

Mitsubishi's new Blu-ray converts your movies into 3D

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Mitsubishi recently revealed a new Blu-ray player that can convert existing 2D movies into 3D in real time. The company showed off the technology to a few tech journalists at the Barclay's PGA Tour at Westchester Country Club, and plans to market the product to consumers in early 2008.

To experience 3D movies with the Blu-ray converter, viewers wear a pair of special shutter glasses. Even though most films today weren't shot in 3D (which usually requires two cameras), the conversion works with a combination of the glasses and a standard Digital Light Processing (DLP) projector. The projector divides a typical 120 Hz DLP TV output into two 60 Hz signals to create the 3D effect.

Currently, the technology apparently works only with existing DLP TVs and projectors, but not with LCD and plasma displays due to their different refresh rate.

During the demo for the journalists, Mitsubishi presented viewing material (movies, sports events, and commercials) that had all been shot in 3D. As CNet's David Carnoy, one of the attendees, reported, "There was real depth to the 3D, and you got that 3D-feeling of objects poking out at you from the screen."

However, Carnoy said that he was less excited about the quality of 2D converted movies, which Mitsubishi did not present at the PGA Tour demo. "I'm pretty skeptical that the technology is going to show up

anytime soon, and I have my doubts that converted 2D content is going to look all that great in 3D. ... I have a feeling you're only going to get a true Imax-like 3D experience with some eyewear," he said.

Nevertheless, talk of 3D movies is increasing, as companies see the possibility of improving upon the earliest 3D technology from the '80s. Samsung and Philips are two other companies developing 3D home technology. In Philips' version, 3D would be integrated right into the display, eliminating the need for glasses.

Mitsubishi has not disclosed the price of the 3D Blu-ray technology, even though representatives said it may be ready early next year. The company did reveal that it is working with a game console manufacturer to integrate 3D into the game. No names were revealed, but there is speculation that the partner may be Sony.

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