

Disney to Begin Renting 'Self-Destructing' DVDs

-- Disney home video unit Buena Vista Home Entertainment will launch a pilot movie "rental" program in August that uses the self-destruction technology ...--

BACKGROUND:

In a nation that places a high value on convenience, this is all possible or will soon be possible for consumers willing to pay a little more for products designed for one-time use. And the list is growing. "There is a definite trend toward disposable," says Tom Vierhile, executive editor of Productscan Online, a database on new products. "People want things ready to go, ready to eat, ready to use. That's the society we live in and it lends itself to disposable products."

Americans have long favored products that can be tossed after one use. In the 1960s, grateful parents began snapping up disposable diapers and Bic introduced the completely disposable razor that many quickly adopted over reusable metal ones. Vierhile says today that trend appears to be accelerating. From cleaning wipes to facial cloths and storage containers, he says the number of disposable grocery products has more than doubled since 1995.

Last year alone, manufacturers introduced 110 kinds of disposable wipes — up from 28 new wipes products in 1998, according to Product Alert, a publication on packaged goods. The new use-and-toss items include wipes for floor brooms and mops, wipes to clean the toilet, scrub greasy pans and even bathe the baby.

In the ever-innovating realm of high-tech, companies have turned to disposables as a way of dealing with frequent technology upgrades. A new breed of "talk and toss" mobile phones has entered the market, and disposable videos and DVDs are becoming available. To some extent, even computers have become disposable. According to

the National Safety Council, computers in 1994 lasted an average of four to six years. By 2004, estimates predict the average life of a computer will be just two years. The trend has conservationists worried.

"It takes something like 25 pounds of garbage to make a pound of product," says Debra Lynn Dadd, founder and sustainability adviser for WorldWise, an organization that encourages environmentally responsible consumerism. "So when you use these products, you're not only throwing out the wipe or the towel, there's also the material that was disposed when the product was made. That's waste we never even see."

Mark Murray, executive director of Californians Against Waste, points out that the move toward more disposable products is accelerating even when we haven't yet figured out how to throw out old garbage. Computers and televisions are among the most troublesome trash items since the cathode ray tubes used in their screens and the wire plates inside computers contribute about 4 to 8 pounds of lead per unit. Once in a landfill, the lead can leak into drinking water and cause health problems. It's a problem that environmentalists say is literally waiting to get worse.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 75 percent of obsolete computer equipment is sitting in closets, basements and attics since most don't know how to properly dispose of them. A recent report estimated that there are 6 million computer and TV monitors collecting dust in California homes, alone. Recently the state of California considered a bill that would have built a recycling fee into the cost of every computer purchased in the state. Governor Gray Davis vetoed the bill in October, saying a better solution is needed. "We were opposed to it because a recycling fee cannot be

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fairly implemented in one state," said Jason Linnell, spokesman for the Electronic Industries Alliance. "They can't tax the Internet so any computers bought online couldn't be taxed. It would be unfair."

Instead, the Electronic Industries Alliance, along with other representatives from electronics manufacturers, government agencies and environmental groups, are working to devise a nationwide computer recycling plan under a program known as NEPSI. If a bill like the one proposed by Rep. Michael Thompson, D-Calif., last session passes, all computers bought in the United States would include a recycling fee.

Until then, Murray argues it's up to computer manufacturers to adopt greener policies.

"The business model of the high-tech industry depends on us to continue to buy, consume and throw away," he says. "That's the problem, they're not designing these things to last, they're designing them to use and throw out."

Some companies, however, have at least begun designing products with an eye toward recycling. The Japanese PC maker NEC recently introduced a "green" computer — the Powermate Eco model. The computer's motherboard is made with a lead-free solder and the frame is made from 100 percent recyclable plastic. Sony Electronics has begun making computers with lead-free solder. But experts say the alternative solders are not yet as dependable as lead and this may delay widespread introduction of green computers for another four to five years.

STORY:

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - This disc will self-destruct in 48 hours. That is the warning The Walt Disney Co. will issue this August when it begins to "rent" DVDs that after two days become unplayable and do not have to be returned.

Disney home video unit Buena Vista Home Entertainment will launch a pilot movie "rental" program in August that uses the self-destruction technology, the company said.

The discs stop working when a process similar to rusting makes them unreadable. The

discs start off red, but when they are taken out of the package, exposure to oxygen turns the coating black and makes it impenetrable by a DVD laser.

Buena Vista hopes the technology will let it crack a wider rental market, since it can sell the DVDs in stores or almost anywhere without setting up a system to get the discs back.

The discs work perfectly for the two-day viewing window, said Flexplay Technologies, Inc., the private company which developed the technology using material from General Electric.

The technology cannot be hacked by programmers who would want to view the disc longer because the mechanism which closes the viewing window is chemical and has nothing to do with computer technology. However, the disc can be copied within 48 hours, since it works like any other DVD during that window. Buena Vista did not disclose pricing plans but said the discs, dubbed EZ-D, would be available in August in select markets with recent releases including "The Recruit," "The Hot Chick," and "Signs."

On the other side, Hollywood's major film studios have stepped up their campaign against companies making DVD copying software. Lawyers for Paramount and 20th Century Fox have filed for an injunction in the US District Court in New York to prevent five firms from selling the software. In a separate case in San Francisco, Sony, Warners, Universal, Disney, MGM and others have mounted a similar lawsuit arguing that another US company's software violates copyright law.

The cases center on the issue of whether selling DVD copying software is illegal under the 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act. The companies selling the software insist it is legal under "fair use" provisions of US copyright law.

But the studios argue that billions of dollars in lost future revenues could be at stake. They are worried that perfect digital copies of movies made on DVD will end up on the internet for free downloading. The New York lawsuit names Internet Enterprises Inc, RDestiny LLC, HowtocopyDVDs.com, DVDBackup-buddy.com

and DVDSqueeze.com and St Louis-based 321 Studios as defendants.

The company says people have the right to copy DVDs for personal use in case their DVDs are lost or damaged. It says teachers use its software to copy parts of a DVD for presentations to classes or seminars. The cases are continuing.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Although the idea of disposable DVDs is not exactly environmentally friendly, Nabil Lawandy, chief executive of Spectra disc in Providence, R.I., claims his company is doing everything possible to make the single-use DVDs green. "It's ideal for consumers. You can open and watch the movie any time you want and it doesn't take a special trip to Blockbuster's," Lawandy says. "Once you use the disc, you put it in the recycle bin."

The discs are designed with two coatings, explains Lawandy. One coating prevents tampering while the other is designed to turn black — and black out the movie — three days after the disc is removed from its package. He says if consumers send back the discs, his company can replace the coating and use the discs again. He hopes a rebate system might encourage customers to do so, but the DVDs aren't yet available to buy.

New York-based Flexplay has designed disposable DVDs that can't be reused, only recycled. So far, the DVDs have only been used in promotional mailings, not widespread movie releases. A Westlake, Calif., company, Now Showing, introduced what they call "Returnless Video" last year. The tapes are played like any other videocassette, but after the second viewing, they are automatically erased and can then be reused as blank cassettes.

Regardless of the efforts of companies to create reusable or recyclable products, Dadd argues that customers ultimately decide how much they will reuse and throw out. "It's about personal choice and commitment," she says. "But sometimes when retailers push disposables, it's difficult to stand by personal commitment."

Pope Turns 83

-- Pope John Paul II turned 83 Sunday and revealed that he suffers from Parkinson's disease...--

BACKGROUND:

Parkinson's disease affects the nervous system of the human body in a way that limits a person's ability to control some of his or her muscles. It is caused by a slow, gradual loss of cells in the brain that produce a chemical called dopamine. Dopamine is ultimately necessary for muscles to function normally.

In many people, this disease causes a slight, involuntary shaking of the arms and legs, called tremors. At times, muscles may feel somewhat stiff and rigid, and the patient may have difficulty moving his or her arms and legs or will only be able to move them slowly. Eventually, walking may become a slow process of taking small steps.

The following symptoms may or may not be seen in the early stages of Parkinson's disease:

- **Shaking of the hands, arms, legs, or feet while resting.**

This shaking is often the symptom that prompts the person to visit the doctor. It may be more noticeable on one side of the body, and it may affect the hands more than the feet. The shaking usually stops, however, as soon as the patient uses his or her muscles

- **Slow movement or a brief, temporary delay in movement.**
- **Difficulty in maintaining balance.**
- **Rigidity or stiffness of limbs.**

This may produce a shuffling gait

Parkinson's disease is a progressive disease—over many years, its symptoms become more noticeable and more symptoms appear, which is why treatment is so important. The following

symptoms may or may not be seen later in the progression of the disease:

- **Facial masking**
This can occur if muscles in the face become rigid; a still facial expression with fewer blinks of the eyes can result. With successful treatment, however, this symptom sometimes disappears
- **Speech difficulty**
This may be noticed, for example, when the person pronounces two or more words together as one word or slurs some words. His or her voice may also be softer than before. Speaking in a softer voice or slurring of words may be noticeable or only slightly obvious
- **Difficulty swallowing**
This can happen if the person has less control over the muscles in the back of his or her throat. However, severe difficulty in swallowing is rare

During the early stages of Parkinson's disease, most patients experience only minor symptoms. Many people continue to work or participate in other activities, but they may become self-conscious about their symptoms.

Keep in mind that the key to preserving your functioning is managing the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. The goals of managing this disease include:

- Keeping symptoms under control
- Maintaining normal daily activities
- Balancing the impact of Parkinson's disease on work and relationships
- Delaying the start of levodopa for as long as possible

STORY:

(Reuters) Pope John Paul II turned 83 Sunday and was joined by thousands of his fellow Poles at a canonization Mass in a packed St. Peter's Square. He received birthday greetings in Latin from one of his closest advisers, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, and loud applause from the

crowd of tens of thousands when he arrived for the service.

John Paul sat in hydraulic chair that allows him to celebrate Mass while seated. He suffers from crippling knee and hip ailments.



A top Vatican official acknowledged Saturday what many observers have long suspected — that John Paul also suffers from Parkinson's disease. The Vatican has never officially acknowledged the source of the pope's trembling hands and slurred speech, typical symptoms of the degenerative neurological disorder.

Two Poles and two Italians — all founders of religious orders — were being elevated to sainthood. John Paul has proclaimed 469 saints, making him the greatest saint-maker in the Church's history.

The birthday celebration is one of a series of milestones for John Paul, who recently became the fourth longest-serving pope in history. A visit to Croatia next month will be his 100th foreign tour, while the Church is preparing to mark his 25th anniversary as pontiff on Oct. 16.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Another famous personality, Michael J. Fox, revealed at age 37 that he has Parkinson's. Thanks to a surgery called thalamotomy, where under sedation Fox answered the doctors' questions as they worked to locate and cauterize misfiring cells, he is free of the worst tremors.

One of the medications that has been a lifesaver for Parkinson's patients is Sinemet, a combination of levodopa and carbidopa. Levodopa converts into dopamine, a neurotransmitter in the brain and carbidopa prevents the conversion of levodopa into dopamine before the drug crosses the blood-brain barrier. An alternative to chemical medication is *Mucuna* seeds, which have been used in the treatment of Parkinson's disease over 4500 years ago.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY:

May 19, 1935

LAWRENCE OF ARABIA DIES

T.E. Lawrence, known to the world as Lawrence of Arabia, dies as a retired Royal Air Force mechanic living under an assumed name. The legendary war hero, author, and archaeological scholar succumbed to injuries suffered in a motorcycle accident six days before.

Thomas Edward Lawrence was born in Tremadoc, Wales, in 1888. In 1896, his family moved to Oxford. Lawrence studied architecture and archaeology, for which he made a trip to Ottoman (Turkish)-controlled Syria and Palestine in 1909. In 1911, he won a fellowship to join an expedition excavating an ancient Hittite settlement on the Euphrates River. He worked there for three years and in his free time traveled and learned Arabic. In 1914, he explored the Sinai, near the frontier of Ottoman-controlled Arabia and British-controlled Egypt. The maps Lawrence and his associates made had immediate strategic value upon the outbreak of war between Britain and the Ottoman Empire in October 1914.

With Lawrence's help, Arabia was liberated, but his hope that the peninsula would be united as a single nation was dashed with Arabian factionalism. Lawrence, exhausted and disillusioned, left for England. Feeling that Britain had exacerbated the rivalries between the Arabian groups, he appeared before King George V and politely refused the medals offered to him.

After the war, he lobbied hard for independence for Arab countries and appeared at the Paris peace conference in Arab robes. He became something of a legendary figure in his own lifetime, and in 1922 he gave up higher-paying appointments to enlist in the Royal Air Force (RAF) under an assumed name, John Hume Ross. He had just completed writing his monumental war memoir, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, and he hoped to escape his fame and

acquire material for a new book. In 1927, an abridged version of his memoir was published and generated tremendous publicity, but the press was unable to locate Lawrence (he was posted to a base in India). In 1929, he returned to England and spent the next six years writing and working as an RAF mechanic. In 1932, his English translation of Homer's *Odyssey* was published under the name of T.E. Shaw. *The Mint*, a fictionalized account of Royal Air Force recruit training, was not published until 1955 because of its explicitness.

In February 1935, Lawrence was discharged from the RAF and returned to his simple cottage at Clouds Hill, Dorset. On May 13, he was critically injured while driving his motorcycle through the Dorset countryside. He had swerved to avoid a boy on a bicycle. On May 19, he died at the hospital.

www.thehistorychannel.com

ENTERTAINMENT:**The Cannes Film Festival**

The Cannes film festival moved on from blockbuster openers and settled down to what it does best -- arty foreign-language navel-gazing. Cannes is best known for showcasing intellectual, foreign films, but glamour is injected by Hollywood stars in town to promote big-budget blockbusters. Stars like Keanu Reeves, Monica Bellucci and Penelope Cruz hogged the limelight amid the release of swashbuckling drama "Fanfan La Tulipe," which got lukewarm reviews, and sci-fi sequel "Matrix: Reloaded," both out of competition.



But by the weekend, lesser-known talents were emerging, filling the Festival Palais with a cacophony of Persian, Italian and Turkish and bringing some stunning cinematography to the screen.

WHO YOU NEED TO KNOW:*John Paul II*

Karol Józef Wojtyła, known as John Paul II since his October 1978 election to the papacy, was born in Wadowice, a small city 50 kilometers from Cracow, on May 18, 1920. He made his First Holy Communion at age 9 and was confirmed at 18. Upon graduation from *Marcin Wadowita* high school in Wadowice, he enrolled in Cracow's Jagiellonian University in 1938 and in a school for drama. The Nazi occupation forces closed the university in 1939 and Karol had to work in a quarry (1940-1944) and then in a chemical factory to earn his living and to avoid being deported to Germany.



In 1942, aware of his call to the priesthood, he began courses in the clandestine seminary of Cracow. At the same time, Karol Wojtyła was one of the pioneers of the "Rhapsodic Theatre," also clandestine. After the Second World War, he continued his studies in the major seminary of Cracow, until his priestly ordination in 1946. He finished his doctorate in theology in 1948.

On July 4, 1958, he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Cracow by Pope Pius XII, and was consecrated September 28, 1958, in Wawel Cathedral, Cracow, by Archbishop Baziak. On January 13, 1964, he was nominated Archbishop of Cracow by Pope Paul VI, who made him a cardinal June 26, 1967.

Since the start of his Pontificate on October 16, 1978, Pope John Paul II has completed 95 pastoral visits outside of Italy and 141 within Italy. As Bishop of Rome he has visited 301 of the 334 parishes. The Pope has also published two books: "Crossing the Threshold of Hope" (October 1994) and "Gift and Mystery: On the 50th Anniversary of My Priestly Ordination" (November 1996). John Paul II has presided at 131 beatification ceremonies (1,282 Blesseds proclaimed) and 43 canonization ceremonies (469 Saints) during his pontificate. He has held 8 consistories in which he created 201 cardinals.

No other Pope has encountered so many individuals like John Paul II: to date, more than 16 million pilgrims have participated in the General Audiences held on Wednesdays (more than 1,000). Such figure is without counting all other special audiences and religious ceremonies held and the millions met during pastoral visits made in Italy and throughout the world. It must also be remembered the numerous government personalities encountered during 38 official visits and in the 650 audiences and meetings held with Heads of State, and even the 212 audiences and meetings with Prime Ministers.

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.vatican.va>

SPORTS:**Yao Ming in spat with Coca-Cola over use of image**

(AFP) - Houston Rockets center Yao Ming claims that the Coca-Cola Company is using his image without permission and has demanded it be removed from products, state media and company officials said. The spat stems from just released commemorative Coke bottles in China which feature a photo of Yao and fellow Chinese national team stars Mengke Bateer and Guo Shiqiang wearing their national team shirts.



The news comes after Yao signed a multi-year deal earlier this month to become PepsiCo's image frontman, making him the first Chinese athlete to secure a major worldwide marketing deal,

Han No Leung, PepsiCo's China marketing manager, said.

For Coca-Cola's part, it claimed it has the right to use Yao's image because it signed a three-year deal on March 21 with the Chinese Sports Management Company, the agent of the Chinese national men's basketball team. The contract permits pictures of the national team to be displayed on a variety of its soft-drink packages and advertising materials.

FEATURE:

Civil War: The Road to War

Part III

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN: The year after the compromise a literary event shook the country. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote an antislavery novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* that was published serially in a newspaper in 1851 and in book form the year after. It was widely read in the US and abroad; it moved many to join the cause of abolition. The South indignantly denied this indictment of slavery. Stowe's book increased partisan feeling over slavery and intensified sectional differences.

KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT: In 1854, Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois introduced a bill to organize the territories of Kansas and Nebraska, thus opening these areas to white settlement. As finally passed, the Kansas-Nebraska Act repealed the Missouri Compromise and provided that settlers in the territories should decide "all questions pertaining to slavery." This doctrine was known as popular sovereignty. Since Kansas and Nebraska were north of the line established in the Missouri Compromise, the act made possible the extension of the slave system into territory previously considered free soil. Soon, settlers in Kansas were engaged in a bloody battle to decide the slavery issue.

The passage of the act caused a political explosion in the North. Abraham Lincoln, a longtime member of the Whig Party, represented the view of many thousands when he wrote, in the third person, that "the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused him as he had never been before." Antislavery groups met to form a new party, which they named the Republican Party. By 1856 the party was broad enough and strong enough to put a national ticket, headed by John C. Frémont, into the presidential election. The Republicans lost by a relatively narrow margin.

DRED SCOTT CASE: In 1857 the Supreme Court added to the mounting tension by its decision in the *Dred Scott* Case. In that case, Dred Scott, a slave, sued for his freedom on the grounds that when his master had taken him to free territories, Scott was no longer a slave. In separate opinions a majority of the justices held that Scott did not have the right to file suit in state or federal courts because he was not a citizen. As a slave, he was considered property. The justices continued to write that Congress had no power to exclude slavery from the territories. Therefore, the Missouri Compromise and other legislation limiting slavery were unconstitutional.

LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATES: In 1858 Douglas was running for reelection to the Senate. His opponent was Abraham Lincoln, then the leader of the Republican Party in Illinois. In a series of seven debates, Lincoln and Douglas argued, among other things, the question of the extension of slavery. Douglas stood on his doctrine of popular sovereignty, holding that the people of the territories could elect to have slavery. They could also elect not to have it. Lincoln, on the other hand, argued that slavery was "a moral, a social, and a political wrong" and that it was the duty of the federal government to prohibit its extension into the territories.

Although the Republicans carried the state ticket and outvoted the Democrats, the Illinois legislature reelected Douglas to the Senate. The campaign, widely reported in the newspapers, had an importance far beyond the fate of the two candidates. It demonstrated to the South that the Republican Party was steadily growing in strength and that it would oppose the extension of slavery by every possible means. The campaign also showed Douglas to be an unreliable ally of the South. He had said repeatedly in the debates that he did not care whether slavery was voted up or down. In addition, Lincoln, hitherto known only locally, gained a national reputation even in defeat.

For more information in: April 14, 2003, May 5, 2003 and upcoming issues.

Quote of the Week:

All things are difficult before they are easy.
- Thomas Fuller

Word of the Week:

Lorgnette (lorn*yet') n. An opera glass with a folding handle; eye glasses with a hollow handle, into which they fold.

Fact of the Week:

The distance between the Boeing 747's wing tips is longer than the Wright brother's first flight.

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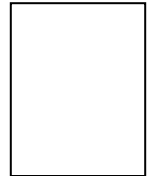
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