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Xbox 360 to get Blu-ray drive?

Microsoft playing both sides in the format war?

by Amy-Mae Elliott published on 17 May 2007

According to Japanese website ITmedia, the Xbox 360 could have an add-on Blu-ray drive for Christmas.

This shocking, as yet unofficial announcement, was made when the site interviewed Peter Moore, who is a big cheese in Microsoft's interactive entertainment division.

Microsoft is one of the big names on the HD DVD side of things, backed up by Toshiba, Sanyo and NEC and currently produces an external, "add-on", HD DVD drive for their gaming console.

It's still early days in the format "war" but early reports suggest that Blu-ray, with such stellar names behind it as Sony, Samsung, Philips, Pioneer, Panasonic is pulling ahead.

A report last month by American trade journal "Home Media Magazine" looking at the recent quarter's sales figures showed that of the high-def discs bought by the public, 70% were Blu-ray and 30% were HD DVD.

This is perhaps unsurprising when you consider that the Blu-ray Disc has the backing of five of the six major studios, while HD DVD is supported by just three of them.

Moore suggested that offering a Blu-ray drive for the 360 would give consumers a choice of which high-def DVD format they'd prefer to go with, but if it goes ahead, it's a move that could be seen as major detraction from the HD DVD cause.

