Samsung, LG Put OLED Aside

Written by Marco Attard
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Samsung and LG are putting OLED aside in favour of quantum dot technology for their next-generation TVs Reuters reports, as OLED is still years away from becoming affordable for the mass market.

While OLED provides admittedly impressive visual results, quantum dot technology is cheaper and easier to manufacture. Thus, according to one analyst a 55-inch quantum dot TV costs 30-35% more than a current LCD TV, while an OLED TV of the same size costs up to 5 times more.

Arguably OLED can become cheaper as production yields get bigger, but should LG remain the only vendor selling the technology (Samsung is still to unveil an OLED TV model for 2015) then prices will only remain high.

"In theory, OLED should become cheaper than LCD once production yields get better because OLED doesn't need a backlight, but at this point both the scale and production yield remain low," CIMB analyst Lee Do-hoon tells Reuters.

Enter quantum dot technology. LG says it has a "dual-track" OLED and quantum dot strategy, while Samsung is "considering" the technology as it sticks with LCD panels for TVs, instead using OLED panels for smartphones.

"How a technology will match with market conditions, when a technology will emerge as the

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main market segment is the most critical consideration," Samsung VP Simung Sung says. "We'll respond aggressively after identifying such a market opportunity."

Currently Sony is the only company selling quantum dot TVs, although China's TCL revealed such a TV back at IFA 2014. The technology also faces an issue in the shape of a small pool of material suppliers, namely Quantum Materials and the Nanoco Group.

Will quantum dot be the breakthrough TV technology of the future? Probably… not. LCD TVs already offer desirable 4K/UHD resolutions at fairly affordable prices, and for most customers that is enough bang for the buck.

Go Samsung, LG Turn to Quantum Dots as OLED Still Too Pricey (Reuters)