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How to choose between LCD and Plasma TV's

In the old days (about two years ago) this was a very easy question to answer. If you wanted to purchase a TV that was larger than 37", you would purchase a plasma TV. If the TV you wanted was going to be smaller than 37", you would purchase an LCD. It didn't take a rocket scientist to answer this question. Why ? The smallest Plasma TV you could purchase at that time was 37". The largest affordable LCD was 32". While the size restriction still holds true today for Plasma TV's, the price and size restrictions no longer apply to LCD TV's.

Let's start by answering the 3 most common misconceptions about Plasma TV's. LCD technology does not suffer from these myths.

- 1) **The screens don't last ...**The most recent generation of Plasma screens are rated for approximately 60,000 hours. This works out to you watching 7 hours a day for 23 years! Coincidentally LCD TV's are rated for this same 60,000 hours. Even if we take a more conservative figure of 30,000 hours, these sets would last for over 14 years at 6 hrs usage every day. In most cases with either of these technologies you'll be changing your TV to something newer longer before it ever wears out.
- 2) **The picture will burn onto my screen...**Plasma TV burn-in is not an issue that should cause undue concern in the average user. With a small amount of caution, most plasma TVs should never have a problem with burn in.
- 3) **You have to "re-gas" your Plasma TV screen...** Plasma screens are completely, permanently sealed when manufactured. Each individual pixel in a plasma panel is sealed, and therefore cannot, and does not ever require any refilling, or recharging.

So which type of TV should you buy? The first question you need to answer may make the decision for you. How large would you like your TV to be? If your answer is smaller than 37", your decision has already been made for you. LCD TV's are available in sizes smaller than 37", but Plasma is not.

Assuming you answered 37" or larger, there are a number of variables that may affect your decision. Price is no longer the issue it once was. Equivalent quality LCD and Plasma TV's are now quite competitively priced with the gap narrowing daily.

So how do you choose?

While both technologies have their advantages, the choice you ultimately make comes down to... Where will the TV be placed and how it will be used?

LCD TV's offer a brighter image and will not reflect ambient light like Plasmas do so If you plan to do the majority of your viewing in a brightly lit room, give the advantage to LCD.

In any other environment, give the nod to Plasma. Plasma offers a higher contrast ratio, which offer you more display depth and detail. Plasma will also offer wider viewing angles.

If you have a topic you would like to see in a future issue or if you have a question you would like answered, please forward the details to green@claimcontrol.ca. Watch for next months article on Blu-ray vs. HD DVD

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