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## Encountering the third generation of DVD format

By Dana Scripca

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It won't last too long until the third generation of DVD format to be unveiled. Your DVD player will play a well-performing disc with high-storage capacity. The upcoming Media-Tech Expo, Las Vegas, USA, will surely clarify this topical issue.

The upcoming Media-Tech Expo May 10-12, 2005 in Las Vegas, USA will be a crucial moment in deciding what DVD format will be the successor of the actual DVDs. It will be HD-DVD? Or the Blu-ray Disc? Before the end of 2005, more likely in 2006, the standard format will be decided for good. The competition between the HD-DVD and Blu-ray is in full swing now.

The overwhelming increase of portable DVD players led to a even higher rise of DVDs industry. In 2003, almost 4 billion prerecorded DVDs were produced. This number is calculated to increase to 7 billion in 2006. The same for recordable DVDs market: DVD±R, DVD±RW. While in 2003 just 908 million disks were produced, it is estimated a double growth rate in 2004 (and about 4 billion estimated in 2006).

This year edition, from Frankfurt, manufacturing technology for the third generation of optical storage media has been debated. More than 1,400 people joined 2004 edition. At upcoming 2005 edition, concepts for replication lines and single components for the manufacturing of HD-DVD and Blu-ray Disc will be introduced. Media-Tech Expo is the leading annual tradeshow for the media manufacturing industry.

As for these two vying formats, both use a blue laser (contrary to red laser for DVDs). The blue laser has a shorter wavelength leading to finer signal markings on the optical media. Moreover, a shorter

wavelength, associated with advanced compression process, prompts a higher storage capacity. Whereas HD-DVD holds 30 gigabytes, Blu-ray holds 50 gigabytes on a double-layer disc.

Professional video industry is one of the most prosperous. Not surprisingly, engineers and manufacturing professionals, producers, video and audio professionals, web developers, broadcasters, directors, DVD authors, editors, graphic artists, gather on annual worldwide electronics and digital video exhibitions to learn the newly techniques, technologies, capabilities, advantages related to their industry. There are seven major exhibitions: DV-Expo, Mediacast, DVD Europe, DVD Replication Exhibition, DVD Summit – Middle East Asia, Media-Tech, Production-Show.

Dana Scripca writes for <http://www.allportabledvdplayers.com> where you can find more information about portable DVD players. Please feel free to use this article in your Newsletter or on your website. If you use this article, please include the resource box and send a brief message to let me know where it appeared: [mailto: danascricri@gmail.com](mailto:danascricri@gmail.com)

### **Recordable DVD formats explained**

**By Kenny Hemphill**

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Picking your way through the ton of information available on recordable DVD formats can be a nightmare. To help you out, we've done our best to distill it into this summary.

There are five recordable versions of DVD; DVD-R for General, DVD-R for Authoring, DVD-RAM, DVD-RW, and DVD+RW. None of the formats is fully compatible with the other although there are drives which will read, and in some cases write to more than one format.

DVD-R for General and DVD-R for Authoring are essentially DVD versions of CD-R. And DVD-RW is a DVD version of CD-RW. All three formats can be read in standard DVD-ROM drives and in most DVD video players. The difference between DVD-R for General and DVD-R for Authoring is that DVD-R for General is a format intended for widespread consumer use and doesn't support 'professional' features such as piracy protection or duplication in mass duplicators. The Pioneer DVD-RW drive which is the most popular PC device for writing to DVD uses the DVD for General format. And as the case with CD, DVD-RW is essentially the same as DVD-R except that it can be erased and written to again and again.

DVD-RAM is slightly different as it is a sector based disc which mounts on the desktop of a PC when inserted into a drive. Files can then be copied to it in the same way as any other mounted media. Some single-sided DVD-RAM discs can be removed from their caddy and inserted in a DVD-ROM drive which will then be able to read the content of the disc.

There are DVD video recorders which use the DVD-RAM format. This enables them to pull off clever tricks like timeshifting - where you can watch the beginning of a programme you have recorded while you are still recording the end on the same disc.

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DVD+RW is the newest format and not supported by the DVD Forum, the body which sets the standards for DVD. However, it is supported by some of the biggest electronics and computer manufacturers, and is therefore likely to stick around.

It is also the format used by Philips in its DVD video recorders. Despite not being authorised by the DVD Forum, DVD+RW is claimed by its supporter to be compatible with more DVD video players than DVD-R and DVD+RW writers are found in PCs from quite a few manufacturers.

Kenny Hemphill is the editor and publisher of

The HDTV Tuner

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