

New LG TVs relegate I/O to a box you can set 30 feet from the screen

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- You can't tell from this picture, but both the TV and port box on the table need to be plugged in somewhere.
- The port box can be up to 30 feet from the TV but needs line-of-sight. And the TV stand is sold separately.
- Audio specs include a 60 W, 4.2-channel system of downward-firing speakers.
- The back of the TV.

Messy cables have haunted TVs for ages. Gaming consoles, sound systems, cable boxes, disc players, and even antennas can all contribute to a cluttered room. But what if all those cables weren't connected to the TV but instead to a separate box far away from the screen?

That's the idea behind the series of TVs that LG listed today. Available in 97-, 83-, and 77-inch panel sizes, the new OLED M-series TVs don't have *any* ports on the actual TV. They each come with a so-called Zero Connect Box for wirelessly sending information between the ports and the TV from up to 30 feet away.

The TV and the Zero Connect Box both need to be plugged in, though, so this isn't *really* a "wireless" solution, even though LG is marketing the line as the "first wireless OLED

TV.”

The TVs offer greater flexibility for connecting stuff to your TV. But that doesn’t mean you can put the Zero Connect Box anywhere. Besides the 30-foot limitation, the TV’s product page states: “Zero Connect Box should be installed lower than the TV’s wireless receiver.” LG also confirmed to Ars Technica that the box and TV talk to each other using the 60 GHz wireless band and multi-path technology, and the box “must be placed within direct line of sight up to 30 feet from the OLED TV in an enclosure-free environment.”

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LG first teased its new connectivity technology at CES 2023 in Las Vegas this January. Today, it priced and listed those models in the US, starting at \$5,000 for the 77-inch LG OLED evo M (model 77M3), moving up to \$8,000 for 83 inches (83M3) and then to \$30,000 for the 97-inch LG Signature OLED M (97M3).

I/O box

In its January announcement, LG said that data transfer from the Zero Connect Box works via a proprietary algorithm “that instantly identifies the optimal transmission path” and helps “minimize transmission errors or disruptions as it can recognize changes in the immediate environment—such as people or pets moving around the room—and switch paths accordingly.”

The box has its own antenna that you can rotate and tilt toward the TV, and the box is “voice-recognition enabled, meaning users can turn on and manage the M3 and connected devices using simple, spoken commands,” LG’s January announcement said.

Revealing more details today, LG said the Zero Connect Box includes three HDMI 2.1 ports, two USB 2.0 ports, space for an old-school antenna, Ethernet, an RS-232C input, and optical

digital audio output.

- The back of the Zero Connect Box.
- The front of the Zero Connect Box.

“LG’s proprietary wireless AV transmission solution is able to transmit large amounts of data at up to 30 Gbps—three times the speed of the existing Wi-Fi standard—delivering sharp video and sound quality that draw users deeper into whatever they’re watching or playing,” LG’s announcement today said, noting the TVs’ support for Dolby Vision and Dolby Atmos.

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