

TECHNOLOGY IN OUR LIVES

Consumers Feeling “Blu” And Loving It

(NAPSA)—While the current economic downturn has made a dent in the amount of money American families are spending, they are still exercising strong purchasing power in the area of consumer electronics.

A major factor in this trend is the steady drop in hardware prices, as technology becomes more widespread and more manufacturers get into the act. For example, since they first came on the market, the cost of Blu-ray Disc players has come way down, and some have already dipped below \$200. Also, recent consumer research clearly indicates High Definition Televisions (HDTV) and Blu-ray Disc players are a strong gift preference for men of all ages this holiday season.

What Is Blu-ray?

Essentially, a Blu-ray Disc is a high-definition DVD. The actual disc, though the same size as a DVD, can store almost six times as much information. Plus, Blu-ray Discs have special coating which protects them from scratches (and possible data loss due to it).

Despite widespread education and marketing campaigns, there are still a significant number of people who are unaware that they can play standard DVDs in a Blu-ray Disc player. And the Blu-ray player will also dramatically improve the look of the DVD, so there's no need for consumers to replace their entire collection of DVDs.

Upconverting

Adding more confusion to the marketplace is the presence of



Blu-ray Discs offer high-definition sound and picture quality, while the players can be used with standard DVDs as well.

devices called “upconverting DVD players,” which some claim will make standard DVDs look as good as a Blu-ray player will. Consumer research, however, indicates that this is not true. While the upconverting players do improve sound and picture quality, only Blu-ray players provide true 1080p high-definition while also improving the look of standard DVDs.

Two In One

Savvy consumers are always looking to get as much value as possible when it comes to home entertainment and electronics. That's why, for families with gamers, a PlayStation 3 (PS3) is an exceptional value: For \$399 you get a true Blu-ray Disc player *and* a gaming console. That's one machine that an entire family can use to watch standard DVDs and Blu-ray Discs and play video-games. There are even simplified remote controls available for the PS3 for those who prefer to use a traditional remote instead of the joystick when using the console to watch movies.