

Technology In Our Lives

HD Brings Theater-Quality Viewing To Living Rooms

(NAPSA)—Most consumers are quick to upgrade to the latest computers, cell phones and music players as technology gets more sophisticated—but when it comes to televisions and DVD players, many viewers are still stuck in the last century.

“The analog TV system we have in the U.S. is more than 50 years old,” explains Andy Parsons, spokesman for the Blu-ray Disc Association, which is working to bring high-definition home entertainment into the mainstream. “In the next year or two, people are going to see some exciting products that will make living rooms feel like movie theaters.”

What’s driving this change? In a word, content. TV broadcasters are offering more high-definition programming via satellite and cable. And, movie studios are preparing to release their movies on high-capacity discs, such as Blu-ray discs, making it possible to buy, rent and view Hollywood favorites in high-definition. People who get to see a true HDTV setup showing the latest Hollywood blockbuster at their local electronics stores can see the difference in quality immediately.

“HDTV will catch on when people see that they can buy movies and games in the new format,” says Parsons. Movie discs using the Blu-ray format are expected to appear in stores beginning in June. Shoppers can expect to find favorite titles such as “Crash” and the “Terminator” series available, with more and more high-definition discs coming to stores throughout the summer.

The improvement in quality, Parsons says, is comparable to what viewers noticed when they switched from VHS tapes to DVDs. “When you watch a video tape today, you really notice how



Blu-ray Disc players offer users the opportunity to watch movies in high-definition clarity in the comfort of their own home.

poor the picture is compared to your DVDs—and you don’t have the menus and all of the added features that you do with DVDs,” he explains. “The shift to HDTV and high-definition discs will be just as dramatic.”

Shoppers can expect to see discs and players with competing formats, Parsons says, and they’ll need to consider what they’re getting for their money. For instance, he explains, they should ask questions about the breadth of games, movies and other products available, so they don’t get stuck with a format with no future. Blu-ray Disc, for example, is partnering with major movie studios, music publishers and game developers, and plans to deliver the industry’s broadest range of home entertainment content. In addition, the players will play all of your existing standard-definition DVDs.

Today, it might be hard to imagine what impact the new high-definition discs and TVs will have on our home entertainment viewing. However, Parsons says, “In a few years it will be hard to remember that we once thought DVDs were the coolest movie format around.”

For more information about Blu-ray discs, visit www.blu-raydisc.com.