



Dream streamer

An elegant, easy to use Blu-ray player that will ease your migration to networked home entertainment, says plugged-in **Steve May**

The first wave of 3D-capable Blu-ray decks may have been hogging the limelight of late, but for those not yet sold on the ability to play barely a handful of 3D discs, the appeal of a feature-packed 2D model for significantly less coin remains significant.

What makes the BD570 of particular interest is its network streaming abilities, and we've been advocating this type of entertainment for some time here at HCC. If you are accumulating a growing collection of sound and vision files on your PC or, more likely, a NAS (Network Attached Storage) device, then you'll be looking for an adept media player to bring them into your main AV environment.

One way is via a dedicated streamer, another is with a Blu-ray player such as this that does much the same job.

LG has been pioneering network-centric disc spinners for some time and this is its most ambitious player

yet. As a BD player it's tidy and at just 204mm deep, it's half the size of its 2008 counterpart. The front fascia is distinguished only by the USB 2.0 slot, into which you can attach USB devices with media for immediate playback. The back panel sports Ethernet, HDMI v1.2, coaxial and optical digital outputs, component video and phono AV outputs.

Perhaps surprisingly, there's no internal memory for BD Live. You have to add your own in the form of a USB Flash drive. Unfortunately, there's only one slot and that's on the front, which looks rather unsightly. Quite why LG didn't think to add a second USB to the rear for BD Live support is a headscratcher.

Network savvy

The BD570 is fully DLNA-certified and can stream media from other DLNA/UPnP devices on your home network, either via its Ethernet connection or over wi-fi.

AV/CV

Product: DLNA-compliant media streaming Blu-ray player

Positioning: Sits below LG's first 3D BD player in the brand's stable

Peers: Panasonic DMP-BD65; Sony BDP-5470

File support is good, but not class leading. It can play AVI, DivX, MPEG, MKV and AVCHD video footage, along with MP3, WAV and WMA music. There are other exceptions when it comes to compatibility (there is no support for FLAC audio), but these are covered in the owner's manual. **If your media collection includes some of the more exotic file types, then a dedicated media streamer may be more appropriate**, however, most common usage is covered. Interestingly, the BD570 will also recognise .srt subtitle files, but only if the folder they reside in is accessed via USB. Rather annoyingly, it cannot find them over the network.

Increasingly, it's the user interfaces rather than the best-in-class components that define a great home entertainment product. And here the LG consistently scores — denote its coolness, the deck's



interface allows navigation through bobbing ice cube graphics. The Movie, Photo, Music tabs allow you to search for media; Home Link scours your network for UPnP and DLNA devices, while NetCast takes you to LG's internet portal, which offers access to YouTube, picture browsing via Picasa or weather-checking through AccuWeather.

One aspect that rocks is its integration with the Gracenote media database.

Play an audio CD and the deck pulls in album art from here and displays it onscreen, which is very cool. The spinner will also scrape Gracenote when you play a music file from an attached USB device, although it doesn't use the same picture window as CD playback does for the art. Access music from a NAS, though, and it makes no attempt to find cover art, which is a real shame.

Another great feature is Music ID. During a movie you can hit the Music ID button on the remote and the player will extract soundtrack information from the Gracenote database. This is a party trick that never fails to amaze. Meanwhile, high-resolution megapixel digital images are resolved in HD, which will please digital snappers.

Shipped with the player is Nero Media Home 4 Essentials, a DLNA compliant media server software package. This is an extremely powerful suite that ensures all content can be seen across your network. Not only does it ease access

Convergence king: LG's new deck is both a media streamer and BD spinner

for the LG player, but it also ensures visibility to Xbox 360, PS3 and other devices. It can also transcode file formats on the fly.

Spin the disc

Image clarity over HDMI is terrific. *The Book of Eli*, with its high-contrast cinematography, looks ravishing on this LG, with every detail on Denzel Washington's post apocalyptic stubble available for inspection. The deck boots and ejects in just four seconds, and our Tech Labs BD test disc was on screen within 50secs, which we rate as good performance.

SD DVD playback is fine too, although there is a fairly high level of noise in the picture. Deinterlacing is very good, too, resulting in smooth upscaled 1080p images.

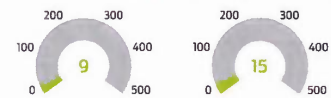
As you may grasped, this is not an audiophile grade player and, with high analogue audio jitter at just under 1200ps, we'd recommend using the optical link for CD playback.

Blu-ray audio support includes Dolby Digital Plus, Dolby TrueHD and DTS-HD MA. To bitstream out you need to set the audio option to Primary Pass Thru.

Overall, the LG570 is a thoroughly engaging Blu-ray and network player that should negate the need to buy a separate media streamer for most users (so long as you don't need FLAC support). While there's still room for improvement, I rate this deck as a terrific playback and entertainment solution

→ Tech Labs

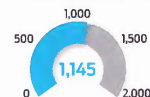
Power consumption: Watts



Idling: This is a good result, according to given standards

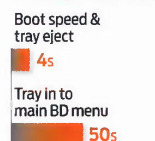
Playing: A good figure that warms the cockles of our hearts

Audio Jitter: Ps



Analogue: Pretty mediocre, but then again the BD570 is not targeted at hi-fi freaks

Loading: Boot/Java



Disc loading & Java: Boot speed is pretty nifty and tray-in speed is acceptable

→ Specifications

- 3D: YES
- Upscaling: YES up to 1080p over HDMI
- Multiregion: YES Region B Blu-ray and R2 DVD
- HDMI: YES 1 v1.3
- Component: YES 1 set
- Multichannel analogue: NO (stereo phono outputs only)
- Digital audio: YES Optical and coaxial electrical
- SACD/DVD-A: NO
- Dolby True HD/DTS HD decoding: YES
- Dolby True HD/DTS HD bitstream: YES
- Profile 2.0: YES
- Dimensions: 430(w) x 44(h) x 204(d)mm
- Weight: 2kg
- Features: Integrated 802.11n wi-fi; DLNA support with media streaming (JPEG, AVI, DivX, MPG, MPEG, MKV, WMA, MP3, WAV); LG NetCast content portal with YouTube, Picasa and AccuWeather, front-facing USB; Gracenote Media Database scraping for CDs and local files, Music ID service for BD/DVD/files, variable sampling frequency output



HCC VERDICT

LG BD570
 £200 Approx

Highs: Media streaming and networking; Gracenote integration; disc loading speed; integrated wi-fi
Lows: No internal memory for BD Live; some inconsistencies in the user interface and operation



Overall: 1 2 3 4 5

