

Video Chat on the TV With Facebook's Portal TV

Written by Marco Attard
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Facebook goes to show the [Portal video chatting device](#) was not a one-off hardware offering as it announces the Portal TV, a means for customers to video chat using the biggest screen in the house.



The Portal TV looks like a miniature Microsoft Kinect, and plugs into TVs via HDMI port to allow Facebook users to make video calls using Messenger or WhatsApp. Video chats made using WhatsApp are perhaps more secure, being encrypted end-to-end, and users can disable the camera and microphone by pressing a button and sliding a cover in front of the device.

Facebook says the Portal TV features Smart Camera technology allowing it to keep track of chat participants as they move around the room, as well as apply amusing augmented reality effects to user faces. Control comes through voice, with a "Hey Portal" command waking the device up and calls made by simply calling the other person's name out loud. An interesting addition is a picture-in-picture mode allowing users to video chat while watching another show on TV, and the Portal TV also provides access to streaming services such as Amazon Prime Video and Facebook's own video offering.

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The aforementioned Portal device has not gone forgotten either--Facebook offers two additions to the range with the 8-inch Portal Mini and the 15.6-inch Portal+, an oversized option sitting on a swiveling base. The original 10-inch Portal also gets a sleeker redesign with minimal bezels.

The Portal devices are available in a number of European markets, including the UK, Spain, Italy and France, on October 2019.

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