Blu-ray Disc News

News and Views from the Blu-ray Disc Association

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Blu-ray Disc: the way into a new software dimension

Interactive multimedia features will play a decisive role in enhancing Blu-ray Disc technology. Following the breakthrough in the home entertainment sector, the Blu-ray Group Deutschland now wants to bring the advantages of the new technology into the spotlight in the software industry.

The battle to be the successor to the DVD has been decided: Blu-ray will win through. Is it time for Michael Langbehn, spokesman for the Blu-ray Group, to rest on his laurels? “For us, the real work is just beginning”, says the Blu-ray representative. “We now want to educate program developers and pre-mastering studios specifically about the possibilities offered by our technology. With their help, we shall really exploit the potential of Blu-ray.”

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Michael Langbehn
Blu-ray Disc Group Deutschland

In addition to five times higher image resolution and the best sound quality, the new technology of the future actually opens up new perspectives, which developers have only been able to dream of until now: genuine interactivity for users, artificial intelligence for new content and linking opportunities with complex program structures such as content management systems. BD-Java and BD-Live make it possible.

In concrete terms, this means that from now on, an entire sector will be dealing intensively with Blu-ray. Michael Langbehn sums it up like this: “We are talking

about a completely new software dimension. A whole new market is now opening up specifically for the software industry."

In the games sector alone, it is now possible for example for multi-player games to be developed, in which network communities can access statistics and high scores and release additional content at any time.

"Now that the question of format has been finally decided, we are concentrating all our efforts on Blu-ray. Key investments in new equipment and personnel are now on the agenda for us, because our prospects for success with Blu-ray could hardly be better."

Lothar Kerestedjian
Director for Product and Business Development Enteractive.

Since January 2008, the software specialist Enteractive has been a member of the Blu-ray Group Deutschland. "Now that the question of format has been finally decided, we are concentrating all our efforts on Blu-ray", says Lothar Kerestedjian, Director for Product and Business Development at Enteractive. "Key investments in new equipment and personnel are now on the agenda for us, because our prospects for success with Blu-ray could hardly be better."

Michael Langbehn

Indeed, the most important market research institutes (Screen Digest, Understanding & Solutions) are talking of a brilliant outlook for 'blu' technology. They predict that by the end of 2011, more than 40 million households around the world will have a Blu-ray Disc player.

For the games sector alone, experts predict growth of up to ten per cent. "We want to bring innovative games titles that can use much of what Blu-ray has to offer on to the market as quickly as possible", promises Lothar Kerestedjian. Already in the second quarter of 2008, Sudokia – the first high-definition game from Enteractive – will come on to the market, exclusively for the Blu-ray player.

Further information about the Blu-ray Group and about the industry standard for the future can be found at www.blu-ray-experience.de.

CyberLink showcases Connected Digital Lifestyle

At CeBIT, CyberLink Corp showcased advanced technologies for the digital home, including software products that enable the Connected Digital Lifestyle.

"As a key enabler of the digital lifestyle, CyberLink's software provides a total solution for enriching the media entertainment experience, in the home and beyond," said Alice H. Chang, CEO of CyberLink. "Our leading technologies, including advanced place-shifting technology, core video technology, and a secure solution for enjoying premium TV on PCs, are designed to realize the vision of a Connected Digital

Lifestyle." CyberLink's leading solutions for the Connected Digital Lifestyle include:

Digital Home Connectivity
CyberLink Digital Home Solution - featuring Media Server and SoftDMA - offers software-based connectivity for streaming, sharing, and playing digital media, including live TV content. As software certified for the DLNA 1.5 specifications, CyberLink Digital Home Solution is compatible with UPnP networks and other DLNA-certified devices, such as PCs, notebooks, mobile phones, the Sony PlayStation 3, and the Microsoft XBOX 360, ensuring connectivity with a broad range of networked devices within the digital home.

Media Place-shifting
CyberLink demonstrates the CES Innovations 2008 Award-winner CyberLink Live, showcasing remote access to photos, videos, music, documents, webcams, and even live TV shows from a home PC. By "place-shifting" media stored on the home PC, users can easily access their content when they are away from home, simply via a web-browsing device.

HD Movie Playback
CyberLink enriches the high-definition movie experience with brand new PowerDVD 8, featuring support for rich interactive Blu-ray Disc features, home theater audio formats, and video file formats. Unique to CyberLink's advanced technology, new features let users extend the movie experience by building a database of movie info and trivia, writing movie reviews, rating their favorite movies, and creating movie remixes. A newly released web site dedicated to PowerDVD users allows the meeting and making of friends, and the sharing of movie information that can be synchronized with a user's own version of PowerDVD.

HD Media Creation and Sharing
Backed by advanced audio and video technologies, CyberLink DVD Suite offers a complete range of applications for creating and burning their personal content. CyberLink is the first in the industry to provide complete and fully tested/certified support for capturing, editing, authoring and burning of high-definition video to Blu-ray Discs.

Blu-ray Disc prices set to fall as economies of scale grow

Prices for blank Blu-ray discs are set to fall sharply as cheaper manufacturing methods take over, a maker of disc drives forecast at the CeBIT trade show in Germany.

Thomas Nedder, chief executive of Sony NEC Optiarc Europe, a joint venture company that makes Blu-ray Disc drives, told Deutsche Presse- Agentur dpa that a price of just 5 euros apiece for blanks was realistic in the near future. Currently the discs cost 20 to 30 euros apiece.

Demand for the drives as data storage devices has picked up in the personal computer industry, which is showing new products at the March 4-9 fair in Hanover.

Nedder said the drives industry was expecting a big upturn in demand for both players and pre-recorded discs now that the standards battle had been settled, but it was too early to offer precise forecasts.

Current forecasts were based on analysts' research in November, before movie studio Warner Brothers threw its backing behind Blu-ray and Toshiba suddenly acknowledged defeat.

'We were surprised at it ourselves,' said Nedder, saying he thought the matter had been settled by US retailer Wal-Mart's decision to stop selling HD DVD movies.

Vendors say the standards battle dissuaded many shoppers from buying either blue laser technology, with consumers fearing they would be left with an obsolete device.

Weltweit erstes Blu-ray-Spiel von Enteractive Entertainment

Mit "Sudokia" auf Blu-ray setzt das Hamburger Unternehmen Enteractive GmbH seine Pionierarbeit im DVD-Geschäft fort und entwickelt weltweit das erste eigenständige interaktive Spiel auf dem Blu-ray Standard. Das hauseigene Label Enteractive Entertainment entwickelt und produziert Spiele für den neuen optischen Datenträger.

Enteractive Entertainment ebnet mit seiner Produktstrategie einen neuen Markt für elektronische Spiele, abseits der herkömmlichen Spielkonsolen, Handhelds und Computer. Die interaktiven Spiele von Enteractive können geräteübergreifend auf dem stationären Blu-ray Abspielgerät, Notebook mit Blu-ray Laufwerk und auf der Playstation 3 gespielt werden.

Mit der Veröffentlichung der Blu-ray im zweiten Quartal 2008 von "Sudokia" steht ein attraktives Gesellschaftsspiel für die ganze Familie im Full-HD-Format bereit.

Eine der interessantesten Neuerung von Blu-ray ist die hinzugekommene erweiterbare Interaktivität gegenüber dem DVD-Format. Mit der Blu-ray JAVA (BD-J) Technologie ist es jetzt möglich komplexe Strukturen in der Programmierung u.a. mit den verschiedenen Videoebenen auf der Disc zu verknüpfen. Die im jeden Blu-ray Abspielgerät integrierte JAVA-Engine von Sun Microsystems bildet das Herzstück dieser neuen faszinierenden Technologie. Die Möglichkeiten um ein

attraktives Produkt zu entwickeln sind fast grenzenlos. Alle Interaktionen können mit der Fernbedienung des Abspielgerätes ausgeführt werden. Ein benutzerfreundliches und intuitives Spieleformat ohne Altersbeschränkung; keine Updates, keine Installationen oder Konfigurationen sind notwendig.

"Das neue High-Definition-Format bietet weit mehr als ein gestochen scharfes Videobild. Bei unseren Game-Entwicklungen reizen uns vor allem die interaktiven Möglichkeiten, die das Blu-ray-Abspielgerät bietet", so Hans Henseleit, Geschäftsführer von Enteractive. "Wir haben bereits weitere Games in der Entwicklung und freuen uns, als Vorreiter dieses neue Marktsegment zu besetzen."

Mit "Sudokia" BDi (Interaktiv) lernen Sie auf spannende und unterhaltsame Art und Weise das Zahlenrätsel Sudoku kennen. "Sudokia" ist für kleine und große Rätsel-Fans gedacht; rechnerische Begabung ist dabei nicht nötig - die Lösungen ergeben sich wie von selbst!

Spielen und lösen Sie Sudokus in einer faszinierenden und mystischen Welt. Detailreiche, hoch auflösende Bilder, Grafiken und Animationen, untermalt von 5.1 Surround-Sound, sorgen für ein Wohlfühl-Ambiente und bieten ein einzigartiges Spiel- und Seherlebnis. Auf dem Weg zum Meistergrad des Großmeisters gibt es viele visuelle Erlebnisse und Überraschungen.

"Sudokia"-Features:

- Nahezu unbegrenzte Anzahl von Sudokus
- Drei Schwierigkeitsstufen im Trainingsmodus
- "Sudokia" – ein Turnier mit neun Ebenen
- Bis zu 5 Spieler
- Vier visuelle Lösungshilfen
- Virtuelle Bildschirm-Tastatur
- Spielverlaufs- und Auswertungsgrafiken
- Abspeicherung der individuellen Spielerprofile und Spielhistorie
- Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround-Ton
- Full-HD-Bildschirmauflösung (1920 x1080p, 16:9, 1:178:1)
- Sprache: Deutsch, Englisch
- Preis: TBA
- VÖ: Q02/2008

Entdecken Sie mehr unter: www.sudokia.com

Lite-On external Blu-ray Disc reader set for European launch

Philips & Lite-On Digital Solutions (PLDS) has announced the introduction of its first external BD-ROM (Blu-ray Disc Reader) drive to the market. With the introduction of DX-4O1S, PLDS complements its Lite-On Blu-ray product line, which already consists of an internal BD-ROM and BD writer.

“Due to recent market developments we can expect an increasing volume of movies to be released in High Definition on Blu-ray Discs”, says Jelmer Veldman, European Marketing Manager at PLDS. “The market adoption of Blu-ray as the optical disc standard for High Definition content results in a growing demand for Blu-ray playback solutions. The portable external Lite-On BD-ROM drive allows users to playback their Blu-ray discs on any PC via a USB 2.0 cable,” Veldman adds.

Lite-On DX-401S

The Lite-On DX-4O1S external BD-ROM is a universal playback device that can read virtually every available format of optical media including BD-R/RE/ROM, single layer and double layer, at 4X maximum. It can read single layer DVD±R or DVD-ROM at 12X max, while double layer DVD±R and single layer DVD±RW can be read at 8X max. CD-R/RW/ROM can be read at 32X maximum speed.

The black & white casing gives the DX-4O1S a stylish modern look. The design was awarded a red dot design award by the German Design Zentrum Nordrhein Westfalen for high design quality.

The DX-4O1S BD-ROM drive will be available in Europe in Q2 2008. The consumer price is yet to be defined.

Singulus gives bow to new Blu-ray Disc replication line

2008 has been a very busy year for Blu-ray Disc in Europe. Just before CeBIT opened its doors, almost 300 visitors from 34 different countries attended the launch of the new Blu-ray Disc machine organized by Singulus Technologies on February 27 and 28, 2008.

138 companies, representing for virtually the entire optical disc industry, took this opportunity to view the new BLULINE II replication line for Blu-ray Dual Layer Discs in production at SINGULUS. As a result of this premiere, initial orders were placed on the very first day of the event. Yet further projects are under negotiation. Several of the new CRYSTALLINE Blu-ray Disc Mastering Systems were also sold.

Singulus Blu-line II

Following the decision by the Japanese electronics giant Toshiba to pull out of HD DVD business, the Blu-ray Dual Layer Disc developed by Philips and Sony, with a capacity of 50 Gb, is the preferred data format for the new High Definition video. All optical disc industry experts giving presentations at the Singulus event positively emphasized this fact.

The speakers included Dieter Daum, CEO of Sony DADC, Austria, and Frank Simonis from the Blu ray Disc Association, as well as representatives of GfK and the British market research institute Understanding & Solutions.

With regard to the event's success, SINGULUS' CEO Stefan A. Baustert commented: "It has been a pleasure to be able to demonstrate our latest Blu-ray Dual Layer Disc (BD 50) production line to our numerous clients and business associates from all over the world over the past two days."

We are here to help

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To find out more about any of the topics reported here please email info@blu-ray-news.net

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