Japanese professor invents lickable TV screen

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Photograph: Kim Kyung-Hoon/Reuters

Have you ever wanted to taste the delicious-looking food you see on cooking shows? Well, that wish has moved a step closer. A professor in Japan has developed a prototype TV screen that you can lick. It is called TTTV. This abbreviation means "Taste the TV". Professor Homei Miyashita from Meiji University in Tokyo created the screen. He said it could become "taste-a-vision". If he created a screen that emits smells, we could also have "smell-a-vision". Professor Miyashita wanted to create a screen that gave a multisensory experience. He hopes his work means that screen technology can move on from just having pictures and sound to a screen that engages the sense of taste too.

Professor Miyashita said his screen can imitate food flavors. It works a bit like an inkjet printer that uses different cartridges to create different colors. Instead of ink, Miyashita's TTTV uses 10 different flavor cartridges. These spray a combination of flavors onto a hygienic film that is part of the TV screen. The TV viewer can then lick the screen to sample the taste. Professor Miyashita said: "The goal is to make it possible for people to have the experience of something like eating at a restaurant on the other side of the world, even while staying at home." A student at Meiji University sampled a chocolate she saw on the screen. She said: "It's sweet like a chocolate sauce." Miyashita said TTTV would cost about \$870.

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