



Blu-ray Disc News

News and Views from the Blu-ray Disc Association

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IFA Special – Day 1

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Universum Film backs BD with blockbuster release slate in Germany

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*Kai Schmidt-Merz
Head of Home Entertainment Marketing
Universum Film GmbH*

Germany’s leading independent home entertainment distributor, Universum Film GmbH, has announced its non-exclusive support for the Blu-ray Disc format. The strength of this support is illustrated by a blockbuster autumn release schedule, which includes *Hannibal Rising* and *Crank* (both due for German release in December) and *Neues vom Wixxer* (set for release on Blu-ray Disc in November).

Owned by Bertelsmann and strategically positioned within the RTL Group, Universum Film sources product internationally and is the leading independent German home entertainment company serving German-speaking territories.

“With the next generation formats, it is the first time that the content owner will be able to offer the highest possible video and audio quality to the consumer,” commented Kai Schmidt-Merz, Head of Home Entertainment Marketing at Universum Film. “The interactive features of Blu-ray Disc, compared with web-enabled functions, will make our content more attractive and up to date for movie enthusiasts.”

It is highly appropriate that Universum Film made its announcement at IFA since the company believes that it is the proliferation of new consumer electronics players that will drive the acceptance of Blu-ray Disc as the next generation High Definition replacement for DVD.

“The penetration of hardware is just taking off,” commented Schmidt-Merz. “Having witnessed the rapid development of the DVD market, we are confident that BD will be a mainstream format within the near future.





“PS3 is an important BD playback platform – at least in the early stages of the format’s introduction,” added Kai Schmidt-Merz. “Besides PS3, we expect that the CE players will achieve a significantly higher attach-rate than games consoles. We are looking forward to when the installed base of CE players reaches its critical mass within consumers’ home cinema systems.”

This news was welcomed by the Blu-ray Disc Association as yet another illustration of Blu-ray Disc’s broad appeal across a range of studio and distributor markets. “Universum Film – part of RTL and Bertelsmann – is one of the largest independent film distributors in Germany,” commented David Walstra, Vice Chairman of the BDA European promotions committee. “We are delighted to work alongside Kai and his team and we’re especially pleased to see the strength of their forthcoming German language BD releases. This will definitely help establish Blu-ray Disc amongst German speaking markets.

Sony shares Blu-ray Disc vision at IFA

“We are watching the future take shape. And at the same time Sony is playing an active part in shaping the future. These Blu-ray products give people the power to make the move to HD now, and become part of the biggest and most exciting development in video, entertainment and film this century. We want everyone to be able to join in.”

*Hiro Shinohara
Director of Home Video
Europe at Sony Europe*

Traditionally, IFA provides an opportunity for exhibitors to provide a strategic overview of its market approach. At this year’s event, Sony leaves nobody in any doubt as to the strategic importance of the Blu-ray Disc format to its plans as the company progresses into the High Definition (HD) era.

Sony has created a special range of Blu-ray Disc products to give people access to the new HD world in whatever form they want. The options range from Blu-ray Disc Players capable of outstanding HD audio-visual performance to notebook PCs powerful enough to edit and burn HD video content to Blu-ray Disc as well as serve as players in their own right.

As High Definition becomes the new standard for video, Blu-ray Disc is increasingly visible as the natural medium for storing super-size HD content. From Hollywood movies to personal HD video captured on an HD Handycam, Blu-ray Disc will hold it all.

“We are watching the future take shape,” says Hiro Shinohara, Director of Home Video Europe at Sony Europe. “And at the same time Sony is playing an active part in shaping the future. These Blu-ray products give people the power to make the move to HD now, and become part of the biggest and most exciting development in video, entertainment and film this century. We want everyone to be able to join in.”



VAIO FZ Series

Those seeking stylish entertainment and real power in a portable format can turn to the Blu-ray equipped models of the VAIO FZ20-Series. This superbly designed notebook fits a 15.4-inch X-black LCD screen into a footprint more usually associated with 14.1-inch displays. Some models of the VAIO AR50-Series notebook combine a massive 17-inch X-black LCD screen which is 1080p Full HD capable with an integrated Blu-ray Disc drive, so it's great for watching BD movies, but it also has the power to edit HD video content too. Alternatively, the VAIO L-Series is a uniquely-designed, slimline all-in-one digital media centre, with an integrated 22-inch screen. Some L-Series models come with a slot-in Blu-ray Disc drive and twin analogue/digital DVB-T tuners for watching and recording different TV channels simultaneously.



BDP-S300

All Sony VAIO Blu-ray Disc equipped products can play BD movies, but for anyone seeking a dedicated player the new BDP-S300 and BDP-S500 provide home cinema of the highest order. Both feature 1080p Full HD output via HDMI, and 24p True Cinema which re-creates the 24 frames per second of the original cine camera, so eliminating the unwanted effects of standard for-TV framerate conversion. Home Cinema enthusiasts can go further and opt for the full Blu-ray Disc Home Cinema System HTP-BD2RSF, which consists of the Blu-ray Disc Player BDP-S300 itself, a digital Sony S-Master amplifier HT-SF2000 and a powerful 5.1 speaker array. The System is easy to set up, with one-touch automatic audio configuration for flexible speaker placement and optimum sound quality in any room. It also features BRAVIA Theatre Sync for synchronized control of your HDMI-connected BRAVIA TV from a single remote.

To demonstrate the ever-growing catalogue of Blu-ray format movies available from Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, customers who purchase either player in Europe will receive a copy of the *Spider-Man High Definition Trilogy* on Blu-ray Disc, (upon registration of the product and completion of a customer questionnaire online). Sony Pictures Home Entertainment has already released more than 40 Blu-ray Disc format (BD) movies, with more than 30 titles scheduled for release between now and Christmas. The *Spider-Man High Definition Trilogy* is a three-pack release of all three films on Blu-ray High-Def, allowing fans an exclusive opportunity to collect *Spider-Man*, *Spider-Man 2* and *Spider-Man 3* all in High Definition.



SONY

Sharp introduces new AQUOS Blu-ray Disc player

Sharp is presenting the new BD-HP20S AQUOS Blu-ray player at the IFA 2007, as the latest addition to its AQUOS home entertainment range. This powerful BD player provides high definition content in 1080p quality and in the 24p progressive scan process, supporting the high-resolution film experience with crystal-clear sound.

The new Blu-ray player provides a resolution quality of 1080p, both from High Definition Blu-ray discs as well from scaled DVDs. The 24p progressive scan process is being used as a standard for cinema productions. This format is transferred to Blu-ray discs and fully supported by the Sharp BD-HP20S Blu-ray player. Losses in quality because of image scaling are immediately excluded, since films are always played on the BD-HP20S Blu-ray player in the same frequency at which they were recorded. Rapid camera pans and tilts are represented in 24p mode without irregularities in the image progression.



Miss IFA shows off the new Sharp BD-HP20S

Using a long-life and particularly high performance 210 milliwatt quality laser, as well as being fitted with modern protocols, together with many AQUOS features, means that the BD-HP20S is a fully technically-developed product that is ready for the future. All components are made by Sharp and key components such as the opto-electronic laser diodes and the multi-beam scan unit were developed by Sharp.

Fitted with the current HDMI 1.3 protocol, the BD-HP20S is as fully set-up for the future as it is compatible with current devices. In respect of digital rights managements, the BD player is also fully up to date. With a doubled data throughput by comparison with the HDMI 1.2 protocol, HDMI 1.3 can pump out as much as 10.2 gigabytes to the output device. This permits reproduction of the high definition audio formats Dolby Digital Plus and Dolby truHD with up to eight sound channels, as well as a substantially larger colour range for natural skin tones and optimal colour reproduction during dark scenes.

The Sharp BD-HP20S offers a range of input and output facilities, so that the Blu-ray player can be applied diversely. The device includes a component (Y, PB, PR) interface and HDMI interface, 5.1 channel analog audio outputs, as well as optical and coaxial digital audio outputs.

The combination of film enjoyment in complete HD quality, the versatility of the Sharp Blu-ray player and the high robustness and excellent fault tolerance of the Blu-ray disc assure a very sound future for Blu-ray technology – particularly considering that data capacities will increase even further. Multilayer discs already permit storage capacities of up to 50 GB. The Sharp BD-HP20S will probably be available on the German market during the fourth quarter of 2007.

At IFA today, Imation Corp announced the release of TDK brand 8cm recordable Blu-ray Discs. Available in both BD-R (recordable) and BD-RE (rewritable), each TDK brand 8cm Blu-ray Disc offers 7.5 gigabytes of capacity, ample to store 60 minutes of full-quality high-definition video.

TDK brand 8cm Blu-ray Discs record in 1080i HD video for lifelike image quality. Users can experience incredible definition when viewing their camcorder footage on today's cutting-edge flat-panel display HDTVs, simply by removing the disc and

Imation introduces mini Blu-ray Discs in Europe

placing it into a Blu-ray player.

“This is a real milestone in making Blu-ray Disc the media format for discerning film enthusiasts. Now users can create home-movies to the standard that was once exclusive to professional filmmakers,” commented Jean Paul Eekhout, European Marketing Director, who manages TDK Brand Recording Media for Imation Europe. “This extension to our Blu-ray portfolio is a response to the incredible consumer demand for the media format. Consumers have seen the power of Blu-ray Disc through Hollywood high Definition movie releases and now want to replicate that quality themselves.”



Jean-Paul Eekhout

Because camcorder media is frequently handled in its day-to-day use, TDK Brand 8cm Blu-ray Discs come protected by DURABIS 2, an industry-

leading coating developed by TDK Corporation that safeguards against potential contaminants such as scratches and fingerprints. And although certain types of pens may damage the surfaces of other media, TDK 8cm Blu-ray Discs are specially designed for safe labeling with both oil- and water-based pens.



The discs are created using an exclusive Spin Coating Technology developed by TDK Corporation which creates a cover layer with nano-precise smoothness, ensuring pure recording perfection. They also feature a dual-level gold matrix recording surface which delivers superior light refraction and highly efficient storage as well as long term storage reliability. Composed of copper and silicon, CuSi recording material of the BD-R delivers remarkable, long-lasting performance. The recording material enables fast recording and playback speeds and also makes it possible to realise massive capacities through multi-layering. TDK BD-R and BD-RE 8cm Blu-ray Discs will begin shipping in Europe in autumn 2007.

We are here
to help

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