CD and DVD Creation FAQs
610-627-1140

How much does it cost to make a CD?
For CD Production, there are 2 costs: Content Development & Duplication. Content is defined as what you see and hear when your CD is "running." Oftentimes content will be a Video, a PowerPoint Presentation, a Website, or sometimes an animated promotion developed from multimedia software, such as Flash or 3D Studio Max. Once you create your content, or use your existing video, website, or presentation, then the duplication can begin. Content development pricing can range anywhere from $200-$1400, depending on what existing material you have, and what you want your CD to do. Duplication & replication prices vary according to the type of media, and the quantity ordered. A table of duplication/replication prices can be found on the website.

Does it matter if I want a DVD or a CD?
These are 2 completely different formats and need different software and viewers to "work." So it depends on what you want to use it for (what is the purpose of your CD/DVD and who will view it). We can make a movie DVD of your video that will run on a DVD player. However, a DVD will not work in your CD drive on your computer (unless you have a DVD drive on your computer.) We can help you decide which format to use by knowing more about your specific project.

What does a "White Flood" mean?
CDs are silver; any white in the artwork requires a "White Flood".

I want to do my own artwork, what format should I use?
For Content: 800x600 layered Photoshop file (.psd with a transparent background or .eps)
For Label artwork: Please go to our website to view templates
For Logos: Adobe Illustrator (.ai) or Photoshop (.psd with a transparent background or .eps)

Do you need my logo to create a CD?
Yes, please provide your logo in Illustrator (.ai) or Photoshop (.psd or .eps) format.

How long does it take to make a CD?
Start-to-finish production time for a multimedia project varies depending on complexity. We've done it in one day; extensive content CDs take an average of 6 weeks. Duplication turnaround is 7-14 days, depending on your choices.

What can I put on a CD?
Imagine the impact in the hands of your sales team or business contacts as they view a self-contained presentation that can include text, HTML, PowerPoint presentations, streaming audio/video, photos, data, charts and graphs, and more. Vision Stream Studios

is a full-service content developer or can work together with your team for significant cost savings!

Will the CD play in both Macintosh and PC/ DOS /IBM Compatible systems (Cross-platform)?

"Cross-platform" refers to a disc that can be used on both Macintosh and DOS platforms. To make a disc run cross-platform requires extensive planning. Each platform performs differently in terms of programming environments, videos, animation, and audio. Still pictures as well as video may lose resolution, color accuracy and consistency if not optimized for the target platform(s). For example, Windows PCs have a minimum color display of 216 colors while the Macintosh uses 256. As a result, video developed for the Macintosh platform may look too dark in Windows. Extensive planning includes first figuring out the minimum user configuration requirements (i.e. memory, CPU, system software versions, sound cards, video boards, and monitor device drivers) to view your CD. The second part of cross-platform planning for your project involves testing all of the minimum user configurations by using machines that match those requirements. In creating a cross-platform CD, usually one of two methods may be used. The simplest way to create cross-platform efficiency is to create two separate volumes, one for Mac and one for DOS files, which are never shared. The second option is to create an image containing both Mac and PC files and share as many files as possible. Generally, the largest content files like video and images will be shared to save space on the disk. Although this method maximizes disc space, there are many more complications.

Because there are so many factors and complications to consider when making a disc run cross-platform, and because the majority of businesses use PCs, Vision Stream Studios recommends sticking to the PC Windows/DOS platform standard for your CD-Rom projects. If you would like cross-platform compatibility, please request a custom quote for this feature.

Can I put my website on a CD?

A website on CD is a good idea for many reasons. The most cost-effective way to create an interactive CD is by using existing marketing materials, such as a Website. You can use your CD in conjunction with your website to provide offline viewable, printable, secure information that entices users to fulfill your marketing goal—usually either to set an appointment, visit the website or physical location, provide more detailed/secure information, display technical capabilities, announce a special event/promotion, or a combination of strategies.

What's the difference between a label, silk-screening and offset printing?

Your interactive CD will need to be labeled using either a Label, a Silk-screen, or Offset printing method. Attaching a Sticker Label is the least expensive way to label your CD. These labels usually look very good, but have the potential to show any wear and tear that may occur. A silk-screen puts your label art directly onto the CD itself and is the next step up in quality, providing rich, vibrant color at 100-line screen. You cannot scrape off the silk-screen, but the art does have a slight screen-like appearance. Offset

printing is the top quality method of putting label art onto your CD. The artwork is printed directly to the CD using a special CD Printer that outputs at 150-line screen. Offset printing has EXCELLENT image detail, but colors are not EXACT. The best way to choose a labeling method is to get a hands-on look and feel of each of the three types.

What's the difference between duplication and replication?
The difference between duplication and replication has to do with the type of media employed and the method of recording your CD information. We refer to DUPLICATIONS as CD-Rs that are burned for small quantity orders, rush orders (CD-Rs can be processed in less than 24-hours), software testing, or products that get modified often.

We refer to REPLICATIONS as CD-ROMs, also known as Molded CDs, that are "pressed" in large quantities by precision injection molding equipment. Molded CDs are resistant to damage and offer disc-to-disc consistency. A metal stamper is created from your CD-R master and placed in a precision injection molder. Turnaround time is 7-14 days. You may choose silk-screen or offset printing and a wide variety of custom packaging options to ensure the highest quality, professional product.

Is there a difference between a CD-Rom and CD-R?
CD-Rs are blank, recordable media produced from gold disk media on individual "burners," allow the fast manufacture of low quantities (under 1,000), rush orders (CD-Rs can be processed in less than 24-hours), software testing, or products that get modified often. However, the cost per unit is much higher than a longer run due to the cost of blank media.

CD-ROMs are also called Molded CDs because they are "pressed" by a precision injection-molding machine. A metal stamper is created from your CD-R master and placed in the precision injection molder. Traditionally, long run CD Replicators have pressed CD-ROMs in quantities as low as 300 units. However, the market is maturing and moving toward higher minimums (like they have with audio CD) of at least 1,000 CDs. Turnaround time is 7-14 days. You may choose silk-screen or offset printing and a wide variety of custom packaging options to ensure the highest quality, professional product.

What is CMYK and Why is it important?
CMYK stands for Cyan (Blue), Magenta, Yellow, Black, and is the color display format used in professional printing environments. To print with the proper color consistency, your presentation must be in CMYK format.

Do CD-Roms get results?
Interactive CD presentations provide increased attention and retention, better tracking opportunities and increased length of time the viewer spends with your presentation. "97% of CDs that are handed out will be watched at some point" (Wharton School of Business.)   If you were to walk into any company in the US, you would probably find

one television and VCR in the conference room, and more than likely 10 our more computers with CD-ROM drives. The math is simple, more computers means increased opportunity for your presentation to be watched. And interactive viewing of a CD means the viewer now "interacts" with select topics of interest to view instead of sitting through the entire presentation. If the viewer wants to review a topic, simply click a button. An additional enhancement to interactivity, Vision Stream Studios incorporates all the necessary software for user-friendly printing, enabling the viewer to print documents ("PDF" Files) directly from the disc. Print diagrams and drawings, photos, white pages, reports, graphs, charts, etc.

Will the little CD-ROMs or shaped CD-ROMs hurt my computer?
The Mini-CDs and Shaped CDs run smoothly in the majority of CD-ROM drives, which eject to expose an inner tray with 2 ring-shaped grooves, one large outer ring and a smaller inner ring. The outer ring will hold the Standard size and larger Shaped CD-ROMs, while the inner ring will hold mini-CDs and Biz Card size CD-ROMs. Although Mini and Shaped CDs may play in the insertion-type CD Drives, often with some noise, we recommend using only the ejecting tray types for optimal performance.

Can I put my brochure on CD-ROM?
Brochures on CD can be very effective, depending on the amount of information in your brochure, and your target market. Storage & organization of CDs is much easier than brochure copy, especially when there is a lot of information contained. If you cannot condense your marketing information to fit on the CD label & sleeve, we will often recommend special printed packaging to hold your CD that gives the user some written preview information. Heavy, detailed brochures are no longer attractive giveaways, especially at events like Trade Shows where the prospective client will be carrying it and walking around.

What is the cheapest CD-ROM to make for Promotion?
By using your existing marketing materials, you can make a CD at very low cost. Here are some examples, in order of most cost-effective: Use your existing Website on CD; Your Existing Promotional Video on CD; Your existing Brochure copy on CD. Another way to keep your CD project costs low is to give your participation. For example, write your own content, choose your own segments from existing video or website you'd like to use. We're happy to work with you every step of the way to ensure the highest quality at the lowest price. In fact, Vision Stream Studios has received award recognition for quality multimedia in the low budget category for one of our clients, Kema-Powertest. If you would like a free sample of this project, please email KEMA@visionss.com.

I have more than 1 video; can I take pieces from each?
If you have more than one video, you can make your CD more interesting by taking the most powerful segments from each video and combining them into a dynamic CD product using digital video editing. The more that you participate in this process, the less expensive the editing costs will be. For example, you could write down the start and finish time codes from your favorite video segments for each tape so that our technical staff can easily find these portions. Saving our staff's time saves you money.

What does "interactive Video on CD" mean?
Video alone is very limiting in its linear form. Linear means it plays in a straight line from beginning to end. Incorporate that same video into an interactive CD, and the viewer now "interacts" with select topics of interest to view instead of sitting through the entire presentation. If the viewer wants to review a topic, simply click a button. An additional enhancement to interactivity, Vision Stream Studios incorporates all the necessary software for user-friendly printing, enabling the viewer to print documents ("PDF" Files) directly from the disc. Print diagrams and drawings, photos, white pages, reports, graphs, charts, etc.

What is the process of making the content of my CD?
1   Preliminary meeting to gather existing marketing materials and discuss target goals.
2   Proposal and Quote is sent based on conversation and materials provided. Graphic Flow of CD Timeline is also included.
3   You make changes as desired to flow chart and concept.
4   Our professional graphic artists create 3 custom-designed choices for your Home/Splash page.
5   You choose one of 3, or elements from each, as the master design for your CD.
2.   Our artists and programmers transform all the materials into a finalized CD format. (Label and Packaging artwork is also developed at this time).
3.   Your approval of final CD.
4.   Replications begin.

What is the process of packaging my CD?
Packaging depends on your target market. It is important to know to whom you are directing this CD and what goal you are trying to accomplish. For in-house training use only, a basic plastic sleeve, jewel box or cardboard jacket will probably be the most practical considerations. For professional demonstrations, presentations, or retail sales you will probably want to package your CD-ROM in a custom-designed wallet or plastic jewel box with a professionally designed and printed insert. Direct mail applications frequently require a custom-printed self-mailer. Some retail sales require a large air box for display purposes. Vision Stream Studios can show you a variety of packaging options to fit your marketing plan.

What are the standard formats for video?
The two standard formats for video are NTSC and PAL. NTSC, which has a frame rate of 30 frames per second (fps), is typically used in the US and Latin American countries. All other nations generally use PAL, which has a frame rate of 25 fps. A VHS or Beta deck must be able to display the respected standards, as PAL will not play on a NTSC machine and vice-versa.

How do I make my CD "User-Friendly"?
Vision Stream Studios puts an 'auto-launch' feature on every one of our CD projects to ensure a user-friendly experience. When a user places a VSS-produced CD into their CD-Rom Drive, the auto launch feature causes the CD to automatically begin playing,

without any effort or searching on the part of the user. Any instruction needed after the CD launches is in clear interactive form. Also, Vision Stream Studios codes the CD so that no extraneous software is needed to view the presentation. All software is included on the CD, so the presentation is self-contained and nothing is "installed" or "left on" the viewer's computer. An exit button is clearly marked for easy exit function.

Other optional "User-Friendly" Features:
- Insertion of a "Skip" button on the Intro presentation page, so that the user may skip the Video or Flash Introduction if they have already seen it before and need to access the other information on the CD.
- Printable Forms are available so that the user may choose what information to print from the CD with the click of the mouse.
- Minimize program functionality