

Desktop DVD Authoring

Contents at a Glance

PART I	UNDERSTANDING DVD: CONSUMER AND COMPUTER	I
1	Making Sense of DVD	3
2	Consumer DVD Players: DVD Video and Audio	31
3	Consumer DVD Recorders: Recordable Formats	69
4	Digital Media and DVD on the Macintosh	87
5	Digital Media and DVD on Windows	113
PART II	EXPLORING DVDs ON YOUR COMPUTER	135
6	Playing DVDs on the Macintosh OS X	137
7	Playing DVDs in Windows XP	159
PART III	AUTOMATED DVD AUTHORIZING	189
8	Integrated Video Editing and DVD	191
9	Automated DVD Authoring with Sonic MyDVD	227
PART IV	PERSONAL DVD AUTHORIZING	265
10	Personal DVD Authoring with Apple iDVD	267
11	Personal DVD Authoring with Sonic DVDIt!	285
PART V	PROFESSIONAL DVD AUTHORIZING	327
12	Professional DVD Authoring with Apple DVD Studio Pro	329
13	Professional DVD Authoring with Sonic ReelDVD	371
14	Feature Film DVD Authoring with Sonic Scenarist	401
PART VI	APPENDIXES	419
A	DVD Technical Summary	421
B	DVD References	433
C	Glossary	439
D	DVD Authoring Software Gallery	467
	Index	499

Desktop DVD Authoring

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with Jim Matey



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To my mother and father, who helped start me on the journey, and to my family, Connie, Karin, and Brian, who make the trip so fascinating.

Table of Contents

PART I	UNDERSTANDING DVD: CONSUMER AND COMPUTER	I
I	Making Sense of DVD	3
	The Dimensions of DVD	4
	The Origins of DVD: Convergence Media	6
	DVD Success as a Consumer Product	7
	DVD on the Desktop	14
	DVD Discs: Size and Capacity	14
	DVD for Computers: Affordable Equipment and Media	21
	DVD Software Applications	23
	The Future of DVD	26
	Summary	28
2	Consumer DVD Players: DVD Video and Audio	31
	Quick Start: Buying a DVD Player	32
	Quick Start: Setting Up a DVD Set-Top Player	36
	DVD Disc Formats	38
	Hooking Up a DVD Player: Inputs and Outputs	44
	Playing a DVD: Control and Status Functions	56
	Summary	67
3	Consumer DVD Recorders: Recordable Formats	69
	Quick Start: Buying a DVD Recorder	71
	DVD Recording and Playback	73
	DVD-R/RW Recorders	78
	DVD+R/RW Recorders	80
	DVD-RAM Recording	82
	DVD Camcorders	84
	Summary	86

4	Digital Media and DVD on the Macintosh	87
	Mac OS X	89
	Macintosh Systems and the CD/DVD SuperDrive	91
	Burning Data to CD and DVD	92
	Accessing USB Digital Cameras with iPhoto	94
	Displaying Video Files with QuickTime Player	102
	DV Video Editing with iMovie	106
	Summary	112
5	Digital Media and DVD on Windows	113
	Burning Data to CD and DVD	115
	Importing and Browsing Pictures in Windows XP	124
	DV Video Editing with Windows Movie Maker	128
	Summary	133
PART II EXPLORING DVDs ON YOUR COMPUTER		135
<hr/>		
6	Playing DVD on Macintosh OS X	137
	Playing Audio CDs with iTunes	138
	Playing Movies on DVD with DVD Player	146
	Summary	157
7	Playing DVD in Windows XP	159
	Playing Digital Media on Windows XP	160
	Playing Audio CDs with Windows Media Player	165
	Playing Movies on DVD with Windows Media Player	172
	Exploring DVD Movies with CyberLink PowerDVD and InterVideo WinDVD	173
	Exploring DVD Discs and Files	180
	Enhanced DVD with the InterActual Player	183
	Summary	187

PART III AUTOMATED DVD AUTHORIZING 189

8	Integrated Video Editing and DVD	191
	Video Editing and DVD Authoring	193
	CyberLink and InterVideo	196
	CyberLink PowerDirector	196
	InterVideo WinProducer	215
	Summary	226
9	Automated DVD Authoring with Sonic MyDVD	227
	Stepping Through a New Project with Sonic MyDVD	228
	Adding and Organizing Movies in DVD Menus	236
	Editing Menus and Sub-Menus	239
	Capturing Video Clips	243
	Trimming and Editing Clips	249
	Creating Photo Slide Shows	251
	Customizing Menu Styles	254
	Burning DVDs	257
	Editing an Existing DVD	258
	Recording Direct-to-DVD	260
	Summary	263

PART IV PERSONAL DVD AUTHORIZING 265

10	Personal DVD Authoring with Apple iDVD	267
	About iDVD	268
	Stepping Through a New Project with iDVD	268
	Setting Up iDVD Preferences	275
	Organizing Clips in DVD Menus	276
	Creating Slide Shows	278
	Customizing Menus	279
	Summary	283

	Working with Subtitles and Languages	386
	Working with Menus and Buttons	389
	Creating Navigational Links	392
	Creating and Importing Assets	394
	Building the Project	396
	Summary	398
14	Feature Film DVD Authoring with Sonic Scenarist	401
	About Sonic Scenarist	402
	Creating a Scenario Project	402
	Exploring the Scenarist Interface	403
	Exploring a Scenario	404
	Editing Tracks	408
	Creating Menus	409
	Defining Navigation	411
	Building the Project	414
	Summary	416
APPENDIXES		419
A	DVD Technical Summary	421
	DVD Formats and Logos Overview	422
	CD Formats and Logos	422
	DVD Formats and Logos	424
	DVD Formats: from Discs to Data	427
B	DVD References	433
	DVD Information Resources	433
	Industry Organizations	434
	DVD Hardware Products	435
	Integrated DVD Computer Systems	436
	DVD-Related Software	436

C	Glossary	439
D	DVD Authoring Software Gallery	467
	DVD Software Players	469
	Consumer Video Editing with Automated DVD Authoring	475
	Automated DVD Authoring	482
	Personal DVD Authoring	486
	Professional DVD Authoring	489
	Video-Editing Software	493

About the Author

Douglas Dixon is a technologist and author who has worked in the “Video Valley” of Princeton, N.J. for more than 20 years, at the bleeding edge where advanced consumer video applications meet personal computers. He recently authored *How to Use Adobe Premiere 6.5*, and also writes regularly on technology and business for *Camcorder and Computer Video* magazine and the *U.S. 1 Newspaper* in Princeton.



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As a technology writer, Doug is a contributing editor for *Camcorder and Computer Video* and *Digital Photographer* magazines, covering video-editing and streaming-media technology and tools, from DV to DVD, desktop to handhelds, consumer to professional.

Doug has published technical articles related to his projects in publications ranging from *ACM* and *IEEE* journals to *Computer Graphics World*. He also is active in professional activities; and has spoken at local, regional, and national meetings, from user groups to PC Expo, Comdex and the ACM SIGGRAPH Conference.

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About the Technical Reviewers

These reviewers contributed their considerable hands-on expertise to the entire development process for *Desktop DVD Authoring*. As the book was being written, these dedicated professionals reviewed all the material for technical content, organization, and flow. Their feedback was critical to ensuring that *Desktop DVD Authoring* fits our reader's need for the highest-quality technical information.

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Bruce Nazarian is an Apple Solutions Expert, a recognized DVD consultant, a factory certified DVD trainer for Sonic Solutions, and an award-winning DVD producer. He is also a member of the DVD Association—Americas Advisory Board, where he sits on the Training and Careers Working Group. Bruce specializes in digital media production for video, broadcast, DVD, and the web. Bruce is the owner of Gnome Digital Media, an award-winning DVD production company in Burbank, CA. He has created the DVD Companion for Macintosh, and the popular Pro-Pack products. You can visit his DVD web site at www.recipe4DVD.com to learn more about how to make DVD authoring easier.

Irwin Eberhart has continuously contributed his multi-faceted skills to the communications industry in various ways. While studying broadcast production at Chicago's Columbia College, he helped pioneer Chicago's own brand of music called "House Music." Under the stage name of Chip E. he produced and recorded many "House Music" classics. Many of his recordings, including "Like This," "Godfather of House Music," and "If You Only Knew," became hits in cities throughout the U. S. as well as in Europe—where Chip E. made many personal appearances. Irwin always had a keen interest in technology, and he became a key player in the Internet industry—managing web development staffs for several top communications corporations. As digital video began to play an important role in

the industry, Irwin began to hone his skills as a film, video, and DVD guru. Irwin has been a featured speaker on DVD technology at events, such as MacWorld Expo, teaches video editing and DVD authoring at Chicago's Mac University, and has authored hundreds of DVDs for corporate museum and film clients. He is currently producing his first film, a documentary about the immersion of "House Music" focusing on the unusual suspects or the unsung heroes who contributed to that style of music—and, of course, it will be distributed on DVD.

Rob Pinniger, after leaving Corpus Christi College, Oxford in 1994 quickly became involved in new media and has since held a number of senior positions at post-production facilities, new media companies and recording studios throughout London. He has also been a freelance consultant and record producer and has written training courses for a variety of major software packages. Rob encoded and authored some of the first DVDs created in the UK and recently passed his three hundredth DVD project. He is currently Technical Manager at Abbey Road Interactive, the new media division of EMI's famous recording studios. In this role he has been involved in the creation of award-winning web-sites and DVDs for a variety of national and international clients. More information can be found at www.abbeyroadinteractive.com.

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As the reader of this book, you are the most important critic and commentator. We value your opinion and want to know what we're doing right, what we could do better, what areas you'd like to see us publish in, and any other words of wisdom you're willing to pass our way.

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Introduction

Desktop DVD Authoring opens up the world of DVD at your desktop—for playing movies, archiving data, and authoring video productions. Whether for business presentations or family events, the new medium of DVD offers an exciting new way to create and distribute video material as high-quality interactive presentations.

Just as the use of CDs for creating personalized music has exploded in the past decade, DVDs are now becoming available for desktop video authoring. This is the next revolution in personal computers, with full-quality digital video and DVD on the desktop.

With a DVD-ROM drive on your computer, you can watch movies on DVD, and explore them to find hidden special features. With a DVD recordable drive, you can use DVD as a bigger and faster CD to store more data and larger files. But most of all, you now can author video productions to DVD.

With this book, you can easily create and share great-looking productions on DVD and even CD, with real, full-quality digital video and audio, complete with professional-style menus. Even better, the DVD discs that you burn at your desktop can be played almost anywhere—not only on computer DVD drives but also on consumer set-top DVD players.

But what about all the different DVD formats? And what are all these different DVD products: consumer and computer, players and recorders? How might DVD make sense for you, for your particular needs? This book will answer these questions by helping you make sense of DVD—discs and formats, consumer and computer products, computer systems and peripherals, for playback and authoring, across both the Windows and Macintosh platforms.

This book takes a broad approach because there is no single answer with DVDs. This book shows you the range of possibilities for desktop DVD authoring, whether you are starting out by just transferring some videotapes to DVD as easily and simply as possible, or stepping up to designing your own interactive presentations.

Desktop DVD Authoring introduces a wide range of DVD authoring tools, for both Windows and Macintosh, progressing from personal applications to more professional tools. It explains the different categories of tools, and shows how to use the tools step-by-step, highlighting differences and special features. Appendix D, “DVD Authoring Software Gallery,” at the end of the book then provides a visual overview of a wide range of available tools for DVD authoring and video editing.

You even can try out the software applications used in the book and work along with the text by downloading trial versions of these products from the company web sites listed in Appendix B, “DVD References.”

From CD to DVD

The tremendous interest in CDs for digital audio was of course driven by the enjoyment of music, but it was enabled by technology, standards, and declining prices. As computers became faster, and CD-ROM playback drives became standard equipment, it became feasible to record or rip music from a CD to your hard disk. With growing hard disk capacity and the standardization of the MP3 audio compression format to squeeze down the file sizes, it became quite reasonable to store your music collection on disk for convenient playback. But the final breakthrough was the growing availability of CD-R/RW drives and the decline in CD media prices to under \$1, making it possible for you to burn your own music mixes to take along with you.

And now, the same excitement is being repeated with DVD and digital video. In the first two years of the new millennium, DVD-ROM drives have become common equipment on personal computers as processor performance has increased so much that you can play DVD movies on your computer, at full rate and full-screen resolution, along with surround-sound audio. Meanwhile, the growth of digital DV camcorders and adoption of the FireWire/IEEE 1394 interface has brought full-quality digital video to the desktop, so you can capture, edit, and record video with no compromises.

Which brings us to the last component: DVD recording. Just as with CDs, DVD recording drives and recordable media are moving down the price reduction curve as manufacturing volumes ramp up. The year 2001 saw the introduction of bundled desktop computer systems; external DVD burner drives; and lower-cost, general-purpose DVD media, all supported by a wide range of DVD authoring tools. And as DVD burners fall under \$500, and recordable DVD discs fall to around \$1, the last cost barriers to DVD are being swept away.

Who Should Use This Book?

Desktop DVD Authoring is for anyone who has some interest and experience with working with video on computers, particularly digital video, and is interested in the possibilities for using DVD to create, share, and archive video material. You may already have some experience using photo-, audio-, or video-editing tools; and with playing and burning CDs. And now you would like to explore DVD authoring.

If you are just starting out with video on computers, you can use this book to learn how to use the “automated” DVD tools to quickly transfer video to DVD with a minimum of fuss, complete with professional-looking titles and backgrounds. And even if you do not have a DVD recordable drive, you can use this book to create and share DVD productions on CD.

If you want to make an interactive production, this book will show you how to use the personal DVD authoring tools, organize your clips into nested menus, and provide more customization of the menus and navigation.

And to create more complete productions, this book demonstrates the professional DVD authoring tools, with advanced DVD features, such as multiple video, audio, and subtitle tracks.

With this book, you can make sense of all the different options for DVD, and pick the right solution for your needs. If a simpler personal tool does what you need for the moment, then you can start out quickly and inexpensively. And even if you need the features in a more professional tool, you still may find it handy to use a more automated tool to quickly transfer some video with a minimum of fuss.

How to Use This Book

This book is organized into six parts, covering DVD consumer products and formats; DVD on computers; and three parts on DVD authoring tools, from automated to personal to professional. (The final part is a set of references for your use.) Trial versions of many of the software applications used in this book are available for downloading. See the author’s web site www.manifest-tech.com.

For help in getting started with DVD, start with Chapter 1, “Making Sense of DVD,” for a quick summary of the different aspects of DVD; and see Chapter 2, “Consumer DVD Players: DVD Video and Audio,” for an overview of DVD on the set-top for movies and music. Then see the second half of Part I to find out about recording to DVD for consumer products and on Macintosh and Windows computers.

Use Part II to learn how to play back DVD movies on your computers, and to explore how DVD discs are organized when they are authored.

Then see Parts III through V to dive in to authoring your own DVDs. By understanding the different types of tools, and exploring how they are designed, you can decide which tools are best for you. And by working along with the book, you can create your own first DVD productions, or step up to a more advanced tool to create more customized DVD designs.

Part I, “Understanding DVD: Consumer and Computer,” introduces you to the broad dimensions of DVD, as it was designed as a convergence medium that spanned Hollywood movies to computer data storage. It explores DVD formats for different types of content, video and audio, and the competing disc formats for recordable media. It then discusses how this wide range of DVD applications and formats is being used in both consumer and computer products.

Part II, “Exploring DVDs on Your Computer,” shows how to take advantage of a computer DVD-ROM drive to play movies on DVD, using popular Macintosh and Windows DVD player software. On your computer, you can go beyond the front-panel control of a set-top DVD player to examine and understand the contents of a DVD movie, and find the “hidden” extra features on the disc. This part also discusses web DVD movies, with both DVD video and computer and Internet applications.

Part III, “Automated DVD Authoring,” shows you how to jump right in to creating simple DVD productions, and record them on a DVD recordable drive or even on a CD. It walks you step-by-step through selecting a collection of clips or even recording directly from a tape, automatically generating DVD menus with thumbnails of your clips, and then burning the result to a disc. These are quick one-stop tools; just pick the clips, burn, and play them back.

Part IV, “Personal DVD Authoring,” introduces DVD tools that provide more flexibility customizing the design of your production. It shows you how to use these tools for importing media clips, laying out menus, linking menus and clips, changing the graphical design, and then creating a DVD recording. These applications assume that you have already edited your video content, whether one long production or a collection of clips, and now are ready to design a DVD production for them.

Part V, “Professional DVD Authoring,” opens the full potential of DVD with more advanced authoring tools. These applications let you create multiple video, audio, and subtitle tracks, give precise control over interactive graphics effects, and provide access to DVD scripting and programming. They also support advanced DVD features, such as encryption, region coding, widescreen, and Dolby Digital audio.

Finally, Appendix A provides a technical summary of DVD formats for content and discs.

Appendix B provides a list of references and web links to more information, including DVD information and hardware and software products.

Appendix C is an extensive Glossary of terms and concepts used in DVD authoring and video and audio editing.

Appendix D is a DVD Authoring Software Gallery that provides a visual overview of these and other tools for DVD authoring and video editing.