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## Flexible Displays: Ready to Wear?

Robert S. Anthony

Aug 21, 2009 11:35 am

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](#)]

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**"Flexible Displays: Ready to Wear?" Comments**

[rasmasyean](#) says:  
Fri Aug 21 12:21:03 PDT 2009

Everytime they come up with a "new flexible display technology", it costs too much to manufacture that like only the military or something can use them.

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[BGG001](#) says:  
Fri Aug 21 23:01:53 PDT 2009

Why bother with LED is my question? I can already buy an OLED watch for \$100 (the example I'm citing isn't flexible, but when OLED was first catching on, I do remember seeing a video of an OLED flexible watch.

<http://www.thinkgeek.com/gadgets/watches/954e/>

Investing in old technology is a waste of resources (for the most part), work on the new and make it cheaper for the masses.

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[quackadilly](#) says:

Sat Aug 22 00:14:35 PDT 2009

LED display t-shirts by Phillips....

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yd99gyE4jCk&feature=Playlist&p=5E091FFB3F7D1B83&pla>

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[rasmasyean](#) says:

Sat Aug 22 00:29:09 PDT 2009

[quote name='BGG001' date='22 August 2009 - 07:01 AM' timestamp='1250920913' post='256800']

Why bother with LED is my question? I can already buy an OLED watch for \$100 (the example I'm citing isn't flexible, but when OLED was first catching on, I do remember seeing a video of an OLED flexible watch.

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Investing in old technology is a waste of resources (for the most part), work on the new and make it cheaper for the masses.

[/quote]

You know when you move the the left and right of an LCD? It fades right?

LED does not fade. It's like a CRT, but even better. And you can make it "thin" as products have advertised. You can't do the same with LCD. So this means you can put it in some flexible strong plastic and step on it. Try stepping on your

LCD...don't blame me for the results.



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