

Toshiba Expands HD DVD Capacity to 45GB

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Toshiba has developed a prototype HD DVD disc that increases the format's storage capacity by 50 percent and brings it much closer to that of the rival Blu-ray Disc, the company said Tuesday.

The new disc has a capacity of 45GB, which is just under the 50GB offered by a dual-layer Blu-ray Disc. The added capacity removes one of the clear advantages Blu-ray Disc held over HD DVD, and gives content producers plenty of space to store longer high-definition movies, or extra content such as trailers, outtakes, or interactive features.

Toshiba accomplished the capacity jump by adding an extra data storage layer to the disc. Each HD DVD layer has a capacity of 15GB and the new disc packs three such layers.

The company also announced a second prototype disc that uses the same basic technology. The hybrid disc combines a dual-layer HD DVD with a dual-layer DVD to provide a double-sided disc that can be played in either HD DVD or DVD players.

Such a disc could be a benefit to consumers in the early days of HD DVD. A hybrid disc could be used as a transitional format enabling consumers to buy discs for use in current DVD players while building up a library of high-definition content for the time when they purchase an HD DVD player.

The capacity announcement could give Toshiba a boost in ongoing talks with Blu-ray Disc supporters Sony and Panasonic regarding a single, unified high-definition video disc standard.

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