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## **BLU-RAY DISC SALES ACROSS EUROPE**

### **REACH TWO MILLION UNITS**

**- Blu-ray disc faster to reach milestone than DVD-Video -**

**LONDON – 12 February, 2008** –Total Blu-ray Disc movie sales across Europe have reached over two million units it was announced today by the Blu-ray Disc Association European Promotions Committee. The most recent figures show Blu-ray Disc movie sales totalled 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<sup>1</sup>.

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 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<sup>2</sup>.

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“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.’

Added David Bishop, President, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, "The Blu-ray success story just gets stronger and stronger. We have reached yet another critical milestone in the European High Definition market. This now presents us the opportunity to focus less on winning a format war and more on addressing the needs of the consumer in adopting 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 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 entertain 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.

### **Next generation High Definition home entertainment**

Blu-ray Disc is a next generation optical disc format developed for High Definition video and high-capacity software applications. A single-layer Blu-ray Disc holds up to 25 gigabytes of data and a dual-layer Blu-ray Disc holds up to 50 gigabytes of data. This greater storage capacity enables the Blu-ray Disc to store over six times the amount of content than is possible with current DVDs, and is particularly well-suited for High Definition feature films with extended levels of additional bonus and interactive material, as well as next generation computer games.

Blu-ray Disc also features the most advanced copy protection, player backward

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compatibility with the current DVD format, connectivity and advanced interactivity. showcasing picture quality with six times the resolution of DVD and theatre quality “uncompressed” audio for the purest digital sound, the cutting-edge discs also feature enhanced and integrated menus, games, High Definition bonus materials and Java-encoding for more dynamic and sophisticated interactivity.

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***Editor's notes:***

1 - Week 04, Media Control Gfk International

2 – Source, Screen Digest Video Intelligence

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