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By: Bogdan Solca, Hardware Editor



[The \\$299 Blu-Ray PC Drive from Pioneer](#)

Affordable drives for your high definition cravings

We found out that Wal-Mart refused to commercialize \$299 HD-DVD players a couple of days ago, apparently trying to keep a balance between the rival high definition formats. A puzzling scheme, I'd say, but now Pioneer is ready to tip the balance in favor of the Blu-Ray format, with the introduction of their brand new and robust Blu-Ray Disc computer drive, which will be available to consumers beginning next month for a suggested price of \$299.

No need for a separate player that takes significantly more space. Pioneer's Blu-Ray Disc combination drive can be integrated with any high definition compliant PC, allowing users to playback new high definition Blu-ray Disc film titles as well as offering backwards compatibility with previous DVD and CD technologies.

Pioneer has managed to speed up things a bit, their new BDC-2202 drive being able to read BD-ROM/BD-R/BD-RE formats at up to 5X and BD-ROM (DL) and BD-R/-RE (DL) at up to 2X speed. In order to ensure total compatibility with commercially released Blu-Ray Disc movies and multimedia content, the drive comes bundled with specially designed software programs that usually cost a small fortune if bought separately. One of the immense benefits of the included software is represented by a Direct-to-Disc feature, which allows aspiring filmmakers to capture movies directly from the camcorder to DVD without the inconvenience of using vital hard drive space.

Pioneer officials quote Home Media Magazine in claiming that Blu-ray Disc film titles have accounted for more than half of the 2.4 million HD discs sold. With the introduction of this new Blu-Ray Disc drive, Pioneer clearly aims at eliminating the HD-DVD competition on the PC, but keep in mind that if you are still confused by the two HD formats, you can always go for LG's GGW-H10N Super Multi Blue drive that supports both formats at a price of \$1,200.