



Blu-ray Disc News

News and Views from the Blu-ray Disc Association

19 April 2007

Contents in this issue

- Blu-ray Disc Association rises to challenge of format growth
- Blu-ray Disc used for magazine covermounts
- Panasonic to introduce 4X Write Once Blu-ray Discs
- Java Technology in TV: Blu-ray Disc and Cable Day at JavaOne Conference in San Francisco

Blu-ray Disc Association rises to challenge of format growth



Victor Matsuda

To borrow a phrase from a famous former British premier, Harold McMillan, “we live in interesting times”. 2007 has seen a dramatic growth in popularity for the Blu-ray Disc. Not just in terms of disc sales – there is a far greater choice of consumer players, IT drives and games consoles that support this spine-tingling entertainment experience.

Now, with PLAYSTATION 3 successfully introduced into the European market the Blu-ray Disc Association (BDA) believes that all of the main cornerstones are in place and BD’s global launch platform is ready. The next six – nine months will see exponential growth in Blu-ray Disc as the High Definition entertainment format of choice, so says the BDA. To flesh out these predictions, this newsletter talked to two senior BDA executives – Global Promotions Committee Chairman, Victor Matsuda who is based in the US and Frank Simonis, Chairman of the BDA’s European Promotions Committee.

Firstly, Victor Matsuda briefly reflected on the first six months of the North American launch. “I basically view this period as a validation of the efforts and fundamental messaging that we have tried to communicate from day one,” explains Matsuda. “We have always highlighted BD’s undeniably stronger industry support, in hardware, movies, and gaming, and those companies’ focus on the consumer. Concretely, the most impressive factors during this period are the launch of PLAYSTATION 3 and multiple BD players late last year, and the tremendous increase in the number of movies that has ensued. The floodgates have basically been opened for the format to really establish itself.”

He believes that the reason for this impressive growth from day one of BD introduction are pretty simple: the combination of the world’s most well-known CE, IT, gaming, and movie companies now actually offering compelling products to the consumers.

“Since January, sales of BD have been approximately three times those of HD-DVD, and most recently, with the success of such titles as Casino Royale, this ratio has been significantly greater. We definitely see this trend strengthening as we move forward.”

Victor Matsuda
Chairman
BDA Global Promotions
Committee



Frank Simonis

“Independent studios are important for the growth in any territory. In the US, we have over 20 studio's selling titles. The same will happen in Europe.

Frank Simonis
Chairman
BDA European Promotions
Committee

However, within this large group of supporting companies there is one key sub-set in the form of the Hollywood movie making community. “We have always been focused on the consumer and consequently, have always viewed studio support as one of the most critical issues,” affirms Victor Matsuda. “The amount and quality of (movie) product is obviously dependent on studio support. To that effect, 18 of the top-selling 20 DVD titles in the US are from BD-supporting studios; 15 of those being exclusive to Blu-ray Disc!”

So what does Victor predict for the run in to summer 2007? “While HD-DVD had a six month head-start, once PS3, the BD players, and BD movies were launched, the total number of Blu-ray Disc movies quickly surpassed that of HD-DVD,” he observes. “Why? Simply because seven of the eight Hollywood studios support BD while only three support HD-DVD. Since January, sales of BD have been approximately three times those of HD-DVD, and most recently, with the success of such titles as *Casino Royale*, this ratio has been significantly greater. We definitely see this trend strengthening as we move forward.”

Sales reports have confirmed BD’s strength in North America, but it is still too early to present an accurate picture of sales trends in Europe. Frank Simonis believes that all the signs are very positive for Blu-ray Disc in Europe and it will eclipse HD DVD very soon, despite the format having been available for over six months in the territory.

“PS3 is a real catalyst for the BD format in Europe too, with almost 800,000 units sold already, and block buster movies are key,” stated Simonis. “Early adaptors value the complete product offer much more than factors such as a low price point.

“Blu-ray Disc has been created with the consumer in mind, offering them the choices they have been looking for from a range of BD players, games consoles and PC drive solutions next to the broadest cluster of High Definition movies and games,” he continued. “Not only will this offer the consumer the widest choice, but also it will fuel competition amongst these products, and for sure, the consumer will benefit.”

In Europe too, content is king and Simonis looks forward to continued support for Blu-ray Disc from the content creation community in the form of major studios and independents alike. “Independent studios are important for the growth in any territory,” confirmed Simonis. “In the US, we have over 20 studios selling titles. The same will happen in Europe.

“However most of the independent studios in Europe have a clear differentiator in terms of their specific language and this can restrict sales volumes. It’s our expectation that many of the independent studio/distributors will join the Blu-ray Disc community from fall 2007 onwards based on the growth of the installed base of players in that specific territory.”

Blu-ray Disc used for magazine covermounts



A further sign of Blu-ray Disc's rapid evolution as an entertainment carrier is news that Blu-ray Discs are starting to be used as covermounts on magazines.

Game media publisher Future has announced a partnership with Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (SCEE) to bring to readers the world's first monthly playable Blu-ray Disc covermount on the Official PlayStation Magazine from June onwards.

The playable Blu-ray disc comes with issue 7 of Official PlayStation Magazine, on sale from Friday, 1st June.

The disc will be packed with playable demos of SCEE and third party software titles. Details of the content of the first magazine bundled Blu-ray disc will be revealed soon. The content will be mostly for PLAYSTATION 3, but because users can access the PS3 via their PlayStation Portable (PSP), there could also be demos for the portable Playstation on this monthly Blu-ray Disc.

Panasonic to introduce 4X Write Once Blu-ray Discs

At NAB in Las Vegas, Panasonic has announced that the company will globally introduce Blu-ray discs with 4x writing speed this summer to coincide with its 4x BD drive launch.

Since introducing the world's first dual layer BD-RE disc in 2004, Panasonic has continued to lead the market development of Blu-ray disc technologies. The new 4x discs, which will be available in both 25GB and 50GB, meet the growing demand for high-speed writing and reading for massive data or content.



Based on its 35-year experience in optical disc development, Panasonic succeeded in developing a new phase-change recording layer to achieve a 4x writing speed. The maximum data transfer speed for a 4x disc is 144Mbps, which means it can copy a 1GB folder in just one minute.

This phase-change recording technology is used both for single and dual layer structures and ensures precise and stable recording at speeds ranging from 1x to 4x.

The newly developed recording layer has a wide power margin at any speed from 1x to 4x. This enables a high-quality recording, even if the drive's laser power fluctuates, resulting in greater overall drive compatibility.



A busy Panasonic booth at NAB

A new film-forming technology minimizes dust generated in the sputtering machine. As a result, the error rate is reduced to 1/10 of the rate of a conventional disc, ensuring high reliability and a high quality recording.

Java Technology in TV: Blu-ray Disc and Cable Day at JavaOne Conference in San Francisco

2007 is a landmark year for the adoption of Java technology for digital television.

Millions of Java platform-based cable, satellite and IPTV set-top boxes, televisions, and Blu-ray Disc players have shipped within the last year. Cable operators, broadcasters, and movie studios worldwide have begun their shift to standards-based technologies to deliver compelling new content and services onto digital televisions worldwide.

As a result, a thriving market has emerged for developers who can author content to specifications based on the Java ME Personal Basis Profile, including Multimedia Home Platform (MHP), OpenCable Application Platform (OCAP), Blu-ray Disc Java (BD-J), and Globally Executable MHP (GEM).

To support this marketplace, the 2007 JavaOne conference has announced a special track of sessions targeting developers interested in gaining an understanding of digital television software technologies and markets. This track will be held on Thursday, May 10, during the JavaOne conference at The Moscone Center in San Francisco. Also included is access to the morning general session with James Gosling on Friday, May 11.



Produced in conjunction with CableLabs and major motion picture studios, Java Technology in TV: Blu-ray Disc and Cable Day will feature:

- A kickoff presentation detailing the current status and future prospects for the OCAP and Blu-ray Disc technologies.
- Technical sessions detailing OCAP technical features, APIs, and how to develop OCAP and Globally Executable MHP (GEM) applications.
- The roadmap for future interactive services on cable TV, the challenges of producing Blu-ray Disc Java (BD-J) software titles for Hollywood, and the role of Java technology in IPTV.
- Birds-of-a-feather sessions, including development of Blu-ray Disc Java technology content and a TV technology Q&A session.

REGISTER TODAY

In addition to the Java Technology in TV: Blu-ray Disc and Cable Day sessions on

May 10, attendees will receive full JavaOne conference materials, and gain admission Thursday to the general session, the JavaOne Pavilion floor, the JavaOne "After Dark" Bash, and to the Friday morning general session with James Gosling.

Registration for the Java Technology in TV: Blu-ray Disc and Cable Day track is \$350. **Please use Priority Code TVD994.** See <http://java.sun.com/javaone/sf/javatvday.jsp> for details and registration.

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 Disc 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.
