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Flexible Displays: Ready to Wear?

By Robert S. Anthony | PC World

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If new research bears fruit, the next stop for flexible display technology might be the side of a commuter bus or the front of a T-shirt. An international team of scientists has developed a way to manufacture flexible and essentially transparent LED displays that could be tightly fitted over a solid object or integrated into fabrics. The research was published in the journal **Science** (paid subscription required).

What's interesting is that the flexible displays would be composed of inorganic LEDs, normally used in huge outdoor billboards, as opposed to **organic LEDs** (OLEDs), which are often used in cell phone displays. Inorganic LEDs are bright and tough, according to **Science**, but usually have to be cut and assembled. The new process allows the inorganic LEDs to be "rubber-stamped" onto flexible materials like rubber or plastic or more rigid materials like glass.

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Under the snappy title "**Printed Assemblies of Inorganic Light-Emitting Diodes for Deformable and Semitransparent Displays**," scientists from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Northwestern University, Tsinghua University in Beijing, China and the Institute of High Performance Computing in Singapore explain that the new technology could be used in displays "that might be interesting for integration with the human body and other curvilinear, deformable surfaces, all of which demand more than simple bending."

Does that mean that there might be an electronic billboard T-shirt in your future? Only time will tell.

[**Science** via **Reuters** and **Electronista**]

Tags: **consumer electronics**

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