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Sony developing TVs that zoom in on image

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TOKYO -- Sony Corp. has developed a computer chip that allows viewers to zoom in on any part of a TV image, such as a favorite soccer player or an intruder on security-camera footage, while keeping the image sharp.

The huge electronics and entertainment giant said it was unclear when the zoom function would be available on TV sets, however.

In a demonstration Wednesday, Sony showed its "Digital Reality Creation Multifunction v2" - a technology that allows users to pan around the TV image and then zoom in. A knob on a box attached to the TV adjusts the amount of zoom.

In the demonstration, an image of sprawling terrain remained sharp enough while zooming in to show that a tiny speck was actually a man walking, and a dark spot in the river was a hippopotamus.

Sony said the Digital Reality Creation chip doesn't zoom the usual way - by stretching horizontal and vertical scanning lines - but instead delivers clear zoomed images by digitally enhancing the signal to communicate gloss, depth and texture.

A box attachment with the feature may be sold separately, but the date and price are still undecided, Sony said.