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BBC explains DRM of high definition broadcasts

New Blu-ray recorders prompt copy protection change

by Amy-Mae Elliott published on 17 April 2009

Following the UK launch of Panasonic's Freesat Blu-ray recorders, the BBC has announced changes to the DRM of its HDTV broadcast that allows a user to make one personal copy of HD content to a Blu-ray disc.

Owners of the Panasonic set-top boxes will be able to record the BBC's HD content to their PVR and then burn just one copy to a Blu-ray disc, but further copies of that copy will not be possible.

In addition, the BBC says it will not be possible to rip the burnt Blu-ray content to a compatible PC.

In a blog post, Danielle Nagler, head of BBC HD, BBC Vision, explains the complicated system:

"It will now be possible to make a single HD Blu-ray copy of one of our programmes, although not copies of copies. An HD connection to a protected home network will also be possible, although an HD connection to the Internet or portable devices will not work..."

"...Partial unlocking of some paths should also enable the high quality standard definition RGB outputs from some set top boxes".

The BBC says in the future it will be possible to make a copy onto any portable device that supports the relevant copy protection protocol - but this support will be up to the individual manufacturers.

