



Blu-ray Disc News

News and Views from the Blu-ray Disc Association

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European Special Issue – Two Million BD Movie Discs sold

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Blu-ray Disc storms through Europe, reaches 2 million movie disc landmark faster than DVD-Video

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*Frank Simonis
Chairman
BDA European Promotions
Committee*

Total Blu-ray Disc movie sales across Europe have reached over two million units announced the Blu-ray Disc Association European Promotions Committee at a press reception in London this week. The most recent figures show Blu-ray Disc movie sales totaled 2.37 million, which means that 79% of the High Definition movie discs bought by consumers year-to-date across Europe were in the Blu-ray Disc format compared with 21% in the HD DVD format, according to sales data provided by Media Control GfK International.

The news of the two million milestone comes within two months of the announcement of one million unit sales, which was achieved in early November last year. This news illustrates a rapidly accelerating rate in the growth of Blu-ray Disc sales across Europe, so the Blu-ray Disc Association says.

A graphic illustration of Blu-ray Disc's rapid establishment comes through direct comparison of its performance with that of the DVD-Video format at a comparable stage in its development. DVD-Video was first introduced into Western Europe in 1997, and the following year some 230,000 DVD players were installed and 2.0



BDA announces European sales landmark to press and analysts in London

million discs were sold through. In comparison, Blu-ray Disc made its first tentative launch in Western Europe in 2006, and the following year some 3.2 million PLAYSTATION 3 (PS3) consoles and 34,000 standalone players were installed while 2.3 million Blu-ray Discs sold through according to data from Screen Digest.

"Sony Europe is delighted with the popularity of PS3 and the positive impact it's had on Blu-ray Disc sales," commented David Walstra, Director, Home Video Europe, Sony Europe.

Sales up to Christmas were strong with over half a million Blu-ray movie discs sold in December, outselling HD-DVD by 3:1 with a 75% market share. The biggest Christmas release was *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End* with sales of nearly 100,000 units. This was joined by impressive sales for *Simpsons: The Movie* and *Casino Royale*.

"News from Warner Bros at CES last month caught the headlines but what this news proves is that the tipping point in the format war in Europe happened several months prior to CES and the tide has been running strongly in favour of Blu-ray Disc for many months," commented Frank Simonis, Chairman of the BDA European Promotions Committee. "Our challenge now is to move Blu-ray Disc into the mainstream. As a format, Blu-ray Disc is proving more attractive than even DVD-Video at the same time in its development.

"Our task is to accelerate awareness amongst consumers of all the applications of the Blu-ray Disc format and its rich feature package – such as BonusView and BD-Live – which combine with stunning video and audio fidelity to revolutionise the home entertainment experience on TV, PC and gaming consoles," Simonis said.

Added David Bishop, President, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, "the Blu-ray success story just gets stronger and stronger. With this two million mark, we have reached yet another critical milestone in the European High Definition market and we have the opportunity now to focus less on winning a format war and more on addressing the needs of the consumer in adopting the Blu-ray format - and that is exciting."

Nicola Cartwright, UK Managing Director, Lions Gate Home Entertainment, reinforces the need to build consumer awareness of the Blu-ray Disc format. "2007 was a strong year for the development of Blu-ray," she said. "2008 has already proven a great start for Lionsgate and the format, and we are excited about the future ahead. Our challenge now is not in fighting a format war, but in our commitment to continually push the capabilities of Blu-ray and to work closely with

"This is an exciting time for Disney and the format, with the success of the Disney Blu-ray titles over last year all the indicators are showing that Blu-ray is ready to go mass market."

*Julie Sneddon
General Manager EMEA
Walt Disney Studios Home
Entertainment*



Sony Pictures' David Bishop – exciting times for Blu-ray Disc

“European retailers recognize that consumers want High Definition entertainment and have quickly reacted to recent industry developments by allocating more store space to Blu-ray – the High Definition format of choice.”

*Vincent Marcais
Senior Vice President
International Marketing
Twentieth Century Fox
Home Entertainment.*

our retailers to enable consumers to enjoy an increasingly enriched world of home entertainment.”

Twentieth Century Fox is a studio that is in the vanguard of Blu-ray Disc’s development as a next generation home entertainment platform, and continues to pioneer many of the format’s added value features. “European retailers recognize that consumers want High Definition entertainment and have quickly reacted to recent industry developments by allocating more store space to Blu-ray – the High Definition format of choice,” noted Vincent Marcais, Senior Vice President International Marketing, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment.

Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment has made a major contribution to Blu-ray Disc’s success in the last year and plans a major slate of BD releases during 2008. “This is an exciting time for Disney and the format, with the success of the Disney Blu-ray titles over last year all the indicators are showing that Blu-ray is ready to go mass market. Disney is committed to taking advantage of the numerous technological advancements of the Blu-ray format, to allow consumers to create an entirely new home entertainment experience.” commented Julie Sneddon, General Manager, Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA), Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment.

One million Blu-ray Discs shipped to independents in Europe

On the same day that the BDA European Promotions Committee announced the 2 million movie disc sales achievement, Europe’s largest Blu-ray Disc manufacturer – Sony DADC – brought important news concerning the important independent studio market in Europe.

Sony DADC announced that it has already produced more than one million Blu-ray Discs for European Independent studios, corresponding to 150 titles. To provide a strong base for the new format, the company is constantly supporting other disc replicators on their BD production setup.

“We are very pleased to announce this production milestone” said Chris Reiser, Executive Vice President at Sony DADC, “Independent studios hold around 30% of the European Home Entertainment market, thus they are very important for Blu-ray Disc manufacturers. Prior to Warner’s January 4 announcement, over 35 European Independent studios had already produced their High Definition titles on Blu-ray Disc. The Warner decision has resulted in a number of Independents exclusively supporting Blu-ray Disc, such as ITV, New Line Cinema, Svensk Film or HBO and we expect a lot more studios to follow Warner’s lead in providing clarity to consumers regarding the future of physical High-Def media.”

“In order to build up a strong base which can meet the anticipated growth of Blu-ray market demand, we are constantly cooperating with disc replicators concerning their BD production setup and have already supported a number of European replicators, such as Infodisc, Sonopress (both Germany) and QOL (France).



Chris Reiser

Sony DADC

Sony DADC has also worked closely with line manufacturers Oerlikon and Singulus in bringing their BD manufacturing technology to market. We are still cooperating with Singulus to further improve the performance of BD production lines” Reiser concluded.



Blu-ray Disc production at Sony DADC

Lionsgate announces stellar Blu-ray Disc release slate in Europe

At the London press and analyst reception this week one of the studios that demonstrated its clear and solid support for the Blu-ray Disc format was Lions Gate Home Entertainment.

At the event, the studio's UK managing director, Nicola Cartwright, announced an impressive slate of Blu-ray Disc releases in the early part of this year. Some of their forthcoming movies include *3:10 to Yuma*, *Earth*, *Dirty Dancing (Special Edition)* and *War*.

Based on Elmore Leonard's short story, *3:10 To Yuma* is directed by James Mangold, and produced by Cathy Konrad, the partnership that brought audiences Oscar winning movies such as "Walk The Line" and "Girl Interrupted".

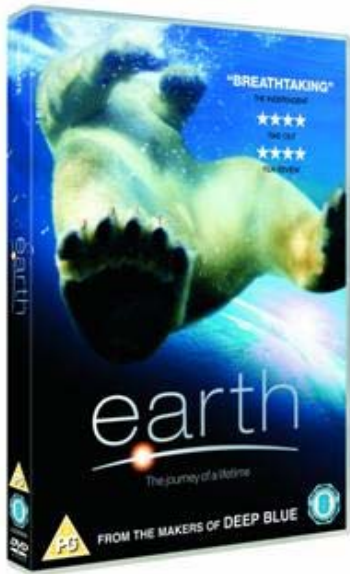
This Blu-ray Disc presents the Feature in 7.1 PCM / 5.1 Dolby Digital Surround EX. The range of special features, many of which are exclusive to the Blu-ray Disc edition, include featurettes which explore the making of, inspiration behind and history of *3:10 to Yuma* and the ever popular Western. **Destination Yuma** is a comprehensive look at the making of Mangold's acclaimed picture, focusing on the genesis of the project from adaptation to remake and present day resurrection, its casting and pre-production process.

Outlaws, Gangs & Posses examines how thieves, bounty hunters and the lawless became the scourge of the West. **An Epic Explored** rounds off the featurettes. There is also a selection of insightful **Deleted Scenes** and an **Audio Commentary with Director James Mangold**.



Lionsgate UK MD, Nicola Cartwright – “2008 has already proven a great start for Lionsgate and the (Blu-ray Disc) format and we are excited about the future ahead.”

The makers of the critically acclaimed *Deep Blue* present the ultimate portrait of life on earth. *Earth* is a stunning cinematic experience that combines rare action, unimaginable scale, impossible locations and intimate moments from the lives of



our planet's best-loved, wildest, and most elusive creatures. Five years in the making, filmed in 200 locations in 21 different countries, the production of *Earth* took 40 specialist crews, involved 1000's of hours of footage and 250 days of aerial photography. The stunning results on this epic feature speak for themselves and serve as a beautiful yet grave reminder of the fragility of the amazing planet we call our home. And now, *Earth* is available on Blu-ray Disc from Lions Gate Home Entertainment.

Earth on Blu-ray Disc is the first opportunity to see this incredible footage in full HD. The award winning team behind BBC's *Planet Earth* started work on their mammoth project with the feature film *Earth* fully in mind as a key goal, and the fruits of their dedication then became the hit TV series that have enthralled millions. Narrated by the incredibly charismatic Patrick Stewart, *Earth* is every bit as awe-inspiring as you would expect it to be, and creates a mesmerising entertainment spectacle for the entire family.

This stunning Blu-ray Disc gives you the opportunity to view spectacular brand new footage and also incorporates the best jaw-dropping highlights from *Planet Earth*. *Earth* on Blu-ray Disc is the perfect Easter treat that promises to blow you away!

Sharp UK reports growth in Blu-ray Disc player market

The DVD sector is already dominated by Blu-ray and we are currently seeing increased sales of this format in the home entertainment market."

*Ning Ning Cheang
Product manager
Sharp Electronics (UK)*

The High Definition home cinema experience is becoming a staple requirement in the 'noughties' living room and Blu-ray is turning out to be the preferred HD player format, so says Sharp UK. Recent GfK data shows that the total quantity of Blu-ray Disc players sold during October, November and December 2007 exceeded the number of HD-DVD players for the first time since the two formats were launched in 2006.

This news comes after the announcement by Warner Brothers last month that it would support the Blu-ray Disc format exclusively and is welcomed up by Sharp UK who reached the number two position in the Blu-ray Disc player market in December 2007.

Ning Ning Cheang, product manager, Sharp Electronics (UK) Ltd, said: "This latest GfK data reveals that Sharp has taken an 18% market share in Blu-ray and we are very happy with this news. Sharp has been part of the Blu-ray Disc Association from the beginning and is one of only three manufacturers that can produce the blue laser device for Blu-ray products. The DVD sector is already dominated by Blu-ray and we are currently seeing increased sales of this format in the home entertainment market."

Sharp's current Blu-ray Disc player model - the AQUOS BD-HP20H - coupled with its HD-ready 1080p LCD TV range, brings the reality of HD into the living room. The player achieves a resolution quality of 1080p and in the 24p progressive scans format, delivering the highest picture quality available with crystal-clear sound, both from HD Blu-ray discs and from scaled DVDs.

The BD-HP20H 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 analogue audio outputs, as well as optical and coaxial digital audio outputs.

Ease of use is guaranteed by the multi-function remote control – a slim device in a polished housing. It is equipped with the AQUOS Link function, ensuring that the BD-HP20H and Sharp LCD TVs can all be handled with one remote control.



Sharp representatives demonstrate their Blu-ray Disc player to journalists at the London press reception

Ning Ning Cheang added:

“The combination of

movie enjoyment in full HD

quality and the high robustness of the Blu-ray disc make Blu-ray a future-proofed technology. We’re proud of the intensive research and development that has gone into our first Blu-ray player and we look forward to the future developments of this technology that Sharp has to offer.”

SHARP

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to help

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