

Toshiba to join rival Blu-ray camp, plans products

August 10 2009, By YURI KAGEYAMA , AP Business Writer

(AP) -- Having lost the video format war, Toshiba Corp. said Monday it will make Blu-ray disc products and plans to join the once-rival camp, the Blu-ray Disc Association.

The Japanese electronics maker had backed another [high-definition](#) video format, the HD-DVD, but ceded defeat last year, saying it will give up making or developing HD-DVD products.

There had been some speculation [Toshiba](#) may skip making Blu-ray products and instead try to develop an even more sophisticated video technology.

But Toshiba said it is planning to introduce Blu-ray products such as players and personal computers. Details were set to be announced later.

"In light of recent growth in digital devices supporting the Blu-ray format, combined with market demand from consumers and retailers alike, Toshiba has decided to join the BDA," it said, referring to the Blu-ray association.

The Blu-ray alliance, backed by Japanese rivals [Sony](#) Corp., Panasonic Corp. and others, had been more successful in wooing Hollywood studios.

Some kind of decision from Toshiba had been expected ahead of the key year-end shopping season.

The move is reminiscent of Sony's strategy after its Betamax videotape standard lost to Panasonic's VHS in the 1980s. Sony ended up making VHS products.

The Blu-ray market could be too lucrative for Toshiba to pass up. The Japanese electronics maker racked up its biggest loss ever, 344 billion yen (\$3.5 billion) in its last fiscal year, which ended in March.

Apart from home entertainment products, Toshiba is also a large maker of PCs, in which Blu-ray drives are slowly supplanting DVD drives. Without Blu-ray drives, Toshiba laptops could have lost out to other manufacturers.

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Citation: Toshiba to join rival Blu-ray camp, plans products (2009, August 10) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-08-toshiba-rival-blu-ray-products.html>

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