

SO I GOT MY FIRST SMART TV TODAY...

Okay so apparently, these things are the biggest news in the TV industry ever since the unfortunate “3D TV” gimmick had failed, at least on the mainstream scene. Seeing as my trusty old LG had finally died after 8 long years of faithful service, I set out on the path to find a worthy successor. This is when I first really noticed these flashy “Android TVs” marketed like they were the best invention since sliced bread.

So, what is a so-called “smart TV”, truly? Basically, it’s something like a smartphone with gigantism and no touchscreen. It can connect to the Internet, download and run certain apps, but that’s about it. It’s living proof just how much computers are getting integrated into our everyday lives. Some 15 years ago, when you said “computer”, you imagined a bulky monitor, a midi tower and all the regular PC peripherals, all made of white plastic. But today, they’re everywhere. Your phone is a computer, your TV is a computer, your fridge is a computer and soon enough, your car will be a self-driving computer and your regular bathroom mirror will have “smart” capabilities.

All things considered, I was very skeptical of it since it just seemed to be another gimmick designed to get people to spend more money on things they do not need. Why would I want Netflix integrated directly into my TV if I can just stream it via Wi-Fi from my phone or computer? Well, I ultimately only got one of these since it was generally a good deal - a 43 inch FullHD LED screen which came at a hefty discount, and from an established brand no less. I hardly need anything bigger for my living room, and I don’t have much use for a 4K TV so I didn’t want to spend any extra cash on that (don’t get me started on that).

Now, how smart is a smart TV? Turns out, not very. The main qualm I have with it is that it is a **smart TV with dumb controls**. Guess what? It comes with a regular remote. Remember texting on a flip-phone or on any old “dumb” phone with only a numerical keyboard? Well, that’s how you type anything on your new smart TV. Now, this is all probably part of the company’s plan for selling people extra “smart remotes” or something, but my first thought was getting a remote control app on my phone. Is *that* any better? A bit. You still can’t completely replace your remote with your phone since the app doesn’t allow you to switch the TV on for some reason, and feels quite sluggish overall. Plus, some reviews on the Play Store point out that it doesn’t even work properly with all phones.

So, in the end, am I happy with my new TV? Yes. Is it because of the smart features it brings with it? Not at all. Frankly, I feel like this technology still needs to undergo some development before it can be deemed a feature worth considering when making your purchase. I got this one simply because of the good specs, a convenient discount and some minor curiosity regarding what an Android TV is like. But the truth is, you could remove all those Android features tomorrow and I wouldn’t notice they are missing. My advice to anyone finding themselves in a dilemma about any similar products is to just prioritize your regular TV specs - the resolution, screen size and display technology. If an integrated OS figures into your desired specs without too much of a price increase, then by all means, buy it and enjoy some convenient features. But **never** base your purchase mainly on whether the TV is “smart” or not.

