CD-ROM Publishing: Opportunities and Challenges

Jack Powers
Director, Graphics Research Laboratory
Publisher, www.electric-pages.com

CD-ROM Basics
- Compact Disk, Read-Only Memory
- 676 megabytes (120,000 A4 pages)
- Mac, Windows MPC, Hybrids
- CD-I: Compact Disk Interactive
- CD-R: Compact Disk Recordable
- HDCD: High density (3.3-6.8Gb)

CD-ROM Statistics
- > 28 million CD-ROM drives
- > 5,000 commercial titles
- > 100 million CD-ROMs in print
- Mass mkt consumer: 500,000 units
- Typical consumer title: 20,000 units
- Business-to-business: 100-1,000 units

Multimedia Data Types
- Typography (not just text)
- Illustration
- Photography
- Hyperlinks
- Sound
- Animation
- Video
- Transaction

Six Advantages of Interactive Media
- Customization
- Timeliness
- Comprehensiveness
- Searchability
- Economy
- Transaction
CD-ROM Applications
- Text and numeric reference databases
- Illustration and photography archives
- Sound, animation, video components
- Direct response, catalogs, retailing
- Shovelware
- Telecom and print links

Platform Paradox
- Designing, authoring, testing, approving on the Macintosh
- Distributing on the Multimedia PC
  - 65:35 MPC:Mac

Costs of Development
- The Content Cliché
- The Moviemaking Analogy
- Designing for interactivity
- Illustrative vs Narrative
  - Video, Sound and Animation

Creating a CD-ROM
- Developing the database
  - Text
  - Layout
  - Illustration
- Pre-mastering and testing
- CD-ROM pressing
- Desktop CD-R publishing

Selling a CD-ROM
- Packaging
- Marketing
- Distribution
  - Retail: Computer store, book store
  - B to B: Direct response
- Customer Support

CD-ROM Pricing
- When was the last time you bought a $70 book?
- $10 to $40 target price range
  - 5 foot $10 packs
- Sponsored and Ad Supported
- Transactional
Production and Design

- Multimedia authoring
- SGML document databases
- Scanned page image databases
- Adobe Acrobat hyperlinked pages
- HTML
- QuicktimeVR and VRML


- <$100 double speed drives
- <$1,000 Desktop CD-R
- Multimedia Motherboards
  - MPEG, sound, CD-ROM ctrllrs
- Internet/CD-ROM Links
- Virtual Reality