 was quite something, wasn't it? While arguably less eventful than previous years, it was still full of exciting headlines, and that's before taking our industry into account! So join our retrospective into what we think were the major happenings of, well, 2013!



1. TVs get curvy: CES 2013 marked out THE winning trend for a TV market in decline-- curved TVs, with ["world firsts" produced by \(who else?\) Samsung and LG.](#) Okay, we kid, but analysts point out

[4K/UHD has the potential to become the next big TV thing](#)

thanks to declining prices, OTT services, various broadcasts (the 2014 FIFA World Cup and Sochi Winter Olympics will get UHD treatment) and improved upscaling technology.

2. Audio, wire-free: According to audio technology from the past year wires are doomed to be a thing of the past, since seemingly everyone has a [wireless audio offering](#) or three

. Bluetooth and wifi are the main technologies of choice, but WiSA (Wireless Speaker and Sound) revealed an alternative platform at CEDIA 2013. The first products carrying the technology come from

[Bang & Olufsen](#)

, but WiSA-certified speakers from other vendors should appear come 2014.

3. Next-gen gaming kicks off: Sony and Microsoft launch the next generation of gaming machines, the [PlayStation 4](#) and the [Xbox One](#). Both are, shockingly enough, similar-looking black boxes, even if the PS4 posits itself as a "pure" games machine while the Xbox One presents something more akin to a living room hub complete with HDMI passthrough functionality. However the two companies might face a dark horse in shape of the [Steam](#)

[Box\(es\)](#)

console-style PCs armed with a custom Linux-based OS from game developer turned online game merchant Valve...

4. EU Crisis is (hopefully) over: Good news! [The European economic crisis appears to be over](#), at least according to GfK. Bad news! The recovery is best described as modest (0.4% Q-o-Q growth during Q2 2012), with "considerable" increases in France, Germany, Portugal and the UK and at least "slight" recovery in the still-shrinking Spanish and Italian economies. But hey, all good news is good news, even if the continent still sees [a stark divide when it comes to average purchasing power](#).

5. Staples takes on home automation: Staples, retailer of (wait for it!) staples of the office supply variety [launches an own automation product family with Staples Connect](#). The system combines products from a number of vendors with a Zonoff mobile device app platform atop a Linksys hub, and shows [how ubiquitous home automation has become](#). Other automation products from 2013 worth having another look at include the [Protect smoke detector](#) and the [Goldee smart lighting controller](#).

6. Farewell, plasma: After months of rumours and hearsay [Panasonic pulled the plug on its plasma TV efforts](#), announcing it will stop selling products making use of plasma panels by end March 2014. Meanwhile Mitsubishi, maker of one of the first consumer-focused plasma TVs, [existed the consumer display market altogether](#). With [shipments in continual decline](#), it is safe to say that plasma well and truly lost the war against LCD, and sooner or later it will be no more. Shame, that.