



War of the DVD's: Blu-ray is the Winner, Analyst
Thursday January 12, 2006 11:29 AM EST - By: Ritwik Sinha
Via: Information Week
<http://www.mobilemag.com/content/100/344/C5979/>

With no signs of a clear winner in the battle of next-gen DVD format at sight, Adrienne Downey, senior analyst with Semico Research Corp., has predicted that Blu-ray Disc technology will become the eventual winner.

In an e-mail newsletter dated 10 Jan., he said, "It's time to put a stake in the ground regarding the future of the high-definition DVD format: Blu-ray has won, walking around CES, it was obvious that much of the enthusiasm and momentum is on the Blu-ray side. The Blu-ray Disc Association's booth was prominent, as were the Blu-ray displays (actual products) at each of the companies supporting the format."

He further stated that he was "disappointed" by the HD-DVD camp at CES, especially with the Toshiba booth which supports HD-DVD, where he found the representative making negative comments about Blu-ray to a group of people saying that Blu-ray is not compatible with current DVD, which according to Downey, is not true.

He also found that on the back of Toshiba's HD-XA1 brochure, there is a small disclaimer which say, "Some DVD discs may not be compatible. If you experience compatibility issues, please contact customer service," but he dismisses it as a typical fight between two warring groups, who have been slinging mud at each other for a long time already .

In-fact the HD-DVD camp believes that it will be the ultimate winner. Both Blu-ray and HD-DVD are blue-laser-based formats; while the current DVD format is red-laser-based technology. Both HD and Blu-ray are backward-compatible with current DVDs and offer more content.

The Blu-ray format is being backed by companies such as Sony, Dell, LG, Panasonic, Samsung, and a multitude of other CE and computer companies, apart from most of the Hollywood studios. On the other side HD-DVD is being backed by companies such as Toshiba, NEC, Sanyo, and the DVD-Forum; apart from two of the biggest Hollywood studios, Warner and Paramount are committing solely to HD-DVD at this time.

But both these formats are being delayed in their effort to be launched in commercial market. According to Downey, "AACS is the main digital rights management system for both formats, and the specs for AACS are still not final".

He further said "Toshiba has already had to delay its December 2005 launch because of this issue. Toshiba announced at CES that it will ship HD-DVD products in March 2006, including a player priced at \$499. Players were announced by the Blu-ray side as well, to be introduced beginning in April, with prices of \$1,000 and \$1,800 quoted. With AACS still not final, the launch timeframes for both camps could get pushed out further."