

Digital Video DV[®]

August 2003 • www.dv.com

REVIEWS Bravo Disc Publisher



The Bravo Disc Publisher is an integrated system that can automatically burn and print labels for up to 25 DVD-R or CD-R discs per job. The built-in robotic arm, in conjunction with custom software, allows for unattended duplicating. In kiosk mode, Bravo Disc Publisher allows you to preload the unit with 50 blank DVDs or CDs and burn them one at a time.

Users can also use their favorite graphics software (Illustrator, Photoshop, etc.) to design discs for use with Bravo Disc Publisher. It prints directly onto the surface of the disc, so no labels are required.

The Bravo Disc Publisher DVD-R system can burn DVD-R media at 4 x speeds, and CD-R media at 16 x speeds. The CD-only model burns CD-R media at 52 x speeds. Both versions of the Bravo Disc Publisher system have a capacity of 25 discs per job when used in standard duplication mode, or 50 discs when using the system's "kiosk" mode. The kiosk mode is a software option that allows you to load blank discs in both the input and output trays, and finished discs are burned one by

Bravo Disc Publisher

DVD Duplicator and Printer • Primera, \$2495 • By Ralph LaBarge

The Primera Technology, Inc. (www.primera.com) Bravo Disc Publisher is an automated disc publishing system that delivers outstanding performance and quality. I liked this unit so much I didn't want to return it, which isn't the case with some of what I review for *DV*.

The system comes in two configurations—one for CD publishing (\$1995), and the other for both CD and DVD publishing (\$2495). I tested the DVD version.

Duplicating and printing

The Bravo Disc Publisher is an integrated system that includes a Pioneer DVR-A05 DVD-R/ DVD-RW burner and a 2400 dpi inkjet printer. A robotic arm automatically transfers blank discs from an input tray to the burner, then from the burner to the printer, and finally to an output tray. If the system encounters a problem during the

burning or printing process, it ejects failed discs out of the front of the unit.

PrimoDVD 2.0 software and a Primera Edition of SureThing CD Labeler 3.1 have been customized by Primera to allow the Bravo Disc Publisher to operate automatically with a PC once a publishing job has been started. Mac units ship with Charismac Engineering Discribe for disc recording and printing and Magic Mouse Production Discus for designing labels. Charismac Discribe and PrimoDVD 2.0 control the robotics and automated burning and printing of each disc. Discribe and PrimoDVD 2.0 are the only software programs that can be used for automated burning and printing. For graphic design on each disc, you can use the included Magic Mouse Production Discus Labeling software (Mac) or SureThing CD Labeling Software (PC).

Score: ♦♦♦♦♦



Pros

Built-in robotic arm and custom software allow unattended duplicating. Uses industry-standard Pioneer DVR-A05 drive, so you can count on quality and reliability of DVD burning.

Cons

Less expensive than competitors, but still not cheap. Only appropriate for companies that require high-speed, high-quality, unattended duplicating and printing of CD and DVD media.

Bottom Line

An excellent value. Should be seriously considered by any company that needs to professionally duplicate and print a large number of DVD or CD discs.

System Requirements

PC: Pentium III at 700 MHz or higher; Windows 2000 or XP with NTFS drive partition; 512 MB RAM; one available USB port and one available IEEE 1394 port.

Mac: 700 MHz PowerPC G4 processor; Mac OS X 10.2 or later; 256MB RAM; 1.5 GB free hard drive space (6 GB for DVD); one available USB port and one available IEEE 1394 port.

I burned a total of 40 different discs during my testing and didn't encounter any problems at all with the Bravo system.

one and ejected out the front tray. This feature might appeal to service bureau kiosks where only one copy is made at a time.

Bravo Disc Publisher is not cheap. It's appropriate for companies that require high-speed, high-quality, unattended duplicating and printing of CD and DVD media. In its defense, the Bravo Disc Publisher system is significantly less expensive (almost \$2000 cheaper) than similar products from other vendors.

Testing Bravo

I spent several days testing the Bravo Disc Publisher system. I made 25 copies of a relatively small disc image to CD-R media. Then I made four copies of an almost-full DVD disc image. I also made one or two copies of several other DVD disc images of various sizes.

The user interface for the Bravo Disc Publisher system is a bit complex, but that's primarily because the system is flexible and provides many options for disc publishing. Options include the number of copies to be made, the burning device, burning speed, verification choices, and printing options.

I tested the Bravo Disc Publisher on a Windows XP system with a 2.8 GHz Pentium 4 CPU, 512 MB RAM, and a 120 GB internal hard drive. My test system also included an NEC DVD+R/DVD+RW drive and



The Bravo Disc Publisher user interface allows you to control the entire disc production process, including the number of copies to be made, burning device and speed, verification choices, and printing options. I burned around 40 CDs and DVDs in my tests—all of them were properly burned and the inkjet print quality was exceptional.

a Panasonic DVD-RAM drive, and the Bravo didn't conflict with the other DVD recorders.

Currently the DVD version of the Bravo Disc Publisher system is supported on Windows XP, Windows 2000, and Mac OS X (10.2 or later). The Bravo system uses both an IEEE 1394 and a USB connection to the host PC, so you will need to make sure your system has at least one of each of these interfaces available.

Burning with Bravo

I was quite pleased with the performance of the Bravo Disc Publisher system during all of my tests. When I made 25 copies of a small CD image, the Bravo Disc Publisher burned, verified, and printed all 25 discs in approximately 90 minutes. All 25 discs were properly burned, and the print quality of each disc was exceptional.

The built-in robotic arm and custom software allow the operator to walk away from the system until it has completed its assigned task.

The performance of the Bravo Disc Publisher system during my DVD tests was also good. It took approximately 70 minutes to burn and print four copies of a 4.3 GB DVD disc image. All four copies were properly burned, and the print quality of each disc was great. I used Verbatim 4 x DVD-R printable media for this test.

I ran a number of tests where only one disc was burned, and in each case, the test was completed successfully and the print quality met or exceeded my expectations. I burned a total of 40 different discs during my testing and didn't encounter any problems at all with the Bravo Disc Publisher system.

By the end of my testing, the color ink cartridge had approximately 60 percent of its ink left, and the black cartridge had about 75 percent remaining. Based on these results, it seems reasonable to expect that the

It took approximately 70 minutes to burn and print four copies of a 4.3 GB DVD disc image on the Bravo Disc Publisher.

color ink cartridge can be used for approximately 100 discs, while the black should last for at least 150 discs.

Obviously the number of discs you can print with each cartridge will depend on the specific disc label art you use. Both the color and black ink cartridges have a suggested retail price of \$42.95 and can be purchased from Primera or its distributors and resellers. The ink cartridges work only with the Bravo Disc Publisher. The ink cartridges use a fast-drying ink, and all of the discs I printed were dry as soon as the system placed them in the output tray.

For all of your DVD projects, I recommend you use name-brand inkjet-printable DVD-R media. For CD projects, you'll need to use inkjet-printable media from any reputable vendor.

Conclusion

The Bravo Disc Publisher is a great tool for companies that need to professionally duplicate CD and DVD disc images. The built-in robotic arm and custom software allow the operator to walk away from the system until it has completed its assigned task.

The system uses an industry-standard Pioneer DVR-A05 drive, so you can count on the quality and reliability of the DVD burner.

The Primera Technology Bravo Disc Publisher is an excellent value, and should be seriously considered by any company that needs to professionally duplicate and print a large number of CD or DVD discs. ■

Ralph LaBarge is an award-winning DVD title developer and author of the book *DVD Authoring & Production* (CMP Books, 2002). He has completed over 300 DVD projects to date, and moderates the Inside DVD Forum on DV.com.