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Big Screens from
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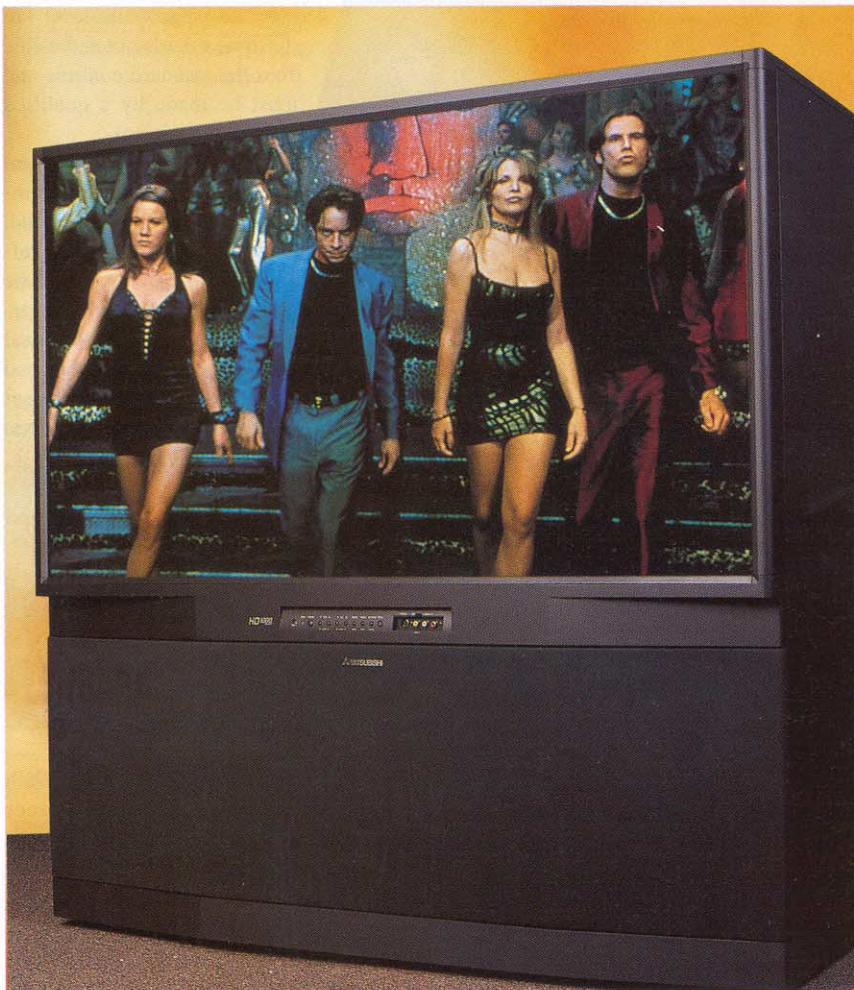
Playback on the Cheap
RaveMP Portable MP3 Player



test report BY AL GRIFFIN

Mitsubishi

55-inch HD-ready TV



Mitsubishi wants you to want digital TV (DTV). Last year the company helped kick start the transition to high-definition digital TV (HDTV) by picking up the tab to transfer CBS's prime-time programming to a high-def format. This year, it has committed to making all of its HD-ready rear-projection TVs (RPTVs) with wide, movie-theater-like screens in the 16:9 aspect ratio that's been specified for the new HDTV images. **But Mitsubishi's most important contribution yet may be a concept called "The Promise."**

The "Promise" is Mitsubishi's guarantee — in writing, no less — that anyone who

buys one of its HD-ready TVs will be able to purchase an upgrade module in the future to keep pace with cutting-edge advances in DTV technology. The company estimates that the module will cost less than \$1,000. Although the specs haven't been set in stone, the module is expected to include a tuner to receive DTV signals off the air and via cable. It will also support IEEE 1394 connectivity (a.k.a. FireWire and iLink) and HAVi system control (HAVi, which stands for Home Audio/Video Interoperability, is a home-networking standard that allows IEEE 1394-enabled devices to communicate with each other). With all the political and technical controversy sur-

rounding the rollout of the nation's new digital television system, Mitsubishi's promise should come as a comfort to those who are itching to buy an HD-ready TV now but prefer to wait until the smoke clears before adding a set-top decoder.

Some people will balk at the idea of characterizing a \$4,000 TV as a "good value." But when you compare Mitsubishi's Platinum series WS-55807 TV with comparable sets on the market, that's exactly what it is. Not only is it HD-ready, but it delivers a nice big image and provides many of the features found in the company's higher-ticket Platinum Plus and Diamond series sets. The 55807 uses three 7-inch cathode-ray tubes (CRTs) to project its image, and it has two built-in tuners so you can watch two NTSC programs at the same time, or a mix of NTSC and DTV broadcasts with the addition of a set-top DTV decoder. In both cases one program will appear in a smaller picture-in-picture (PIP) window. The set displays 1080i-format high-definition and 480p-format standard-definition DTV signals and can be configured to upconvert standard NTSC video for either 480p or 960i display. To help you make the most of its myriad features, Mitsubishi provides a nicely illustrated manual that explains everything in clear, concise terms.

fast facts

KEY FEATURES

- 55-inch (diagonal) 16:9 screen
- 7-inch CRTs
- Displays native 480p- and 1080i-format signals if connected to an outboard DTV decoder
- Switchable 480p/960i upconversion of standard video signals
- Component-video input compatible with progressive-scan DVD players
- 64-point convergence control

DIMENSIONS 50 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, 51 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, 28 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches deep

WEIGHT 276 pounds

PRICE \$4,000

MANUFACTURER Mitsubishi Digital Electronics America, Dept. S&V, 9351 Jeronimo Rd., Irvine, CA 92618; phone, 800-332-2119; Web, www.mitsubishi-tv.com