

CES 2014: What to expect from Las Vegas's giant tech show

By Leo Kelion Technology reporter

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Las Vegas is about to host its annual showcase of the latest digital innovations.

More than 20,000 new products are expected to be shown

off to 152,000 tech trade attendees at 2014's Consumer Electronics Show (CES).

Exhibitors will spend millions on outlandish press conferences; there will be giant-sized TVs you'll never be able to afford in resolutions your eyes would struggle to appreciate; a swarm of celebrities ranging from rapper 50 Cent to rockers Fleetwood Mac; and a seemingly endless smorgasbord of sensor-laden, cloud-powered, app-enhanced inventions.



CES Press Day is on Monday, then the show floors are open from Tuesday until Friday



Ben Walsh of UK firm SunnyCam tells BBC technology correspondent Mark Gregory why he is taking his smart glasses to CES

Even if the flops-of-tomorrow are likely to outnumber the success stories, there's always the prospect of a first glimpse of the next big thing.

"CES is a hands-on experience," says Gary Shapiro, president of the Consumer Electronics Association, which organises the event.

"Anyone with an idea can introduce a product and see how people react to it immediately. Whether people want to invest, whether they want to buy it, whether they want to write about it."

New TVs

Televisions are always one of CES's biggest categories, right back to its first show in 1967.

The two biggest manufacturers - Samsung and LG - will square off once again at this year's event with similar sounding products.

Both have already announced 105in (267cm) sized 4K Ultra HD screens in the extra-wide 21:9 aspect ratio.



Japan's Sony, Sharp, Toshiba and Panasonic will also have new Ultra HD models on show, as will China's HiSense and TCL Corp. But the firms are expected to pursue different strategies.

"The Chinese manufacturers are pushing 4K as a common technology in a lot of their models, while the Japanese and Korean brands are still looking for it to be more of a premium feature," explains Edward Border from the consultancy IHS Technology.

"So, for some brands you will mainly see 4K at the higher-end, but for others it could appear in high 30in and low 40in sets."

Polaroid's decision to sell a 50in Ultra HD set for less than \$1,000 could also be disruptive.

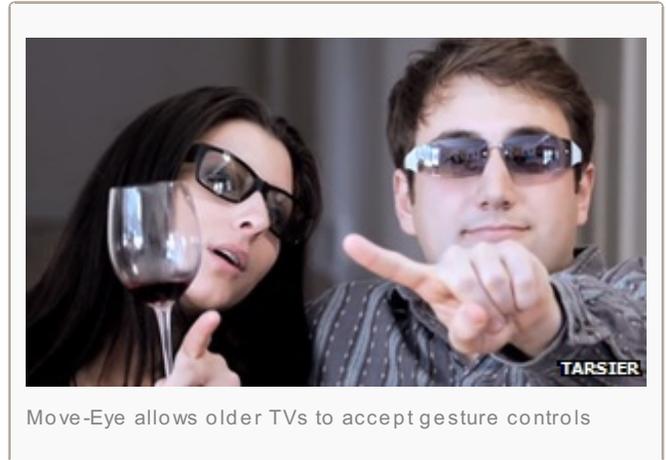
Watch out too for third-party add-ons that transform older sets into "smart TVs".

For example Bob is an Android-powered stick that plugs into an HDMI port to offer YouTube and video games.

And Tarsier will demo special glasses called Move-Eye that monitor the wearer's hand movements, allowing them to switch channels using gesture controls. Wearable tech

With Google Glass still awaiting a sensible-priced release, smaller firms will be showing off their own tech-enhanced eyewear.

GlassUp will show off a pair that superimposes smartphone alerts, directions and other app information over the user's right eye.



first generation allowed owners to watch 3D movies.

And XoEye will show off glasses with two in-built five megapixel cameras designed to stream stabilised video feeds over wi-fi.

Much of the other wearable tech will be focused on fitness.

Lebanese start-up Butterfleye is at CES with Instabeat, a waterproof heads-up monitor that attaches to swimming goggles to show the wearer's heart rate.

Veristride will promote a shoe insole sensor that provides feedback about the owner's movements.

And Singapore's Smartmissimo is promising to show off the world's first wearable "smart electrical muscle stimulator" for athletes.

The big name brands are also pushing for a slice of the action.

Another scoop from @evleaks indicates LG will have a new fitness tracking wristband. The firm unveiled an earlier model at CES in 2013, but never put it on sale.

"LG is [also] rumoured to be developing a smartwatch that incorporates the same curved display technology found on its newest TV sets and G Flex handset," @evleaks told the BBC.

"For the thin-wristed individual, such a form-fitting piece of kit would be most welcome."

Sony's chief executive Kazuo Hirai could also use his Keynote Address to spell out his vision for wearable tech after mixed reviews for his company's smartwatches.

And Archos is seeking to shake up the category with a watch costing less than £50.

Tablets, smartphones and PCs

Many smartphone and tablet-makers are holding back announcements until February's Mobile World Congress or their own standalone shows.



Instabeat is a heart rate monitor that can be attached to swimming goggles



LG may unveil the Lifeband Touch fitness tracker

But three Asian firms have confirmed they will have new products on show:

- ZTE has promised to take the wraps off the Grand S2 handset, which it says will feature "intelligent voice controls"
- Lenovo has already teased images of the S930, a new 6in phablet
- And a video teaser from Asus suggests it has at least three new handsets

Intel will want to highlight the release of new Windows laptops that double up as tablets after championing the two-in-one format at previous CES shows.

In addition, Time Magazine has reported that [PC Plus will launch at the event](#) - a class of devices powered by Windows 8.1 that can run some Android apps through software emulation.

There will also be more PCs powered by Google's Chrome OS.

Connected home

New ways to link household objects to the net has been a hardy perennial of recent CES shows.

A Twitter-equipped fridge from Samsung was one of last year's more extreme examples.



Intel will promote Windows two-in-ones as alternatives to tablets that do not use its chips



Lenovo's S930 features Dolby-enhanced audio



The Smart Diet Scale links up to online nutrition guides to tell you about your food

launches. The firm says it will tell users if they brush long enough and whether they clean the hardest-to-reach parts of their teeth and gums.

Okidokeys will be the latest firm to offer a way to unlock your front door with a mobile phone, with the added twist that you can revoke someone else's access privileges remotely.

And to avoid the frustration of missed deliveries, DoorBot will show off a "video doorbell" that lets you see and speak to someone waiting on your doorstep via an app, letting you tell them where to leave the parcel when you're out.

Not tasty enough?

Then try the Smart Diet Scale - a Bluetooth-enabled kitchen gadget that weighs your food before you cook it, and sends the information to an app that calculates the calories, carbs and fat involved.

3D printers

In 2012 there were two 3D printer-makers at CES.

This year the tech warrants its own zone and about 30 firms are showing off their wares.

New entrants include Singapore-based Pirate3DP and its Buccaneer printer, following a Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign that raised over \$1.4m (£870,000). The firm suggests its machine is less likely to jam than others when building up plastic objects layer by layer.

California's AIO Robotics will also show off an all-in-one machine that scans and then either prints or "faxes" copies of an object.

The industry's granddaddy, 3D Systems, says it will respond to these upstarts with three new model categories: edibles, ceramics and full-colour plastics.



A smart toothbrush is one of this year's oddities



3D printers have their own zone for the first time at this year's CES



Bre Pettis, chief executive of US company MakerBot, talks to the BBC's Rory Cellan-Jones about the rise and rise of 3D printing

Also watch out for Makerbot's Bre Pettis who is hosting a Press Day event on Monday ahead of the scrum of Tuesday's show floor openings.

"3D printing has been around for about 30 years, but a lot of the early developments were patent protected," says Duncan Wood, publisher of TCT Magazine who will be running sessions on the tech at CES.

"But over last three to four years those patents have started to expire and entrepreneurs are now able to build their own variations, helping cause a downward pressure on prices."

Car tech

The major carmakers will be out in force despite the fact Detroit's high-profile motor show begins the following week.

To distinguish the two events, the auto firms are likely to focus on connected technologies rather than new models at CES.

Audi's chairman Rupert Stadler is giving one of the Keynote Addresses and will reveal a tie-up

with Google, [according to the Wall Street Journal](#). It says the two firms are developing an in-car entertainment and information system that runs on Android.

The German company's rivals General Motors and Honda may have more to say about their efforts to integrate Apple's rival iOS software.



Audi's Rupert Stadler will discuss car connectivity technologies on Monday evening

Meanwhile BMW, Ford and Mercedes-Benz will offer demonstrations of their self-driving vehicles, while parts-maker Delphi will show off a Tesla model fitted with its autonomous car tech.

Yahoo, Steam Boxes and other stuff

Yahoo is likely to be one of the other firms attracting attention this year.

Chief executive Marissa Mayer is delivering one of the Tech Titans presentations nearly one-and-a-half years after jumping ship from Google.

"I would be really interested to hear her innovation story," says Sef Tuma, managing director at consultancy Accenture's digital services division.



Yahoo chief Marissa Mayer delivers her first CES "keynote" speech this year

"The other players - Google, Amazon, Facebook - are playing in the cloud, in social, with mobile operating systems and devices. They are basically expanding the realms of their existing platforms.

The BBC's North America Technology Correspondent on wearable tech

"I'd really love to know what's Yahoo's goal. Are they trying to play in that arms race or will they start looking at a different strategy to be seen as relevant."

Video games firm Valve will also be closely watched. It [has told IGN](#) it intends to reveal who will be making Steam Machine consoles and what their specifications will be - potentially a make or break moment for its forthcoming Linux-based platform.



Boss Gabe Newell, however, is expected to be more vague about the prospects of Half Life 3 being a launch title.

Netflix's chief executive Reed Hastings is also in town. He is likely to be pressed on the rollout of 4K content.

Whatever happens at CES, the BBC will bring you news and insights from the event at bbc.co.uk/ces2014.

You can also follow some of the reporters attending on Twitter:

Technology correspondent Rory Cellan-Jones:

[@BBCRoryCJ](https://twitter.com/BBCRoryCJ)

North America technology correspondent Richard Taylor:

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