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Today's News:

BLU-RAY 'MANAGED COPY' DUE Q1 under mandate of final AACS license agreement, newly released after three years of delays. (P. 1) ...

Three Years of Delays

Blu-ray 'Managed Copy' Due Q1 as Mandate in Final AACS License

Consumers will be able to make legal copies of Blu-ray discs as early as Q1 under "managed copy" specs that are mandated in the final Advanced Access Content System license agreement, just released with little fanfare...

New hardware will be needed to detect the "Cinavia" audio watermark that's embedded in Blu-ray soundtracks, Ayers said. Cinavia, developed and licensed by San Diego-based Verance, prevents playback of movies that were illegally camcordered in theaters, he said. Blu-ray discs aren't required to bear the watermark, but Blu-ray players will be required to detect it, Ayers said. To date, four of the six major studios have licensed Cinavia, a Verance spokeswoman said. She declined to disclose licensing terms, including royalty rates.

Ayers said reaching consensus on managed copy was one reason, but not the only reason, why it took...

Current interim licensees have until December to sign up for the final agreement, Ayers said. It's not a hard deadline, but one that dovetails with the expiration of the existing interim license, he said. "Nobody is required to move to the final agreement. But the fact is, the interim agreement runs out in six months." That would have obvious implications for current licensees' ability to offer Blu-ray products after December, he said. "Companies could sign up as early as today, and begin taking advantage of the lower licensing fees," he said. Verance also is making an early-bird offer, for its mandated Cinavia technology. "We recently announced an incentive program for manufacturers who incorporate Cinavia into Blu-ray players in 2009, to encourage near-term adoption," a spokeswoman told us. -- *Stephen A. Booth*

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