

# Church Production

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WFX '08 SPRING PREVIEW



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PRIMERA BRAVO  
SE Disc Publisher



BLUE SKY  
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By John McJunkin

## Primera Bravo SE Disc Publisher

Disc duplicators have become as common in churches as pews and pastors, since a large proportion of churches now record sermons or entire services, and wish to make them available to parishioners. Historically, there have been two extremes in terms of available options for churches that want to make discs available. One is to spend a huge amount of money on a highly sophisticated disc duplication device that creates discs with virtually no difficulty whatsoever. The other is to dedicate a computer with a disc burner to the arduous task of duplicating discs one by one, and in the more sophisticated version, have some labeling solution requiring the application of a paper-based sticker to each disc, which will hopefully never get wet. In the less sophisticated version of this scenario, some poor soul is stuck with handwriting the pertinent information on each disc with a permanent marker. In my mind—neither of these scenarios sound fun or plausible.

So what are we to do? Enter Primera's Bravo SE Disc Publisher. Not only does it make discs, but Primera has announced a very pleasant little surprise—more on that in a moment....

Traditionally, sophisticated disc publishing devices have been prohibitively expensive. This is precisely the issue that Primera tackled with the Bravo SE. This unit, which retails for \$1,495, makes simple, high quality disc publication available to a lot of churches that would have otherwise never thought it possible. And you may note that I keep referring to the process as "disc publishing" versus "disc duplication." The distinction here is that disc publishing includes the nicety of high resolution printing directly on the disc as part of the overall process. Disc duplication is different to the extent that it involves multiple processes, including the initial burning of the discs, followed by the labeling of the discs, which can be, as I mentioned before, a grueling task. Disc publishing literally brings the entire process all together, vastly simplifying the role of church volunteers or professionals.

### Product Components

The Bravo SE features a high-speed Pioneer disc reader/writer capable of reading and writing CD-R, CD-RW, DVD-R, DVD-RAM, DVD+R, and dual layer DVD+R. Its blank disk tray can hold up to 20 discs, publishing up to 20 discs in one pass. The printer is of the ink-jet variety, and it uses a three-color (CMY) cartridge. It can print up to 4800 x 1200 dpi, which delivered truly excellent results for the test projects I did. The publisher connects to your computer via an included USB 2.0 cable, placing the



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## Primera includes an application called PTPublisher, which facilitates the actual data burning aspect of disc publication.

unit under software control from your computer. The printer can print on virtually any blank disc, but it is necessary to make adjustments regarding the printer driver. From my standpoint, it's a lot more likely that a church will keep things simple in the interest of getting a lot of discs out quickly—just text and no sophisticated graphics. This also reduces the amount of ink used in the process.

I extracted the publisher from its box, and got it powered and connected to my computer, which uses the Windows Vista operating system—the system is compatible with Windows XP and Macintosh from 10.2 forward, as well. I started the software install and also installed the new color inkjet cartridge that shipped with the unit. The unit's printer then performed a print head alignment in preparation for disc publication. Primera includes an application called PTPublisher, which facilitates the actual data burning aspect of disc publication. On the Mac platform, this is accomplished with an application called DiscRibe. Exclusive to the Windows platform is an included application called SureThing Labeler, which is used to create the image that will be printed on each disc. Primera does not include any such app for the Mac, but certainly there are other similar applications available (and I must plead ignorance on this aspect—I'm a sound guy).

I was directed by the publishing application through the process, first creating the image that would be printed on the disc—and in my case, I kept it simple, with just name and title against one of the 88 included backgrounds (some of which are nice photographic

images). PTPublisher auto-launched the SureThing Labeler application, which I used to create the image. I saved the image and closed SureThing, and then PTPublisher immediately asked if I wanted to use the image I'd just saved—very user-friendly. I responded affirmatively, and then the next step was to copy the DVD that I was going to publish. The content on this disc was a video presentation about an hour in duration, taking 3.84GB on the disc. Copying from the disc to my computer was very quick—approximately seven minutes. And the source disc was neatly deposited into the Bravo's output tray upon completion of that process.

### Disc Burning Capabilities

Next up was the disc-burning part of the operation. I loaded 20 discs into the Bravo's blank disc tray and started the process, which again, considering the fact that this is a DVD, not a CD, went pretty quickly—about seven minutes to burn the disc, and about three minutes to handle printing. You can easily create a disc image of the source disc and eliminate the process of copying the source for each run. The Bravo also works in a “dumb” mode as well—simply creating clones of whatever disc you put into it. I proceeded on to CDs, burning a 700MB audio file of more than 78 minutes in length, which took about seven minutes to burn, just like the DVD.

It's evident that this device nicely simplifies the disc publishing process, facilitating the creation of quality discs for your congregation. The printing is gorgeous, and the street price of the

Bravo is somewhat lower than the retail price and, in consideration of what it does for you, is a bargain.

So, what was the pleasant little surprise that I mentioned earlier? Primera has introduced a new application called PTRip. iTunes has become virtually ubiquitous at this stage, and it's very nice to have a large library of music on one's computer—available for synchronization with one's iPod. PTRip allows you to put 20 discs you like into the Bravo's blank disc tray, and then the Bravo robotically imports the contents of all 20 discs to iTunes. I can't begin to tell you how much time I've spent loading discs into iTunes, and now that I can load 20 discs at a time without lifting a finger, I'm thrilled. Only one minor complaint here—this application is only available for Windows, and my large iTunes library is on one of my Macs. Perhaps they'll port it in the future.

The Primera Bravo SE Disc Publisher is a very valuable tool for churches that wish to create discs for their congregations. It is not an industrial-strength solution—that is not the intent. It is a medium-duty tool that will nicely facilitate sending the congregation home with services on a disc. I definitely recommend taking a look at it.

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