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New Imager Makes Device Screens 'Touch-Free'

Elizabeth Palermo, TechNewsDaily

Contributor

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What if you could control your TV without using a remote or use your computer without ever touching it? Innovative imaging technology is on the horizon and it's bringing new meaning to the term "hands-free."

An Austrian research team has developed a versatile device that can capture images on a flexible, polymer sheet. The imager is a rectangle of clear, plastic film and uses [fluorescent](#) particles to capture incoming light. The light is channeled to sensors, then to a computer that combines the light signals and creates an image on the device's surface.

"To our knowledge, we are the first to present an image sensor that is fully transparent- no integrated microstructures, such as circuits- and is flexible and scalable at the same time," Oliver Bimber of the Johannes Kepler University in Linz, Austria, said in a statement.



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The new invention could have many practical applications, Bimber and his fellow researchers said. They envision the imager being applied on top of transparent user interfaces, such as the screens of TVs and computers. This would enable users to control their device without having to touch them.

Researchers said that the imager would allow gamers and computer operators to control their devices using simple gestures and without the use of external cameras or motion sensors. Because the imager is housed in a flexible polymer sheet, it can also be wrapped around objects to give them sensor capabilities.

Bimber said that his team is not yet aware of all the possible applications for their device, but he believes that the inexpensiveness of the polymer sheet used to create the imagers means it's disposable, and therefore more suitable to a range of different functions.

This story was provided by [TechNewsDaily](#), a sister site to LiveScience.

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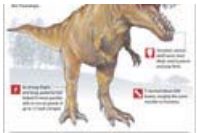
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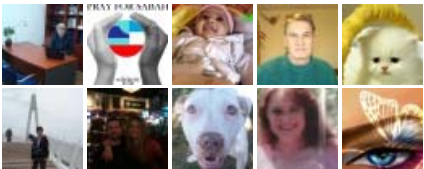
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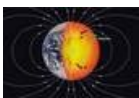
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