

Magic Calendar has e-ink display that evokes paper

March 26 2017, by Nancy Owano



(Tech Xplore)—We generally see paper as something you wrap stuff in. Or paper is what you use in the form of towels to wipe up a mess. We

also see paper as the material for print.

Japan? Another story. There [paper](#) goes beyond the utilitarian; it is also a material for artistic purposes and paper plays a big role in works that draw much appreciation of art.

In Japan, paper is a material for paintings, for calligraphy, for paper-folding decorations, for puppetry.

Small wonder that in Japan a concept has been put forward that involves paper connecting to the Internet and in a most interesting way.

We are being introduced to the Magic Calendar, which is "part of a Japanese Android Experiments campaign that looks for potential Android-powered ideas that can be turned into actual products," said JC Torres in *SlashGear*. The idea is to have a Magic Calendar on your wall that syncs with your Google Calendar account.

The powered-by-Android concept involves "an always-on Magic Calendar dashboard that displays your calendar on a [wall](#)."

Rei Padla in *Android Community* said the idea allows an e-paper calendar to be [synced](#) with a smartphone. The Magic Calendar takes advantage of Google Calendar and a custom app.

The person behind this paper-digital blend is Kosho Tsuboi. He said in a video posted last month that he was a regular user of Google Calendar. He said he came up with the design of the calendar based on the idea of having a product "that would inherit both the characteristics of smartphone and paper calendars."

Why, though, go to the trouble of having this wall calendar? If the focus is on keeping track of dates and events, then your smartphone or laptop

carries the information you need. The question, actually, can be turned around to why not.

Neither would you need a painting or hanging tapestry to get through the day but they are quite nice. So is the e-ink display. bringing numbers to life on the wall, drawing in family members to dates that impact their routines.

As he said in the video, you get the ability to put changeable information on a media that has a similar weight, texture, or smooth feeling that one associates with touching paper.

Torres said an [e-ink display](#) was used rather than an LCD, and that is significant. It means that the wall calendar can last for a long time on a single charge. "E-ink only uses power when changing its contents and doesn't draw any power to keep display the same static content, unlike LCD displays."

Yes, there are some tradeoffs with the use of e-ink, if you want to call them tradeoffs. Torres said that "e-ink displays usually have significantly lower resolutions than LCDs."

Second, it is not as if you easily touch the screen if you want to change something. "Then there's also the issue of interaction, since you can't really touch the e-ink screen to manipulate it. You can only change views, for example, by pressing buttons on the side of the Magic Calendar. Any editing has to be done on a computer or phone, which is synced to Google Calendar, which then trickles down to the Magic Calendar."

What's next: the product is still in development, said Kosho Tsuboi in the video. "I think that as technology development progresses and these types of products are developed, the boundary between analog and

digital things will disappear."

Interestingly, many comments from those hearing about the [calendar](#) have been overwhelmingly positive: Shut up and take my money just about summed up the positive reactions.

More information: www.android.com/object/vote/magic-calendar/

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