

DVD: The Versatile Option

Advantages of DVD

DVD has a number of advantages. First, DVD is modern, impressive, and easy. Would you rather have to locate a VCR and fast-forward and rewind until you find the segment you want to present to a potential client or investor, or pull a small disk out of a sleek CD wallet and pop it into your laptop, using the menu to quickly and easily navigate through its contents?

Also, the DVD has superior image and sound quality and it is durable.

With a 100-year expected shelf life, it will last much longer than VHS tape. In addition,

DVD allows you to organize numerous media elements into one elegant presentation.

Use your DVD at live events to enhance slide presentations with full screen video and high quality audio. Use it at trade shows with continuously looping video or interactive menus. Make one training video and put it on DVD in multiple languages.

If your project will necessitate many copies, use DVD and save a fortune in shipping. Provide interactive programs on your training DVD. Customize your disk to fit your needs.

What is DVD?

DVD is an exciting, enticing, and effective way to present your media project; whether it is promotional, educational, training-related, or for entertainment. DVD stands for Digital Versatile Disk, a truly appropriate name because it offers the complete package. Not only can you incorporate high quality video and stereo and surround sound, but

you can include PowerPoint presentations, narration in several different languages, subtitles, website links, and, most importantly, interactivity.

One DVD disk, the physical size of an audio CD, can hold a wealth of information: 4.7 gigabytes for the standard DVD disk, or up to ten hours of MPEG 2 quality video. With this capability, you can produce one disk and use it in multiple ways, referring to the menu options for easy navigation.

From direct messages from your CEO, to corporate profile video segments, to PowerPoint slides outlining the growth of your company, DVD offers the ability to contain it all in one disk.

Accessible to just about everyone, DVD can be played either on a computer or in the DVD deck which most people have in their living rooms.

Best of all, DVD can be as simple or as all-encompassing as you want. Incorporate many menus or none, have a basic look or animated graphics with sound effects- it is up to you. DVD is versatile.

Making a DVD

Making a DVD usually involves five phases; pre-production, production, authoring, encoding, and pre-mastering.

Pre-Production involves planning and organization of the DVD and determining the elements needed. From menus, to video segments, to graphics, the needs of the project must be assessed.

Production refers to creating all of the necessary elements, like

designing the graphics; and shooting and editing the video.

Authoring involves interface design, determining the flow of the DVD, and creating/programming menus and buttons.

Encoding means converting the video and audio elements into a digital format that DVD recognizes. The individual elements data is compressed and then together it is multiplexed, or combined, into one data stream.

Pre-mastering refers primarily to testing the DVD.

The cost of a DVD is determined by production, pre-mastering, and mastering or replication.

Production, authoring, and encoding are usually the most costly phases, in which the audio, video, and menus and control information is created and encoded.

Of course, the cost of a DVD is also determined by both the quantity of elements involved, and how many elements already exist. This determines how much production time is needed. For example: Are there pre-existing graphics and logos which you want incorporated into your DVD? Are the video segments already shot and edited? Have the PowerPoint slides been created?

Also, if you want a large quantity of disks, they might need to be replicated in a separate plant with million dollar equipment, rather than duplicated onto DVD-Rs, which is a more simple technology. Obviously, the bigger the project, the more it will cost.

Considerations

When considering producing a DVD, there are a few questions you should ask yourself:

How many minutes of video will it contain?

Will it have menus?

How many menus will it have?

How many choices per menu?

Will it contain multiple languages?

Will it need subtitles?

Will it have multiple video programs?

Should it have a website link?

Should it loop continuously?

How many copies will I need?

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Case Study

A rapidly growing retailer, Factory 2-U Stores, realized they could better serve their training needs with multimedia. The cost of sending trainers to each store far outweighs providing DVDs.

With a tight budget and fast-approaching deadline, Staylor-Made Communications found a way to creatively and effectively cover over three hours (and seven complete videos) of new-hire orientation information on one nine gigabyte DVD. User-friendly, the DVD included a main menu of the different training modules and various submenus for each new topic. The DVD also featured resume ability to allow users to find exactly where they left off.

For video segments, two co-hosts presented material on-camera in a studio with a green screen and a composition of animation as the background. Enhanced with b-roll,

dramatizations, and scenarios, the program was married with music, graphics, text support, and effects on four editing systems working around the clock.

Pleased with the efficiency of Staylor-Made Communications and the convenience and quality of DVD, Factory 2-U placed DVD players in all of its nearly 300 stores. SMC has since been able to produce several more Factory 2-U DVDs for internal communications and training.

Contact SMC for DVD

If DVD sounds like the right option for you, rely on Staylor-Made Communications to produce a disk tailored to your needs.

Contact SMC for a consultation or visit our website to fill out the 6 P s of Project Planning worksheet.

Jim Staylor is an award-winning scriptwriter/producer and the owner of Staylor-Made Communications in San Diego. (800) 711-6699, www.staylor-made.com

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