

No.1/Dec '10

**MEDIA
PLANET**

DIGITAL CHRISTMAS

3

STEPS

TO A GREAT
CHRISTMAS

THE NEXT BIG THING

3D TV: Just a gimmick or is it worth investing in?

Smart phones
The capabilities
making them the
nations favourite



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CHALLENGES

Digital technology has revolutionised our lives. It's also changed the way we spend Christmas, says Richard Lindsay-Davies, Director General of the Digital TV Group

This year, Christmas is going digital

A once traditional affair, the rapid rate of technical innovation in the UK coupled with the increasing convergence between media means that for many, Christmas Day will now involve taking digital photos of the family (and uploading them to Twitter), watching the queen's speech in sparkling high definition and playing games on the Wii.

Greater choice

1 When it comes to Christmas shopping, consumers have more technology to choose from than ever before. 2010 has seen the release of gadgets such as the iPhone 4, Amazon Kindle, and the iPad - now the most wanted digital gift according to a voucher codes.co.uk poll.

There's also the launch of 3D content on Sky and Virgin and 3DTVs by manufacturers such as Sony and



Richard Lindsay-Davies
Director General of the Digital TV Group

Panasonic, and the introduction of new services: Freeview HD, Google TV and Apple TV.

Catch-up TV services such as BBC iPlayer, 4oD, and ITV Player have significantly enhanced the TV viewing experience and is now available on a range of platforms including Free-sat, Fetch TV and BT Vision.

Different brands

2 Surrounding these innovations are a raft of different brands, logos and labels making choosing that perfect gift overwhelming and confusing for some.

When buying a digital television, consumers should always look for the 'digital tick' logo which identifies that the product will work after the UK digital switchover.

This supplement will explore the digital products on offer this festive season and how to find and identify them.

Wish-lists

3 Inside, retail experts reveal how online shopping can make the gift-buying experience easier, and the Gadget Show presenters reveal what's on their Christmas wish-lists. The Digital TV Group break down the revolutionary 3DTV technology coming to a screen near you and assess the opportunities and challenges of 3D in the home.

The latest Ofcom Communications Market Report revealed over a quarter of mobile users now have a smart phone, but what is the key driver behind this take-up? Your Digital Christmas starts here.



WE RECOMMEND



Joshua Barnfield
Director of the
Centre for Retail
Research

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"You may be more successful getting it on the internet than you would be finding it in a store"

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NEWS

STEP

1

FIND NEW WAYS
TO WATCH

3D – OR NOT 3D? THAT IS THE QUESTION

■ **Question:** Is 3D TV just a gimmick?

■ **Answer:** No. The technology is still in flux, the content is limited and glasses are still required to view it — but new developments have vastly improved 3D effects

Back in the 1950s – and for a brief time in the 1980s – 3D movies were all the rage in cinemas. Shame about the cardboard glasses you had to wear. And shame about the 3D effects, too, which weren't very good.

New technology

"That's old 3D technology called anaglyph," says Tom Morrod, Senior Analyst and Head of TV Technology at Screen Digest. "It's very basic. What's happened now, however, is that 3D technologies have been developed which work well for the TV in your home."

3D technology works by sending slightly different images to your right and left eyes, essentially fooling your brain into thinking it's seeing a 3D object. "3D is a trick of a mind," says Tom.

But now, at least, it's a good

trick: thanks to new developments, the depth of field gives the illusion, says Tom, of looking through a window.

Cutting edge

There are two main 3DTV technologies: passive polarised and active shutter. Both require the viewer to wear glasses. To view these new technologies you will need a new 3D TV: your old 2D one won't do. At present, however, the amount of content you can watch in 3D is limited. For instance, in October, Sky launched its own 3D TV channel; there are a number of movies on demand plus various 3D games you can play.

"In the next few years we will see glasses-free 3D on small devices such as personal games con-

soles or mobile phones," says David Docherty, Chairman, Digital TV Group. "This works in a similar way to the 3D postcards that have been around for many years. A lenticular lens in front of the screen delivers a different image to each eye. This works well when there is a single viewer and device relationship, as with a mobile phone, but the technology doesn't yet work well for multiple viewers."

Here to stay

So how long will it be before 3D takes over?

"I don't think we will ever watch 3DTV as often as we currently watch 2DTV," says David Docherty. "Its most popular use is for live events,

sport and movies and I don't think this will change greatly over time. There is no doubt that 3D will soon become the standard for gaming and movies, but TV is a very passive experience for many. People want to get on with their daily routine with the TV on in the background and 3DTV doesn't allow for that."

Even so, the 3D TV world is with us. And this time it looks as though it's here to stay.

TONY GREENWAY

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Tom Morrod
Senior Analyst
and Head of TV
Technology at
Screen Digest



PHOTO: PANASONIC



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NEWS

STEP

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GET MOBILE

Pocket power

■ **Question:** What has fuelled the rise of the smartphone?

■ **Answer:** The applications they offer turn them into mini-personal computers - with a staggering range of capabilities

Until recently, the question most people asked when buying a mobile phone was: 'Does it have a camera?'

Now, with the latest smartphone technologies, that's the least of their concerns. Currently, the buzz is all about the kind of applications - or apps - you have, which have turned mobile handsets into mini-computers. There are thousands of apps available to download.

Jaw-dropping

"We have become application obsessed," says technology writer Mark Bridge. "I like augmented reality, which takes the view in front of you and overlays information on

screen - such as the location of the nearest cashpoint.

"That's very clever; but it's in its infancy. And how practical is it? The useful stuff that smartphones do is probably more mundane: mobile banking, for instance."

Still, some of the technology is jaw-dropping. Want to check if you're getting the best deal while shopping? Naturally, your smartphone can

connect you to various websites as you rake the racks, so you can price compare. But more than one app can turn your smartphone into a barcode scanner, which then displays prices of the same product in rival stores and online.

Hands-on

If you are buying a smartphone this Christmas, it pays to do your homework. Get hands-on: ask to use it, if you are buying from a store.

"In the end," says Mark, "it comes down to buying the phone that does what you want it to do. If you send a lot of messages, say, you'll probably want one with a physical keyboard."

The main limitation of smartphones is screen size, hence the rise of the tablet computer. "This does seem to be the Christmas of the tablet," says Mark. "Look at iPads and others on the market. All of them are, in their way, simply over-



sized mobile phones." (Some, such as the iPad, don't actually have phone features, but you can download Skype - and use a headset.)

Loyalty

The price of smartphones has come down recently - yet it's hard to tempt die-hard fans away from their favourites. "People are iPhone fans, people are Google's Android fans," says Mark Bridge. "There is something about mobile technology which generates real rivalry and loyalty... the kind you don't expect to find outside of a football stadium."

TONY GREENWAY

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FACTS

■ **According to** the Mobile Operators Association, over 12 million people in the UK own a smart phone to access internet and web based services.

■ **According to figures** from Ofcom, 89% of adults in the UK personally own or use a mobile.

■ **Each month**, 111 text messages are sent, per mobile subscription.

■ **14% of adults** live in a home that has a mobile phone - but no landline.

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PROFESSIONAL INSIGHT

STEPS

3

BUY EASILY
AND SAFELY

With more and more of us doing our shopping online, there's only one way for Christmas e-commerce to go, says Dr Joshua Bamfield, Director of the Centre for Retail Research. And that's up.

Shopping — with a mouse click

Staying in is the new going out. At least, it is when it comes to doing your Christmas shopping.

Over the last few years, e-commerce – otherwise known as sitting at your computer and purchasing presents with the click of a mouse – has become increasingly popular with the Great British public.

The Centre for Retail Research is an independent organisation which provides analysis of the UK retail and service sectors. It estimates that £8,960million will be spent online this Christmas, representing 20p in every retail £1 spent. Shoppers said that 72 per cent intended to use online retailers to buy goods at this Christmas and 38 per cent would buy a majority of their Christmas goods online.

Quick and convenient

The CRR forecasts that the first 'online Christmas' – where 50 per cent of Christmas purchases are made via e-commerce – will be Decem-

ber 2015 (assuming a 24 per cent online growth rate) or 2021 (if growth is slower at 16 per cent).

It's obvious why shopping online has become so popular: it's quick and it's convenient. "Online is very good for people who are keen on Christmas shopping because they can use it to be really organised," says Professor Joshua Bamfield, Director of the CRR. "But it's also good for people who find it a bit of a fag, because deliveries can be made up until the last minute."

"Plus, if you need, say, a specific toy for a child, then you may be more successful getting it on the internet than you would be finding it in a store."

Future growth

At Christmas, presents people want to buy are electronics, box sets, books and readers. "Things that online does well," says Joshua. "So it's a good story and we don't see any reason why it can't grow further."

Virtual stores have had a seismic effect on physical ones. The lure of online was partly blamed on the demise of Borders, for instance. Yet not

ONLINE

"People can use online shopping to be really organised"



Professor Joshua Bamfield
Director of the Centre for Retail Research

everyone likes online shopping. "A third of people have never bought anything online, which is partly generational," says Joshua.

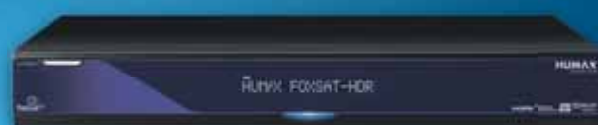
"But a good proportion of the population are making an average of 12 transactions a year. Their bugbear with online is usually the product – it's not quite what they ordered – and the problem of delivery. If you nip out to buy a paper, that's the time when the delivery man comes."

Genuine and secure

If you are buying online, make sure you're dealing with a genuine website with a secure transaction page. Also, read the terms and conditions page to make sure it operates a robust consumer protection policy. Using a credit card for items over £100 gives you (with some exceptions) legal protection.

"You also have to look at the location of the company," says Joshua. "If it's not located in the UK, then you're not going to be able to complain to Trading Standards. If something goes wrong, it may be difficult to get your money back."

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INSPIRATION



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music when they want it

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SHUTTERSTOCK

Are you listening legally?

■ **Question:** How is web-based music evolving?

■ **Answer:** Technology is changing, which means there are new ways of legally listening to – and sharing – your favourite tracks

HOW WE MADE IT

The internet has always been a headache for the music industry. Illegal downloads, says the British Phonographic Association, dented sales by an estimated £200million in 2009. But there are websites where all kinds of music is available to listen to or download, completely legally.

Spotify, for example, launched in the UK, France, Spain, Sweden, Norway and Finland in 2008 – and, earlier this year, expanded to include the Netherlands. Around ten million people now use its free and subscription service; although company accounts show that, in 2009, Spotify made losses of £16.6million on revenues of £11.3million.

Legal access

Clearly, however, Gustav Soderstrom, Spotify's VP of Products, is



Gustav Soderstrom
Spotify's Vice
President of
Products

upbeat about the Spotify model because it allows people legal access to music on the web. If you opt for the free version of Spotify, you get ads with your music; if you pay a monthly fee, you don't. Tracks from a catalogue of 10million songs can be streamed to your desktop computer or (via its Premium subscription service only) played on your mobile. You can also send links to friends to make music a more social experience.

"People want access to a big catalogue," says Gustav. "They want mobility and they want ubiquity so they can listen to it anywhere. What we've managed to do is build a system that's easier to use than illegal downloading.

"We think most users have an innate desire to do the right thing; but unless you present them with something that's better than they already have, nothing will change."

Musical evolution

It is surprising, however, that artists and labels agreed to allow their songs to be streamed over the internet. How easy was it to get the licences?

"The first time around wasn't easy," says Gustav. "We were a small, unknown Swedish company that wasn't well-known in the music industry. It was a huge challenge to get the attention of these guys and tell them we wanted to do something new. But it worked. And now labels and artists can see a way that music can evolve."

Online shopping has taken a financial chunk out of the high street. So is web-based audio the future? And has digital killed the music store? "I don't think so," says Gustav. "It used to be that you had to go and buy a CD which cost a certain amount, even if you just wanted one track. So (the industry) targeted the demographic that were able to do that. What's happened now is that the barriers are lower, so the market for music is increasing. Music is going to have its golden age now."

TONY GREENWAY

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3

GUSTAV'S BEST TIPS



Gustav Soderstrom
Spotify's Vice
President of
Products

Access all areas

1 The music industry has only been about 'ownership' to date; and that will still be there going forward, so you will still be able to own a music file. But the industry is also moving towards the 'access' model, whereby you pay a flat fee to access an entire music catalogue. Both can survive. You can make the analogy with video: you can buy a DVD, but you can also rent a DVD – and one model hasn't killed the other. It's the same with music.

Unleash the silver surfers

2 This surprised us a bit. You expect a super-young demographic with web-based audio; but, for us, it's spread very broadly. We have a substantial amount of users over 65, both free and paying. The first thing people do is look up their favourite music... but then they try different genres. Which I think is fantastic.

Benefits of streaming

3 The old model was that you paid per track – so you had to buy a song before you knew if it was any good. Or you had to spend a lot of time on pirate networks downloading them. As a result, you didn't discover much new music, because it was too much work and too expensive. Streaming removes the marginal costs of listening to new songs, which was an inhibitor. I think that's going to be awesome for the music industry.

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