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**Startup Failure Post-Mortems 2018 Third Update (11/14/2018)**

### Liquavista

Title: [Amazon has shut down Liquavista](https://the-digital-reader.com/2018/10/15/exclusive-amazon-has-shut-down-liquavista/)  
Title Link: <https://the-digital-reader.com/2018/10/15/exclusive-amazon-has-shut-down-liquavista/>

Product:[Liquavista](https://www.cbinsights.com/company/liquavista)  
Product Link: <https://www.cbinsights.com/company/liquavista>

The Digital Reader confirmed the screen tech company’s shutdown in an article:

An Amazon rep told me this morning that they ‘can confirm that Liquivista is no longer operating.’ However, they were unable to tell me whether Amazon still be pursuing this tech, if Liquavista’s R&D work been shifted to another unit, or the state of their screen production.

# Liquavista

ELECTRONICS | Electronic Components / Lighting & LED

[liquavista.com](https://liquavista.com/)

## Founded Year

2006

## Stage

Dead | Dead

## Total Raised

$35.6M

## About Liquavista

Liquavista, a spin-out from Dutch electronics Philips, developed and patented an electro-wetting technology for use in electronic display screens. Its unique IP allowed it to create full colour, 'paper-like' displays, capable of displaying video, while consuming less than one third the power of a traditional LCD. Liquavista's technology could address all the display markets currently dominated by LCDs, including mobile and fixed applications.

## Liquavista Headquarter Location

400, Kastanjelaan

Eindhoven, 5616 LZ,

Netherlands

# **Exclusive: Amazon Has Shut Down Liquavista**

15 October, 2018 [Amazon](https://the-digital-reader.com/category/amazon/), [Screen Tech](https://the-digital-reader.com/category/tech/screen-tech/)

[](https://i2.wp.com/the-digital-reader.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Liquavista-charbax.jpg?ssl=1)

Here’s a fascinating footnote to tomorrow’s Amazon news.

I have official confirmation today of a rumor that [circulated in March](https://the-digital-reader.com/2018/03/15/is-amazon-shutting-down-liquavista/): Amazon has shut down its screen tech sub, Liquavista.

An Amazon rep told me this morning that they “can confirm that Liquivista is no longer operating”. However, they were unable to tell me whether Amazon still be pursuing this tech, if Liquavista’s R&D work been shifted to another unit, or the state of their screen production.

If Amazon stays true to form, this information will probably be released to Techcrunch or another major news site after I break this story.

It is also entirely possible that Liquavista will play into tomorrow’s announcement, but that is really just a wild guess. (I am not playing coy; due to Amazon PR giving me the runaround I really don’t know anything about tomorrow.) That is unlikely, however; I was first tipped to this story by a reader who noticed the [Liquavista website](http://liquavista.com/) went down 3 weeks ago. (*Thanks, Javi!*) If Amazon were still doing something with Liquavista, the site would have been restored when I pointed it out to Liquavista weeks ago.

Launched in 2006 as a spin off from Philips, Liquavista had been developing a unique type of screen tech that was based on running an electric current through a liquid. This is called [electrowetting technology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electrowetting), which is a fancy way of saying that each pixel in a Liquavista screen contained 3 liquids (red, green, blue), and that the color shown by a pixel depended on the amount of power fed into each liquid.

Here’s a demo of a Liquavista screen [from 2013](https://the-digital-reader.com/2013/01/22/a-close-look-at-liquavistas-latest-electrowetting-screen-tech-video/). Recorded shortly before the Amazon acquisition, this was the last time Liquavista showed off their screen tech.

The screens were originally being developed as a solution to the battery life issue. Mobile battery life was terrible back in the pre-iPad, pre-iPhone, and pre-netbook era, and people were willing to pay a premium for a screen which used less power than typical LCD screens.

That was why the company was launched, and why Samsung bought it in 2011, but by the time Amazon bought Liquavista in 2013, it was pretty clear that there was no broader market for this tech. The problem of mobile battery life [had been solved](https://the-digital-reader.com/2013/05/21/why-samsung-sold-liquavista-in-a-single-photo/) and battery capacity was already improving year by year, and screens were getting more and more energy efficient.

Coincidentally, I was the first to report that [Samsung bought Liquavista in 2011](https://the-digital-reader.com/2011/01/18/samsung-bought-liquavista/), and the first to report that it had been [sold to Amazon in 2013](https://the-digital-reader.com/2013/05/13/confirmed-amazon-bought-liquavista-color-kindle-to-follow/), and now I am the first to officially report Liquavista’s demise.

Liquavista never did get their screens into production; I see from my archives that mass production was [supposed to begin in 2013](https://the-digital-reader.com/2012/03/21/samsung-electrowetting-screen-tech-to-hit-mass-production-next-year/); however, nothing reached the market, and it’s not clear that they even started production.

Liquavista were one of many startups that competed to provide a low-power screen solution, and most of them are dead now.  The lucky few like Pixtronix and Mirasol lived long enough to be acquired, while the majority declared bankruptcy or simply shut down.

The one survivor from that era is E-ink. First commercially produced for the [Sony Librie](https://the-digital-reader.com/2014/04/24/ten-years-ago-this-week-the-sony-librie-ships-in-japan/) and later the original Kindle, E-ink screens still dominate the ereader market, although with the way that market is shrinking due to people holding on to last year’s model (it still works great), it is hard to predict the company’s financial future.

Liquavista’s future is equally uncertain.