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SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE
BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

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DVD Format War Just Got Stupider

The NYTimes reports that Warner Bros. believes it can help the DVD format war between Blu-Ray and HD-DVD, two competing formats that offer substantially better pictures than regular DVDs but which have been met by yawns from consumers. WB is releasing a DVD that can hold BOTH formats simultaneously. In other words, you buy "Superman Returns" and don't have to worry which format will ultimately triumph the way people did with VHS vs Beta. When one player remains standing, all the DVDs you buy this way will still be playable on either machine. This sort of helps retailers but doesn't do a thing to end the confusion and indifference from consumers. They correctly don't want anything to do with either format until one standard is set and the prices are lowered. They love their DVDs and see no reason to replace all of them. In the stupidest arguemnt, WB insists that its research shows people are willing to pay a premium (ie. "just a few extra dollars") to buy these multi-format discs. Really, people who are refusing to buy Blu-Ray and HD-DVD are eager to pay EVEN MORE for a DVD that contains both formats they want no part of? How does that make sense? Until they end the format war and make the price the same as current DVDs, people aren't going to bite. Right now, the NYTimes says, "Superman Returns" on DVD is \$20 at Best Buy in regular DVD, \$30 for Blu-Ray and \$35 for HD-DVD. Only an idiot would think people want to pay say \$38 for a DVD that contains both Blu-Ray and HD-DVD. That's almost DOUBLE what DVDs cost now. DVDs succeeded because they offerered vastly superior quality to VHS, included tons of extras, were available much quicker and cost a lot less or at most the same. What part of "bargain" does Hollywood not understand?

POSTED BY MICHAEL IN NEW YORK AT 3:14 PM



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