

## Some DVD collectors think big

January 24 2006

---



As my favorite artist, Prince, used to say, he doesn't like the term "fan" because it's short for "fanatic." Nowhere is this more true than the avid DVD collector. I'm not talking about the person who has 100 DVDs on their shelves; no, I'm talking about folks who scour sales ads every week, check out DVD sites like DVDtalk.com to carefully research their purchases and run out to Best Buy or Circuit City or Wal-mart to get the \$15 sale prices. These people own 400 or 500 or more DVDs and carefully catalogue their collections in fancy Excel spreadsheets or other database programs.

Kevin Bonds, a telecommunications manager with ICMA-RC in Washington, is one of these "fans." He owns more than 700 DVDs on multiple bookshelves and loves to show them off to family and friends. "I have an addictive personality and I just like the thought of amassing a

collection larger than anyone else's. ... Plus, I love movies. ... Also, I'm a big MTV Cribs fan, so I enjoy showing it off when I give visitors to my home a tour of my 120-inch-screen movie theater."

He continued, " I track everything in an Excel spreadsheet, denoting the title, year released, MPAA rating and genre. ... I hope to go back and update the entries with primary stars and any awards won like Oscars, Golden Globes, etc."

While there haven't been any real studies done on this group of people, the folks at the market-research firm NPD Group ([www.npd.com](http://www.npd.com)) have conducted some studies on purchasing habits and estimate that 25.4 percent of heavy buyers -- classified as folks who purchase more than seven DVDs in three months, are 25-34. One would think that a large majority of these "fans" would be male, but that's not necessarily true. I posted a message on the D.C. Web Women's ([www.dcwebwomen.org](http://www.dcwebwomen.org)) list serve and was surprised by the heavy response from women collectors.

"I prefer spending quiet time at home with my boyfriend on the evenings so that is my main motivation to build my collection. We watch anywhere from two-to-three movies a night so it always helps to have a great collection on hand so we never get bored," said Elly Shariat a Creative Talent Recruiter for Boss Staffing.

According to Russ Crupnick, senior VP industry analyst for NPD Entertainment, he's not surprised that I received a lot of responses to my inquiry. He thinks that women are still the primary shoppers in the family and that they make purchases for their kids and family members, and quite simply, "There's a lot of TV product that is very appealing to women -- Sex & the City is a great example."

A lot of these "fans" will make impulse buys, but they also do extensive

research on their upcoming purchases. They comparison shop on sites like Amazon.com, or they'll check out reviews on popular DVD-centric Web sites like DVD Talk ([www.dvdtalk.com](http://www.dvdtalk.com)).

When asked what motivates these people, Geoffrey Kleinman, editor, DVD Talk ([www.dvdtalk.com](http://www.dvdtalk.com)), said, "Packaged media has been around since The Bible, so it's no wonder that it still thrives so much today. I think many people are collectors of some sort by nature. DVDs enable you to take the feelings you have about your favorite films and express them by buying them and proudly displaying them on your DVD shelf. Also the cost of being a DVD collector isn't huge ... although it can add up."

You would think that all of these DVD buyers and extreme collectors would have a negative impact on the home video-rental business, but Steve Swasey, director of corporate communications for Netflix ([www.netflix.com](http://www.netflix.com)) thinks the company's site is all part of the research tool.

"It's very complimentary, Netflix finds that many of our customers enjoy renting movies, but many of them enjoy buying them as well. If you see a great movie, they will rent the film first and if they really like it they'll buy it. Collectors really know what they want to purchase. We have movies for sell on our site that we sell for a reasonable price," said Swasey.

Studios are doing their best to encourage people to purchase DVDs by releasing special editions, throwing more special features on the disks and more. "You see it most profoundly when they offer separate 'super' special editions of DVDs. Select releases really get the royal treatment, like Sin City-Recut," said Kleinman. "There's no way that release would exist were it not for the super DVD fan. Unfortunately as much as they cater to them they often take advantage of their enthusiasm. I mean how

many versions of Evil Dead 2 have been released?"

Our two sample fanatics had totally different opinions on whether extra features are the main reason for their purchases. Bonds said that special features and packaging doesn't influence him that much, while Shariat said, "Packaging is important. I always make sure to get the collectors or special edition versions and those have the prettier packaging as well as all the extra features such as different endings, scenes that have been cut out, etc. I tend to watch this first, before ever even watching the movie."

The upcoming HD-DVD vs. Blu-Ray war has the potential to freeze buying habits for consumers, but according to our fanatics, they not only expect format wars, but accept the inevitability of it. "I will always have to do upgrades, be it PC's, TV's and audio gear. ... Eventually My DVD playback platform will join the mix. It's just part of the technology cycle," said Bonds.

Hollywood studios are hedging their bets and are trying to be platform neutral. Swasey said that Netflix is very excited about the upcoming change and that, "while format wars aren't good for consumers," they will support both formats. Kleinman thinks the studios aren't doing enough to get information to consumers. "There's a huge difference between the DVD launch eight years ago and the HD-DVD/Blu-Ray launch. Back then the Internet was emerging as a tool for DVD consumers to get their information; now it's the most important influencer in making their buying decisions."

He added, "Many studios have seriously misstepped in dealing with the Internet and so far with HD-DVD & Blu-Ray they're showing little signs of ensuring that the online DVD sites are informed and involved. I just don't think they can afford not to embrace the online DVD world to assist in making a case for the next generation of DVD."

*Copyright 2006 by United Press International*

Citation: Some DVD collectors think big (2006, January 24) retrieved 12 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-01-dvd-collectors-big.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.