

Valve Index will be going high-end in the VR headset world

May 1 2019, by Nancy Cohen



Pre-orders hovering in the wings will be the icing on the cake—the cake being a high-end VR headset called the Valve Index, from Valve. *TechCrunch* said pre-orders will kick in and the ship date is June 28. Preorders are for users in the contiguous [US](#) and most of Western Europe (the UK is left out for now), said *Ars Technica*.

So, what's so special about it? The 1440×1600 per eye display features

"some insane 144 hz [refresh](#) rates," said Lucas Matney, *TechCrunch*, and a 130-degree field-of-view.

Instead of a mount perpendicular to the user's eyes, said the [Valve site](#), "the headset's displays cant outward by 5 degrees. This improves outer FOV while balancing the inner FOV."

Geek.com also noticed the 1440 x 1600 pixels per eye "with enhanced LCD [subpixel](#) rendering techniques to increase sharpness and reduce the 'screen door effect.'"

Talking about its headset, Valve discussed how multiple attributes contribute to how clearly and comfortably you see details in VR—and they have you covered. "The headset's dual 1440x1600 RGB LCDs provide 50% more subpixels than OLED, resulting in greater sharpness for the same rendering cost. In addition, the fill-factor is three times better than OLED."

Geek.com called it a powerful headset. What is special for Jordan Minor is that this marks the company's first fully internal VR hardware solution, and Minor affirmed it's pretty impressive. " The Valve Index aims to provide the highest [fidelity](#) VR experience imaginable," he wrote.



Outside components are needed. Minor made that clear. "You just can't strap it on your face and go," he said, and he walked readers through the required specs: Windows 10 or SteamOS or Linux, 8 GB of RAM, NVIDIA GeForce GTX 970+ or AMD RX480+, Dual Core CPU, and some USB 3.0 ports.

The Valve Index encompasses a range of hardware; as for controllers, "the 87 new sensors in the controllers can now map your hands to the point where games recognize what your individual fingers are doing," said Minor.

Interestingly, with all the impressive talk over features, Sam Machkovech in *Ars Technica* posed the tough question. Is it worth \$999? During a Q&A, a Valve source said one of the driving factors for their game teams was that "we want long-form VR [experiences](#)."

Nonetheless, wrote Machkovech, "Valve didn't hand us a box complete with an Index." Until that time, he added, they are left with spec sheets and series of impressions. Machkovech added, it was "question marks" at the moment. "As soon as we have more to report on Valve's lengthy-session sales pitch (that is, as soon as we spend more than two hours inside of the Valve Index uninterrupted), we'll be here with impressions."

Motherboard, meanwhile, stepped up with encouraging points.

"Though the Index's \$999 price tag is an [eye-popper](#)," you can buy components separately. As for pricing, said the article, "It seems that Valve's betting that there are enough users who want to invest in high-end gear, and chances are it's not making that bet blindly."

Moreover, "Even in the premium VR market, the Valve Index is a heavy hitter. The HTC Vive Pro is more expensive than the Valve Index at \$1,400, and it appears that the Index will rival the pricier system."

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