



Blu-ray Disc News

News and Views from the Blu-ray Disc Association

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Sony Pictures posts stunning BD sales in Europe

"Our European Blu-ray sales increased more than 1,000 percent since the launch of the PS3 in March 2007, due to strong sales in the UK, France, Germany and Spain."

*Matt Brown
Executive Vice President,
International
Sony Pictures Home
Entertainment*

Sony Pictures Home Entertainment's (SPHE) total Blu-ray Disc sales across Europe have topped 180,000, it was announced this week by Matt Brown, Executive Vice President, International. "Our European Blu-ray sales increased more than 1,000 percent since the launch of the PS3 in March 2007, due to strong sales in the UK, France, Germany and Spain," said Mr. Brown. "This is extremely positive news not only for SPHE but for the European High Definition market as a whole, as it underscores the increasing consumer demand for High Definition content and the power of the PS3."

The launch of the PS3 in March is seen as a turning point for the Blu-ray Disc format across Europe, with weekly sales of Blu-ray Disc titles averaging between two- and five-times the amount of HD DVD sales week over week (*Source - Gfk, year to date 17th June, 2007*).

Blu-ray Disc software accounts for 67% of the total High Definition market and SPHE titles account for more than 50% of the total Blu-ray Disc market share in the UK, France and Spain.

In the UK, SPHE maintains 53% share of the total UK Blu-ray Disc market, holding six of the top 10 best-selling Blu-ray titles, including the Bond Blockbuster *Casino Royale*, the biggest selling Blu-ray title in the country.



Bond on BD – simply stunning

Gaumont/Columbia TriStar Home Video in France has achieved a 55% share of the total Blu-ray market, releasing seven of the top 10 Blu-ray Disc best-sellers to date, including *Casino Royale* at #1. In Germany, SPHE has a 43% share of the total Blu-ray Disc market, releasing four of the top ten best-selling BD titles, including the #1 title *Casino Royale*.

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Matt Brown

"The launch of the PS3 had a tremendous impact on Blu-ray software sales across the board," added Mr. Brown. "Recent sales figures are a clear indication that the PS3 is seen as an entertainment device."

SPHE Spain maintains a 68% share of the Blu-ray Disc market. *Casino Royale* is the biggest selling title in Spain and SPHE has released eight of the top 10 selling

titles in the territory. Throughout Europe, SPHE titles are selling through strong, with SPHE occupying the number one selling spot for Blu-ray Disc title with *Casino Royale*.

US Blu-ray Disc promotional offer hits the streets

In the United States, seven of the major Hollywood studios and six top consumer electronics manufacturers have launched the Blu-ray Disc Promotion, a summer-long promotional program intended to encourage customers to experience the unparalleled High Definition experience that Blu-ray Disc provides.

The promotion gives consumers the opportunity to jump-start their High Definition library by receiving five free Blu-ray Discs from a list of over 20 of the most popular titles offered by participating studios when they purchase qualifying Blu-ray Disc players between July 1 and September 30, 2007.

Participating studios include Buena Vista Home Entertainment, Lionsgate Home Entertainment, MGM Home Entertainment, Paramount Home Entertainment, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment and Warner Home Video. Hardware manufacturers include Panasonic Consumer Electronics, Phillips Electronics, Pioneer, Samsung, Sony Electronics and Sony Computer Entertainment.

Consumers who purchase any one of the many qualifying Blu-ray Disc players from participating hardware companies can select five of the following Blu-ray Disc titles, which include new releases and fan favourites.



One of many BD favourites available free this summer

Among the 21 titles in this mail-in offer are: *Babel*, *Black Rain*, *Blazing Saddles*, *Chicken Little*, *The Corpse Bride*, *The Devil's Rejects*, *The Guardian*, *Hart's War*, *Invincible*, *The Italian Job*, *Kiss of the Dragon*, *The Last Waltz*, *The Omen [2006]*, *Pearl Harbor*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Resident Evil: Apocalypse*, *Species*, *Stealth*, *Stir of Echoes*, *The Transporter 2* and *Underworld: Evolution*.

The promotion kicked off on July 1, 2007 and is supported by a major print and online media campaign that launched in July. This campaign will be seen in such popular print publications as *Maxim*, *GQ*, *Rolling Stone* and online sites such as *CNET* and *Google* among others.

Details on the Summer Blu-ray Disc Promotion are available at <http://www.bluraysavings.com/>

Panasonic announces World's first 4x Write Once BD discs



Panasonic has announced this week that the company will globally introduce Write-Once Blu-ray Discs (BD-R) with 4x writing speed.

The new discs will be available in both 25GB and 50GB, which will be introduced in the market this July and September respectively.

In conjunction with the launch of 4x BD drives, the new discs have the capability of 4x speed writing and reading, allowing users to handle large amount of data or High Definition content with greater convenience. Panasonic is the first company to announce the market introduction of 4x BD-R Discs as of July 3rd, 2007.

Since introducing the world's first dual layer 1xBD-RE Disc in 2004, Panasonic has been among the format's leaders, developing Blu-ray Disc technologies to meet the growing demand for high-speed reading and writing of massive volumes of data. The new 4x Discs have the maximum data transfer speed of 144Mbps, which means they can copy a 1GB folder in just one minute, while a DVD-RW (2x data transfer speed) needs 6 minutes. This is achieved by the application of new phase-change recording technology. The result is precise and stable recording even when writing at 4x high speed.

Panasonic succeeded in applying this technology to not only single layer Discs but also to dual layer Discs, allowing users to write massive 50GB data at 4x high-speed without turning over the Disc. With its advanced dual-layer technology, Panasonic, which was is the world's first to launch 50GB BD discs with 2x speed, is now bringing the 4x speed model to market as well for the first time in the industry.

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

The new Discs offer extremely low error rate thanks to the newly developed film forming technology which minimizes dust generated in the sputtering process. The error rate is reduced to 1/10 that of a conventional Disc, ensuring high reliability and a high quality recording.

Starz announces exclusive BD support



Blu ray Disc has a new exclusive backer, Starz Home Entertainment, which announced its exclusive support for the High Definition format alongside the impending release of its feature "Masters of Horror".

The news came at the Sixth Annual Home Entertainment Summit when Starz Home Entertainment President Bill Clark revealed the exclusive support for Blu-ray Disc. Although no other titles were announced, Starz did say many more in their catalogue would follow 'Horror'.

The news is even more noteworthy because Starz owns the catalogue of Anchor Bay Entertainment, one of, if not the, most popular independent genre suppliers for standard DVDs. A few in Anchor's library are the classics, 'Halloween,' 'The Evil Dead,' 'Re-Animator' and the original 'Night of the Living Dead.' Clark said that they had no plans to release any movies on HD DVD.

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