Sony is promoting its 4,096-by-2,160-resolution LCD technology
John C. Dvorak

Sony is promoting its 4,096-by-2,160-resolution LCD technology using what is called Silicon X-tal Reflective Display (SXRD). Combine SXRD with a 10,000-lumen bulb, and you get what the folks in the movie business call a 4K projector, to be used in theaters to compete with the DLP projectors used today. Smaller 5,000-lumen systems will be developed for smaller venues. Here are some details from the Sony press release:

With SXRD technology, pixels are set at a pitch of 8.5 micrometers, from the center of one SXRD pixel to the center of the next, with an inter-pixel gap of 0.35 micrometers. "A narrower pitch and thinner gap translate into a quicker refresh rate to produce much smoother moving images," said Tom Mykietyn, director of content creation for Sony Electronics. "When an image is projected onto a large screen from a 4K projector, the typical 'cross-hatch' pattern just about disappears. For example, on a 27 foot wide,16:9 screen, each pixel is only about the size of the letter 'e' in Liberty on a quarter."

Texas Instruments has developed a 1080p version of its DLP chip, which, when used as a theater projector chip, was expected to generate a gorgeous big picture. But people who have seen this 4K job in person say that it's amazing.

The Hollywood studios, meanwhile, are trying to standardize everything they can about these digital systems, so they can feed a single file to all of them without worrying about compatibility is-ues. It's called the Digital Cinema Initiative and will be part of the eventual final transition from celluloid to bits and bytes.

Someone commented on TV that once the movie projector is gone and LEDs replace the incandescent light bulb, we'll be at the end of the Thomas Edison era, as we will no longer be using any of his many inventions. The irony is that this won't be true for a very long time. Edison, working with Henry Ford, perfected manufacturing of the modern charcoal briquette, as in those bags of briquettes sold by Kingston. The Edison-Ford methodology may have been based on—or perhaps managed to circumvent—a patented briquette process developed in 1897 by inventor Ellsworth B. A. Zwoyer. Whatever the case, they sell them at Safe-way. Edison lives!

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