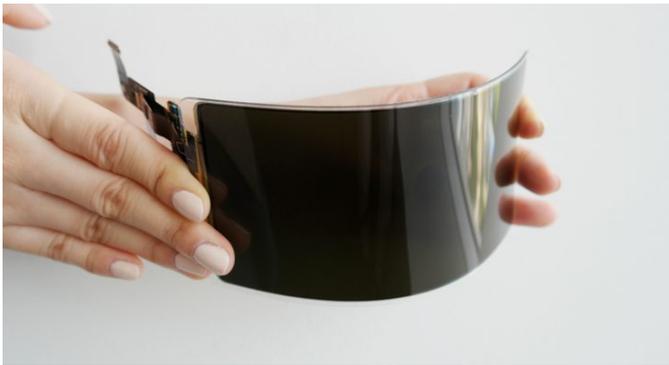


Huawei Working on First Foldable Screen Phone?

Written by Frederick Douglas
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Huawei plans to beat Samsung in launching the first foldable smartphone with a flexible display, Nikkei reports, thanks to an OLED display developed by obscure Chinese panel supplier BOE Technology Group.



Beijing Oriental Electronics (aka BOE) is a little known name outside of specialist Asian supply chain circles, but it is a good enough display maker to even hold some Apple iPhone LCD business. Currently it is pushing into more innovative territory, thus the deal with Huawei the production of a flexible smartphone. BOE has already shown off flexible display prototypes at tradeshows, including a tablet-size device one can fold into a smartphone.

A "person familiar with Huawei's plan" tells Nikkei the foldable device will probably be a luxury item, with initial planned volume of just 20000-30000 units (if not less) for a small section of the first-wave adopter market. As such, the device will be more of a technology demo in the name of attracting industry and media coverage towards Huawei.

The news comes on the heels of a Samsung announcement of an "unbreakable flexible panel"-- an OLED smartphone display certified for durability by UL (Underwriters Laboratories). The flexible panel features a fortified plastic window instead of glass. Samsung says the plastic is as lightweight and transparent as glass, but unlike glass it does not shatter in case of impact, even from heights up to 1.8m.

Such a panel will find use in smartphones-- perhaps even the flexible device Samsung is rumoured to launch as part of the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Galaxy brand. Nikkei says the Samsung foldable smartphone will feature a 7.3-inch seamless display, and can be folded for 20000 times.

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Both Huawei and Samsung foldable handsets are supposed to launch sometime next year. Will 2018 become the year of the flexible display, if not the foldable phone?

Go [Huawei Aims to Launch World's First Foldable Screen Phone \(Nikkei Asian Review\)](#)

Go [Samsung Display's 'Unbreakable Flexible Panel' Verified by Underwriters Laboratories](#)