

## **“VHS is dead, long live DVD”**

This statement can be looked at in two ways, either true or false. People that would say that this statement is false would mostly be for nostalgic reasons. I myself feel that this is true because technology is evolving minute by minute, and the future is key to technology. Although I think that it's good to have new technology, it also means that more and more people will be taken advantage of. This will not just be the consumer, as prices are very high, but the poor exploited Asian communities that will be paid less than a dollar a day. Apart from this I do think that the digital versatile disc is the way forward for our viewing needs.

The acronym DVD stands for Digital Versatile Disc. Each word is key in showing how “VHS is dead” and that the DVD is the future. The ‘Disk’ is the future because unlike a video, it is not at all bulky and is only 120mm wide, where as a video is 187.5mm. This obviously means that the way we view films, music etc is getting smaller and also means that it will continue to decrease in size. Even though a video is larger than a disc it does not mean that it holds more memory, in fact a disc holds seven times more memory than a video, which is the main reason the DVD has taken on. The word ‘Digital’ has great benefit over the VHS because videos are predominantly analogue and all DVDs are digital. This is a great advantage for the consumer because people would rather watch something digitally, than something analogue. The word ‘Versatile’ is the solution to how we interact with our TV. The way it is versatile is by holding so much more information and the ease with which the consumer can range through what is on offer. The DVD has the versatility to view special feature for example commentary and deleted scenes, and it also has the versatility to select the scene you want with the easy touch of a button.

The new step of the DVD is the format of DVD-RW otherwise known as recordable DVDs. This is much like VHS videos because it uses blank disks and you can record what you want onto them. The film industry is not for the DVD-RW format because a DVD has copyright on it, which makes it illegal to copy. As it stands, anyone can log onto a powerful computer and by using the right software can gain the file of codes of which a film comprises of, and by using another piece of software known as DivX can reproduce the film.

All videos have one thing in common which is their downfall to DVD, it is that cassettes use a magnetic tape. Every time a tape is played it becomes worn, and the tape gets stretched ever so slightly. This wear damages the tape so much it's eventually made un-useable. Also due to the size of the tape there is a smaller amount of data that a tape can hold,

this is not to be confused with the length of tape, but the added features, in particular, sound. With sound the videocassette can only reproduce Nicam stereo through the lines which make up your TV screen. Nicam stereo is not true stereo but an effect which falls you into thinking it's stereo. If you were to hook your TV up to a stereo system you would be able to hear that it's not true stereo.

Cassettes are bulky, take up more space and break. The VHS player/recorder is also unreliable with the main part being the clutch - that's the main failure and the reasons for chewed tapes. DVDs are far more flexible with ease of use and added featured data can be stored on the disc, together with the video, text, language, sound types, and information.

The most notable extra feature for the ordinary person is the sound options from Nicam to Dolby stereo to Surround Sound 5.1. 5.1 allow the makers of the DVD to produce cinema quality sound, and better with five strategically placed speakers and a base box, providing sound quality from the comfort of your own home. A big bonus for the DVD maker is one DVD for a region, you don't have to make a German, an Italian and any other number of languages as this is all on one DVD.

With DVDs there are several regions due to various reasons. The two main reasons are region 1 North America and Japan (NTC) and region 2 Europe (PAL). There are other regions and they have nothing to do with the TV system used. Region 1 normally receives the DVD first due to actual release dates of the film. Region 2 is the next region for film release, which is why the format is changed from Region 1. That is you would be able to buy a Region 1 DVD before film release in Region 2, and therefore you would not visit the cinema.

As the DVD is a digital format it is easier to break the region code. This can be done via hardware or software, these are known as multi-regional DVD players. You can buy multi-regional DVD players although they are not advertised, but the only way you can watch a Region 1 DVD on your TV by having a digital TV, this looks at the digital content and not the format (NTC/PAL) of the signal. Another advantage is the use of the pause/slow motion functions. They produce perfect pictures on the TV because they are a digital signal and therefore are decoded in the DVD players digit by digit. There is no tape being stretched on the pause button, only a pause on the digital coding.