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Screens Screens Everywhere(of Every Size)

Screens have seen major advancements throughout recent history with the technology of HD TVs to LED to 3D to most recently Ultra High Definition (or 4k). Through these changes it seems that the mental model of the creators has been to deliver a more immersive experience this can be demonstrated by the creation of the new curved TV by Samsung or the recent rise in the use of projectors in homes to make screens so big that it feels like you're in the room with what is going on in the screen. The goal of complete immersion seems to be leading eventually toward holograms(3D imagery not requiring a screen) and virtual reality(“a computer-generated simulation of a three-dimensional image or environment that can be interacted with in a seemingly real or physical way by a person using special electronic equipment, such as a helmet with a screen inside or gloves fitted with sensors.”) so that a TV isn’t even necessary anymore. Steps toward complete immersion are already being taken with the oculus rift and Sonys Morpheus project both are virtual reality headsets that allow the user to feel as if they are in the game by cutting out all distractions like noise and peripheral vision. On the other side of the immersion spectrum is Microsoft’s response to virtual reality is their prototype called RoomAlive, they use kinect devices attached to projectors in order to turn the whole room into an interactive environment giving the user a different sense of immersion. These two examples show two very different ways that the researchers are trying reach the nearly graspable task of complete immersion. On one side of the spectrum with the Oculus Rift they are trying to achieve total immersion by cutting you off from the outside world hence limiting possible distractions from what is going on in the screen. Where as on the other side Microsofts RoomAlive project instead of taking you from the outside world it brings program to you making your entire room a holodeck of sorts.These examples highlight the differences in the mental models between these two up and coming technologies. This battle between virtual reality and holograms seems to be the future for screens however both are not without faults especially from a usability standpoint.