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Blu-ray Hardware And Software Sales Continue to Soar

Consumer spending for the first three quarters of 2010 in the home entertainment window for pre-recorded entertainment, which includes DVD, Blu-ray Disc and digital distribution, reached $12.6 billion, off four percent compared to the same period last year.

These were among the findings of the year-to-date U.S. sales figures for the home entertainment industry released by The Digital Entertainment Group last week.

Blu-ray Disc continued to make significant contributions into the third quarter, with sell-through up 80 percent to $1 billion year-to-date.

Packaged media sell-through, which includes DVD and Blu-ray Disc, declined eight percent year-to-date. However, the considerable growth of electronic sell-through helped offset this decline, bringing overall sell-through up two percentage points, off just six percent year-to-date, DEG said.

Digital distribution, which includes electronic sell-through (EST) and video-on-demand (VOD), is firmly established, having made up 13.5 percent of the overall consumer spend in home entertainment year-to-date. EST climbed 37 percent to $432 million and VOD was up 20 percent to $1.2 billion year-to-date, a combined growth of 23 percent to $1.7 billion.

Blu-ray hardware sales continued to climb in the first three quarters of the year as well, selling more than three million set-top units, an increase of 104 percent over the same period last year. This brings the total installed base of Blu-ray Disc playback devices in the U.S. to 21.1 million units.

"While we continue to encounter tough market conditions, there are a number of positive trends emerging, particularly in some of the industry's key growth areas," said Ron Sanders, President, DEG and President, Warner Home Video. "Blu-ray continues to show strong growth in every category, new release packaged media sell-through is up, and digital distribution is gaining significant momentum as we move into the fourth quarter."

According to Rentrak Corporation's Home Video Essentials, rental spending was down 4.4 percent to $4.4 billion year-to-date, with DVD and Blu-ray kiosk revenue up 55 percent and Blu-ray rental spending up 40 percent.

The DEG compiles quarterly sales data for various products within the home entertainment category, including Blu-ray, DVD and HDTV. The industry association compiles its data based on input from member companies, retailers and industry association tracking sources.

Blu-ray disc

Blu-ray Discs shipped to retail in the first three quarters of 2010 topped 98 million, up 57 percent over the comparable period in 2009, according to figures compiled by Swicker & Associates on behalf of the DEG. Household penetration of Blu-ray Disc compatible devices, including set-top players and **PlayStation** 3 consoles, has now reached 21.1 million U.S. homes.

HDTV sales

According to figures compiled by the DEG based on data from CEA, retailers and manufacturers, some 12.7 million HDTVs have sold year-to-date. U.S. household penetration is at approximately 53 million.

DVD palyer sales

According to figures compiled by the DEG based on data from CEA, retailers and manufacturers, 14 million DVD players sold to U.S. consumers year-to-date.

Since launch in spring 1997, some 289 million DVD players, including set-top and portable DVD players, Home-Theater-in-a-Box systems, TV/DVD and DVD/VCR combination players, have sold to consumers, bringing the number of DVD households to approximately 91 million (adjusting for households with more than one player). The DEG estimates that some 68 percent of DVD owners have more than one player.

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