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### Two tribes go to war

Sony and Toshiba are squaring up to decide who will win the format fight for the next generation of DVDs, but will consumers be the ultimate casualties?

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## Microsoft thinks small in IP licensing push

Tuesday, January 31 2006

by [Silicon.com](#)

*Microsoft is stepping up efforts to license technologies from its research efforts to entrepreneurs and small businesses.*

The company is marketing a special portfolio of intellectual property to economic development agencies in Europe and Asia as a tool to support local start-ups, Microsoft said on Monday. So far it's signed up Enterprise Ireland and The Finnish National Fund for Research and Development.

Brad Smith, Microsoft senior vice-president and general counsel, said in a statement: "Microsoft is an intellectual property company. By extending the reach of IP Ventures through government agencies, we believe new businesses will bring more technology to market faster, and they'll also contribute back to local economies."

Microsoft launched the licensing programme, called IP Ventures, in May. With a focus on small businesses, the six-person programme was a shift for the company, which had focused much of its intellectual-property licensing effort on larger businesses.

In addition to new agreements with government agencies, Microsoft has nearly doubled the number of technologies it licenses through the programme. Among the new technologies the company is offering are an image-editing program that lets users manipulate and move objects in pictures and photographs, a system for assembling high-bandwidth internet connections from mobile phone signals and touch-screen displays that use cheap, acrylic plastic.

The company also licenses the technology directly to venture capital firms and small businesses.

*Alorie Gilbert writes for CNET News.com.*

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