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Just a Flicker of DVD Flicks

James Turner, Special to The Christian Science Monitor

BOSTON— Buying a DVD player may be fairly easy, but finding movies to play on it presents a challenge.

First, don't expect to find your favorite classic movie on DVD, since there are only a thousand or so titles available.

Most major studios, however, are taking steps to put some summer blockbusters on DVD.

For example, MGM/United Artists has only 75 to 100 titles on DVD.

But the studio is making DVD versions of popular new films available as soon they are released on video tape. The company also plans to gradually make DVDs from its extensive movie catalog.

New Line Cinemas has 30 DVD titles and plans to put all future releases on both DVD and video.

By contrast, Paramount has yet to release a DVD title, although it has embraced the format in principle.

Finding a store that rents DVDs is the next challenge. Blockbuster Video, the Dallas-based rental giant, is test-marketing DVDs in 100 of its stores.

The company plans to expand that to 1,000 stores across the country by the end of the year. Even so, that's only about 25 percent of its stores nationwide.

Expect to pay the same price as for a videotape rental.

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