



Blu-ray Disc News

News and Views from the Blu-ray Disc Association

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Blu-ray Disc Association predicts record breaking Q4 sales

"When Transformers was released on HD DVD in 2007 its Director, Michael Bay, stated his preference for Blu-ray Disc. He got it, and now more and more Main Street consumers are getting it too. Blu-ray is just what your HDTV needs – for relatively small additional cost, you can exploit the full 1080p potential of your new HDTV in ways that are impossible with HD broadcasts."

*Victor Matsuda
Chairman
BDA Global Promotions
Committee*

Fall has arrived and as the leaves turn golden so do prospects for Blu-ray Disc in the important pre-Christmas sales period. The Blu-ray Disc Association (BDA) reports that sell-in indicators for Blu-ray products are proving more positive than even the most optimistic sales forecasts and market analyst reports.

"We have good reason to predict that this Q4 sales period will see the Blu-ray Disc revolution take hold in US mainstream markets and we will witness strong sales performance in every other geographical region," commented Victor Matsuda, Chairman of the BDA Global Promotions Committee. "It's all about consumer awareness – the abundance of choice in players and the awesome line-up of movie titles that Blu-ray offers mainstream home entertainment fans.

"Take *Transformers* as one example," continued Matsuda. "It was released on DVD and HD DVD over 12 months ago, but as soon as it was released on Blu-ray Disc it shot back up to the #1 position. Blu-ray adds value to the consumer experience – it offers six times the image resolution of DVD as well



Michael Bay, Director of Transformers

as uniquely high resolution multi-channel surround sound. It creates such a 'WOW' factor that consumers only need to experience it once and they're hooked.

"*Transformers'* director, Michael Bay, has always been a huge fan of Blu-ray Disc. He got it, and now more and more *Main Street* consumers are getting it too. Blu-



Victor Matsuda

ray is just what your HDTV needs – for relatively small additional cost, you can exploit the full 1080p potential of your new HDTV in ways that are impossible with today’s HD broadcasts,” commented Victor Matsuda.

The 30 September release of *Iron Man* is another good example of Blu-ray’s positive and rapidly growing impact on movie releases. In the U.S., for the week commencing 29 September, the BD release of *Iron Man* is the best-selling movie of all packaged media (including DVD) on Amazon.com.

Matsuda reports that in North America Blu-ray Disc movie sales are running around four times higher than at the same time last year. On the basis of this, and the sure knowledge of a strong slate of new movie releases from the Hollywood majors this Fall, Victor Matsuda believes that Blu-ray Disc is set to re-write the record books in terms of new format introductions.

“At the IFA exhibition in Berlin last month, renowned media industry analyst Jim Bottoms (from Futuresource Consulting) predicted that in the US, Blu-ray Disc would end 2008 in an unassailable position as the next gen home entertainment packaged media format. Without wishing to appear arrogant, this is the message we need to communicate to consumers worldwide. The future is clear. The future is Blu-ray Disc. And now is the time to buy into the format with its wealth of content, and hardware devices available a wide range of different price points in order to cater for different budgets.”

“The availability of affordable players is an important factor and key Blu-ray hardware manufacturers have now aggressively priced entry-level products at strategic price points (<\$299) in the U.S. for example, as the format quickly expands to the ‘early mass’ segment of the consumer market,” concluded Matsuda. “I predict an exceptionally busy period for the format thanks to a combination of these price developments in the hardware sector combined with the launch of some very big movie titles.”



US Survey finds most without HDTV plan to buy one

As reported in US-based Home Media Magazine, an HDTV is definitely on the shopping list for a lot of first-time buyers, a new PriceGrabber.com survey finds.



The survey of 1,915 respondents in September found that 57% already had an HDTV. Of the other 43%, 73% planned on getting one within the next 12 months.

With average LCD prices down 13% and plasma prices down 27% since August 2006, consumers have more incentive to get an HDTV, PriceGrabber said. Also, because of the Feb. 17, 2009 digital TV transition, 14% of all respondents said an HDTV was their fix.

"In the next 12 months, 57% of surveyed respondents expect to purchase an HDTV and 38% expect to purchase a Blu-ray Disc player. Fifty-one percent of current HDTV owners are likely to buy a second HDTV set in the next 12 months," the report said.

British Video Association on song with Blu-ray Disc

The British Video Association (BVA) played host to a Blu-ray music showcase last week at the Metropolis Studios on Chiswick High Road in London. With representatives from the music studios such as EMI, Eagle Rock, Decca, DG, Universal Music and Sony BMG, the audience was treated to numerous fabulous offerings on High Definition with Robbie Williams singing Mr Bojangles, Justin Timberlake's Cry Me A River, Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake and Freddie Mercury belting out Queen's Under Pressure to name but a few.

Several artists took the time to come down and lend their support for the event, including Phil Manzanera of Roxy Music fame and Stewart Copeland from The Police.

"We had a superb response to our Blu-ray Music Showcase held at Metropolis Studios," commented Hannah Conduct, marketing manager at the BVA. "A cross section of industry representatives were there ranging from BVA members to key retailers to both trade and consumer journalists.

"Feedback has been extremely positive with attendees saying they found it an informative and entertaining evening. One guest proclaimed that they thought 'it was an eye opener for quite a few people who really didn't appreciate the value of High Definition music on Blu-ray disc'".

She added: "This was exactly our aim – to demonstrate to retailers and journalists quite how spectacular Blu-ray is and highlight the amount of music titles that will be in the market by the start of 2009."



Phil Mazanera (left) from Roxy Music pictured with The Police's Stewart Copeland (right) and Matt Lawrence from Metropolis Studios at the event

New Blu-ray Disc reader / DVD writer combo from Lite-On

Lite-On has announced the introduction of its 6X internal Blu-ray Disc Combo, iHES206. The new Blu-ray Disc Reader plus DVD Writer provides consumers an all-in-one solution to playback High Definition content, while maintaining the capability of archiving data onto CD or DVD.

The Lite-On iHES206 with Serial ATA interface is a great solution for enthusiasts who wish to enjoy the advanced technologies of Blu-ray Disc in home entertainment. It will not only allow them to play High Definition content such as Blu-ray movies, it will also



provide users all the advantages of a DVD Writer.

The iHES206 is capable of recording on today's most popular DVD and CD media in the market, and playback from media such as Blu-ray Discs, DVD, and CD. The drive can read BD-R/RE/ROM discs at 6X (Double Layer at 4X). It can write DVD±R at 16X, DVD±R DL and DVD+RW at 8X, DVD-RW at 6X and DVD-RAM at 12X.



iHES206

With a BD writer and an internal and external BD-ROM already in its product portfolio, Lite-On is determined to fulfill the growing demand for more Blu-ray Disc compatible products.

"Now that Blu-ray is becoming a widely accepted and popular format for High Definition video playback, we want to offer the consumer another solution to enjoy Blu-ray on their PC," says Jelmer Veldman, Marketing Manager for Lite-On in Europe. "This BD-COMBO is the perfect upgrade for those users who want to playback High Definition movies on their PC."

Availability of the iHES206 is scheduled from November 2008 and the estimated retail price is €139.

Russian Laser Video – Europe's leading indie Blu-ray Disc replicator

"High quality, lowest prices and advanced logistics are our strong points."

*Yuri Vasin
Deputy Technical
Director
Laser Video*

Following an order earlier this year for three Singulus Indigo Blu-ray BD50 lines, in addition to the one it already operates, Moscow-based Laser-Video Multimedia claims to have become Europe's largest independent Blu-ray replicator with a monthly capacity of two million High Definition discs.

Back in May 2007, Laser-Video had purchased Europe's first mastering (Crystalline) system from Singulus, enabling the company to offer an end-to-end BD production capability authoring, mastering and replication.

"High quality, lowest prices and advanced logistics are our strong points," says Yuri Vasin, Deputy Technical Director.

The company's clients include major studios such as Universal, Paramount, Warner, DreamWorks, 20th Century Fox, MGM, Walt Disney, as well as leading Russian companies and distributors and large publishing houses



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