



nbsp;

[Home](#) [Services](#) [EMedia Xtra](#) [Events](#) [Contact](#) [Advertising](#)

Adobe Licenses Sonic DVD Technology



| Adobe deserves credit for the skill it has used to develop its product lines from its original print products into a range of digital media terrain. Originally known only for its excellence in high-quality print publishing tools (and PostScript), Adobe leveraged its print and PostScript expertise in the mid-90s to develop the only serious electronic paper system, the ubiquitous Portable Document Format (PDF). Adobe has also managed to avoid direct competition with Microsoft, and currently maps its portfolio of products into five areas: Web, design, publishing, digital video, and streaming media. It considers FrameMaker and FrameMaker+SGML part of the print collection, although it identifies them both as multichannel publishing tools outputting to print as well as Web and CDROM.

With about 25 million DVD players in U.S. homes, DVD will probably become the dominant optical medium for delivery and storage of everything from video to music, databases, and more. On December 11, Adobe announced it was licensing Sonic Solutions DVD technology, an agreement Adobe said would accelerate its entry into the DVD authoring software market. Sonic is best-known for its Creator professional DVD authoring system and for creating the first "entry-level" DVD authoring product to broaden the DVD development space, DVDIt! Given the pervasiveness of Acrobat and the use of Adobe products, this agreement is apt to affect you, whether you are a consumer or business user, whether you now record or use DVD media, and even whether or not you are a current Adobe customer. Clearly, Adobe believes DVD recording is going mainstream, and in addition to creating the foundation for an Adobe-branded professional DVD authoring application, Adobe will begin moving DVD support into its existing product lines. I asked David Trescot, director of Product Management for Digital Video at Adobe, about the impact of this licensing agreement with Sonic Solutions. It appears the obvious intent involves the distribution of video on DVDs, although Trescot was mum about product particulars. Beyond products like Premiere, we may see an impact on a number of other Adobe products.

Research Center

- CD/DVD Duplication
- CD/DVD Jukeboxes
- CD/DVD Media
- CD/DVD Printers
- CD/DVD Replication
- CD-R/RW Drives
- DVD Authoring Services
- DVD Authoring Tools
- Knowledge Management
- MPEG Streaming
- Networking Software
- Network Storage
- Packaging
- Plasma Displays
- Projectors
- RAID
- Recording Software
- Video Production Tools
- Writable DVD Drives
- Digital Audio

The Acrobat Connection

Data (as opposed to video) is already commonly distributed on both CDs and DVDs. While 640MB once seemed infinite, Microsoft today uses 4.7GB DVD to deliver two MSDN Help and documentation applications with version 6 of Visual Studio. That's Microsoft, but even smaller corporate customers have been routinely distributing indexed collections of PDF files on single CD-Rs, and are increasingly finding 640 MB constraining, especially if they want to include rich graphics and video links in their PDF files.

With Acrobat 5.0, indexed documents can be located on different disk drives or network server volumes and the index can be housed on some drive or volume other than the indexed documents. Still, most users (and virtually all laptop users) will have only one optical drive, and that is increasingly a DVD player. Acrobat's architecture continues to evolve, but Acrobat's indexing system and search plug-in haven't changed appreciably in over three years. Developing a search index requires balancing parameters that include how soon you want the index to be available, the number of documents in the index (too many documents and Acrobat Catalog splits the index), and the amount of processor memory used during indexing. At the very least, the search plug-in will need an "optimize for DVD" checkbox. Other Adobe products like FrameMaker (and its +SGML cousin) produce rich tagged PDF, yet working on increasingly larger book collections to take advantage of DVD capacity will require changes to these products too. Which Adobe products will first be affected?



Industry Info

Conference Calendar
CD Tracker
CD/DVD ROM Index
Facts/Figures/Findings
Ad Link

Trescot says, "We will be adding DVD output capability to those products where it makes sense and where there is customer demand. At this point we're not announcing which products will incorporate DVD authoring, nor on what timelines."

Adobe DVD Authoring

EMedia Services

About EMedia
Editorial Calendar
Print Advertising
Web Advertising
Subscribe Magazine
Subscribe Newsletter

Sonic Solutions' products already range from consumer to Hollywood studio systems, so Adobe will have to be careful not to move Premiere into Sonic's DVDIt! product space. By the end of 2002, Adobe promises to release its own DVD authoring product. This, according to Trescot, "will be a complete Adobe product, not just a branded version of something else." Adobe must perform careful acrobatics to avoid encroaching on either Microsoft's or Sonic's turf, but has shown a history of deft product management skills. The December 11 announcement looks like a winner for everybody.

--Robert J. Boeri



Copyright 2002, Online, Inc.
213 Danbury Road, Wilton, Connecticut 06897-4007
203/761-1466, 800/248-8466
Fax 203/761-1444
info@onlineinc.com