



Blu-ray Disc News

News and Views from the Blu-ray Disc Association

16 February 2007

Contents in this issue

- Buena Vista Worldwide Entertainment announces European Blu-ray Disc launch
- Cross-studio communication initiatives to support Blu-ray Disc
- Sony Pictures Home Entertainment announces new BD titles in Europe

Buena Vista Worldwide Home Entertainment announces European Blu-ray Disc launch

"Pearl Harbor is an epic motion picture produced/directed by Bruckheimer/Bay with unbelievable special effects. From a film perspective, it's ideal for showcasing spectacular scenes in full HD 1080p and amazing sound in uncompressed PCM.

Chicken Little, on the other hand, is great for demonstrating just how perfect a picture can look since it's animated and based on digital files."

Bob Chapek, President of Buena Vista Worldwide Home Entertainment

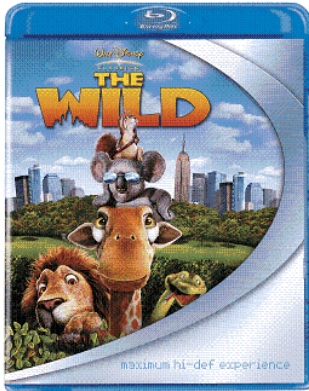
Buena Vista Worldwide Home Entertainment has announced that the first European launch of Blu-ray Disc titles will be on March 19, 2007, starting in the UK and cascading out into other European countries very shortly thereafter, depending on the country.

The 12 launch titles include: *Eight Below, Chicken Little, Enemy of the State, Flightplan, Gone in 60 Seconds, The Guardian, Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Hollywoodland, Pearl Harbor, Scary Movie 4, Sky High, and The Wild*. All of these titles will include seamless menu navigation and a Movie Showcase bonus feature highlighting select scenes in the film plus some bonus content from the original DVD.

In addition, *Chicken Little* will feature two new Java features exclusive to Blu-ray Disc: a filmmaker Q&A and an Alien Invasion game; *The Guardian* will feature one new Java feature: a filmmaker Q&A; and *Eight Below* and *Flightplan* will each include a Blu-Scape High Definition short film feature. *(These new features may not be available in all countries due to localization issues and individual market preference).*



Bob Chapek



“Buena Vista Worldwide Home Entertainment feels that BD's capacity advantage is crucial to including more and higher quality content onto a disc - more languages, more subtitles, more features, higher bit rates and so on. We intend to use the full 50GB on all titles being launched.”

Bob Chapek.



Talking exclusively to *Blu-ray Disc News*, Bob Chapek, President of Buena Vista Worldwide Home Entertainment believed that *Pearl Harbor* and *Chicken Little* were exemplary of the potential that BD offers movie studios to add value to their releases.

“Pearl Harbor is an epic motion picture produced/directed by Bruckheimer/Bay with unbelievable special effects,” explained Chapek. “ From a film perspective, it's ideal for showcasing spectacular scenes in full HD 1080p and amazing sound in uncompressed PCM.

“Chicken Little, on the other hand, is great for demonstrating just how perfect a picture can look since it's animated and based on digital files. It is the first time we restored one of our catalog titles back from files for the Blu-ray encode,” Chapek commented.

“Looking ahead, Pirates and Cars represent our company's biggest movie franchises. We feel that the launch of these tent pole titles on Blu-ray Disc will truly help propel the format forward to new levels globally,” said Bob Chapek.

Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl and *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest* will both be released on Blu-ray in May 2007 and coincide with the much-anticipated theatrical release of *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*. Each movie will be a 2-disc 75 GB release and include brand new Java bonus plus all of the bonus features previously released on DVD.

The Curse of the Black Pearl will include an all new Java feature called "Scoundrels of the Sea", an interactive in-movie feature that presents facts on-screen about the legends and lore of pirates. *Dead Man's Chest* will include an exciting new Java feature called "Liar's Dice", a single-player game, shot in live action.

Similarly, *Disney/Pixar Cars* will be released on Blu-ray in Summer 2007 and will be the ultimate showcase movie for demonstrating just how perfect a picture can look since it's animated and completely based on digital files. In addition, *Cars* will include two new Java bonus features.

“All three movies are ideal for showcasing spectacular high definition scenes in full 1080p, amazing sound in uncompressed PCM, and unparalleled levels of interactivity never seen before on DVD,” stated Bob Chapek.

Looking at the European market, Chapek regards the BD platform as offering major new revenue potential within the company's business operations. He believes that the launch of PLAYSTATION 3 will provide a significant driver fuelling the establishment of the format on a worldwide basis.

“The PS3 is important because it represents such a large majority of total devices that can play Blu-ray Discs and has such enormous buzz around its launch,”

explained Chapek. "Until other CE manufacturers can put enough standalone BD hardware into the market, PS3 will weigh heavily.

Early U.S. research we have done shows positive signs - namely, that over 80% of PS3 owners we surveyed plan to purchase Blu-ray movies.

"Fortunately, some of the early U.S. research we have done shows positive signs - namely, that over 80% of PS3 owners we surveyed plan to purchase Blu-ray movies. That being said, we still have much work to do to increase the tie-rates between hardware & movie software, especially among gamers."

Also, Chapek sees a number of other critical advantages in the Blu-ray Disc format. "Buena Vista Worldwide Home Entertainment feels that BD's capacity advantage is crucial to including more and higher quality content onto a disc - more languages, more subtitles, more features, higher bit rates and so on. We intend to use the full 50GB on all titles being launched," concluded Bob Chapek.

Cross-studio communication initiatives to support Blu-ray Disc

At a specially convened London press conference this week, UK home entertainment studios releasing Blu-ray titles announced their intention to present joint communication initiatives to promote the Blu-ray format in the UK. The studios include Buena Vista Home Entertainment, Lions Gate Home Entertainment, Paramount Home Entertainment, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment and Warner Brothers Home Entertainment.

The studios are working together in recognition that a united approach to promoting the benefits of the Blu-Ray format is crucial in establishing High Definition content as the next generation of home entertainment.

"The early signs of interest consumers are showing towards the High Definition revolution are incredibly exciting for us all in the Home Entertainment market, and by working together in this way we can guarantee our consumers are receiving a clearer message to help them understand just how good it really is."

*John Stanley
Managing Director
Warner Home Video*

Anthony Peet, Managing Director, Buena Vista Home Entertainment, commented, "We're very excited to be joining with other distributors in getting behind Blu-ray. Our slate of releases has been selected to showcase this fantastic new format. Blu-ray offers enormous potential for home entertainment, not simply with high Definition picture quality and lossless audio but also capacity for bonus content and new levels of interactivity and we're confident it will bring incremental value to the category."

Zygi Kamasa, CEO, Lions Gate UK, comments, "With over 170 companies now supporting blu-ray, there is a commitment to deliver an incredible range of High Definition content from feature film to TV, games, music and more. The proposed cross studio communication initiatives will undoubtedly help showcase this revolutionary technology, and ultimately drive a new revenue stream within the home entertainment industry."

Charlie McAuley, Managing Director, Paramount Pictures Home Entertainment, comments, "With such a strong 2007 release slate, we're very excited about the additional opportunity that Blu-ray brings. The additional functionality, sound and picture quality really provides us with the best possible way to showcase our product. The emergence of new technology is always exciting and it's great that Paramount, with our host of Blu-ray releases, is contributing so heavily."

“Our ability to create and distribute the most compelling products possible through the establishment of the Blu Ray format is a significant step in our quest to excite and engage consumers in our movies. The success being attained in the USA gives the UK Market a significant opportunity to grow as player penetration explodes!”

*Steven Leighton
Managing Director - UK
Twentieth Century Fox
Home Entertainment*

Andy Armstrong, Managing Director, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, comments, ““With US Blu-Ray software sales up 700 percent since the mid-November US launch of PLAYSTATION 3 and other Blu-ray hardware from manufacturers, the UK market is poised for huge growth. This event marks the studios’ intention to maximise this potential.”

Steven Leighton, Managing Director - UK, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment, comments, “Our ability to create and distribute the most compelling products possible through the establishment of the Blu Ray format is a significant step in our quest to excite and engage consumers in our movies. The success being attained in the USA gives the UK Market a significant opportunity to grow as player penetration explodes!”

John Stanley, Managing Director, Warner Home Video, comments,“The early signs of interest consumers are showing towards the High Definition revolution are incredibly exciting for us all in the Home Entertainment market, and by working together in this way we can guarantee our consumers are receiving a clearer message to help them understand just how good it really is.”

Sony Pictures Home Entertainment announces new BD titles in Europe

At the same London press conference, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment (SPHE) announced the latest additions to its robust Q1 Blu-ray Disc (BD) slate, adding a broad selection of new release and catalogue titles, and many 50GB dual-layer discs, that will be available on store shelves one week prior to the launch of PLAYSTATION®3 (PS3) on March 23 in Europe.

The first 500,000 PS3 owners across Europe to register on the PLAYSTATION® Network will receive a copy of the James Bond blockbuster **Casino Royale** on a 50GB dual-layer Blu-ray Disc (BD).

Casino Royale, the \$535 million worldwide box office smash, hits shelves March 19 in tandem with the 50GB thriller, **Layer Cake**— giving consumers a double dose of Daniel Craig in high definition. Visionary writer and director Guillermo del Toro’s (*Pan’s Labyrinth*) **Hellboy**, a supernatural action adventure based on Mike Mignola’s popular Dark Horse Comics series, will make its debut on BD that same day. **Stranger Than Fiction**, starring writer and producer Will Ferrell as a man whose world gets turned upside down when he begins to hear his life chronicled by a narrator only he can hear, hits shelves on BD April 2 followed by **Big Fish**, an adventure as big as life itself, starring Ewan McGregor, Albert Finney and Billy Crudup on April 9.

“We are delighted that early purchasers of PS3 in Europe will have the opportunity to experience Blu-ray movies for themselves,” said Matt Brown, Executive Vice-President, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, Europe. “Based on the enormous



Matt Brown

box-office success of **Casino Royale** worldwide, we're confident that when consumers experience Bond on the PS3 - they will be hooked."

Casino Royale includes a collection of added-value features available in 1080P High Definition visual quality, with uncompressed audio features to deliver the best possible audio experience, making it the perfect vehicle to highlight the broader entertainment credentials of the PLAYSTATION 3 system.

"We are delighted that early purchasers of PS3 in Europe will have the opportunity to experience Blu-ray movies for themselves. Based on the enormous box-office success of Casino Royale worldwide, we're confident that when consumers experience Bond on the PS3 - they will be hooked."

*Matt Brown
Executive Vice-President
Sony Pictures Home
Entertainment, Europe.*

"The launch of PLAYSTATION 3 in the U.S. has already had an enormous impact on the marketplace. Blu-ray is outselling HD-DVD two fold in the U.S., resulting in a 700 percent increase in software sales since the mid-November launch," said David Bishop, President, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment.

SPHE recently released its first 50GB BD titles in Europe including **Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby** (January 15), **Black Hawk Down** (January 22) and **Click** (January 29).

Sony Pictures Animation's first full-length animated feature, **Open Season**, starring Ashton Kutcher and Martin Lawrence, launches today (February 12) and marks the debut of the first MPEG-4 AVC encoded BD title from SPHE. New release **All The King's Men**, featuring an all-star cast, including Sean Penn and Jude Law, will be available to consumers on March 6.

Catalogue titles also available today include action-adventure comedies **A Knight's Tale** starring Heath Ledger and **RV** featuring Robin Williams. Additional catalogue titles will be available to consumers on March 19 with the release of **Kung Fu Hustle**, **50 First Dates** and **XXX**.

The PLAYSTATION 3 60GB model will launch in the PAL territories of Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Australasia on March 23. The first 500,000 consumers to purchase a PS3 in Europe and register on the PLAYSTATION®Network will be eligible to receive a copy of **Casino Royale** on Blu-ray Disc. For further details, please visit www.playstation.com

We are here
to help

The Blu-ray Disc Association supports the production of this electronic newsletter. For more information on the association visit the website – www.blu-raydisc.com
To find out more about any of the topics reported here please email info@blu-ray-news.net

Images included within this newsletter have been minimised for ease of emailing. If you require hi-res versions for reproduction within magazines please contact info@blu-ray-news.net

To receive copies of Blu Ray News free of charge, please email info@blu-ray-news.net stating your wish to subscribe. Likewise, if your colleagues want to receive the newsletter all we need is their email address.
