

Epson PP-100 Discproducer

Chris Randall



The PP-100 is a well-built professional unit, which also means (at 52 pounds) that it's pretty heavy; you'll need to make sure that you place it on a sturdy surface that can handle the weight.

Hollywood studios. More surprising still, the unit comes with two DVD burners for speedy production. Whether you need to produce one disc or 1,000, you will find the PP-100 is a professionally built, very solid, and reliable duplicator/printer.

SETUP

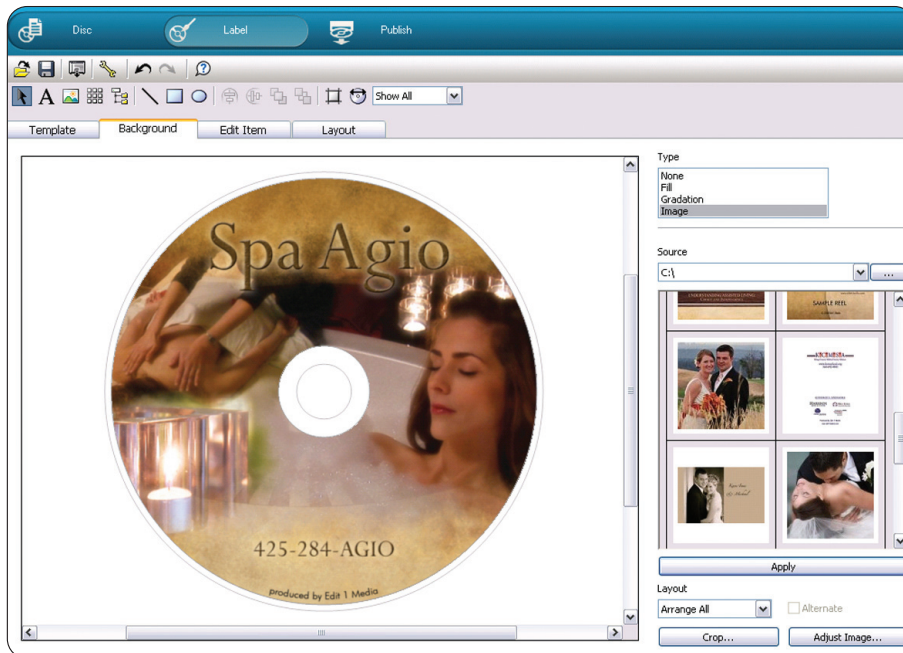
Setting up the printer is a simple process that requires installing the included Total Disc Maker software, connecting the USB cable, and powering on the unit. Because the PP-100 weighs 52 pounds, you'll need to make sure that you place it on a sturdy surface that can handle the weight.

The included disc stackers can hold up to 100 DVDs or CDs for hands-free operation. Another cool feature allows you to output short-run duplication jobs to the tray below without the need to open the unit while it is printing.

The Discproducer comes with six ink cartridges that easily push into place. The set of cartridges comes loaded with plenty of ink and is rated to print up to 1,000 discs. Cartridges run \$45 each, bringing the total cost of replacing the cartridges to \$270. This works out to be 27 cents per disc, which is less than the 45 cents per-disc cost associated with thermal printers. In comparison, the Epson R300 per-disc cost runs around 15 to 20 cents, making the Epson PP-100 only slightly higher in cost for ink. I'm happy to report that the disc-feed tray for the printer works flawlessly. This is a professional, well-built product that should prove to be very reliable down the road.

as our business has grown, the need for larger duplication orders from our corporate clients has increased. I wasn't happy with the print quality from the older automated printing and duplication system we'd been using in our studio and was looking for a more reliable solution. That is why I was happy to receive the Epson PP-100 Discproducer for review.

The PP-100 is a super-cool printer that doubles as a duplicator, an all-in-one system that is worth the investment (street price \$2,995). You can easily duplicate and print up to 100 discs unattended on glossy or matte media. Six-color printing technology allows you to print exceptional-quality labels that rival discs put out by the



The Windows-only Total Disc Maker software bundled with the Discproducer is simple and straightforward to use, and the main interface will seem familiar to users who have used products like Nero.

option of writing the data, printing just the label, or both. Because the PP-100 comes with two DVD burners, selecting both drives during burning will really speed up the print job.

MONITORING THE PRODUCTION JOB

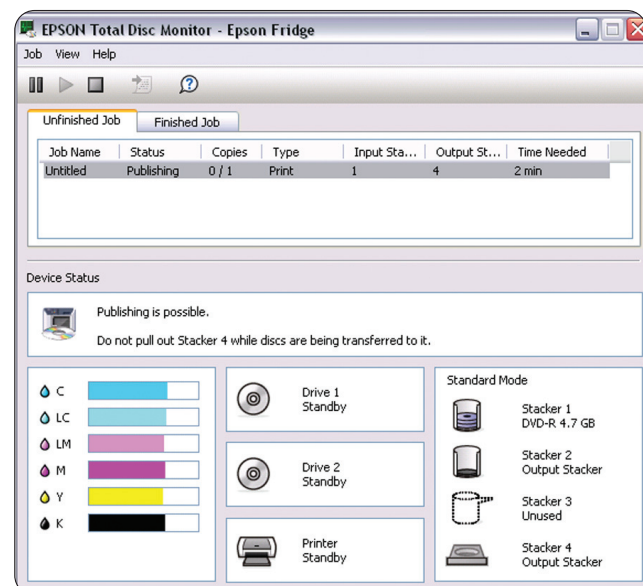
Another great feature of the printer is the Epson Total Disc Monitoring software. The software automatically pops

up once you begin publishing a job and gives you vital information about the printer and duplicator status. It lets you know when your discs are getting low as well as monitoring ink levels. It will even estimate the number of discs you can print based on the level of ink remaining in the cartridge.

USING THE SOFTWARE

The Total Disc Maker software that ships with the unit is simple and straightforward to use. Currently, it only supports Windows, although Intel Mac users running Windows via Bootcamp should be able to use it. Similar to burning a disc in Nero, you have the option of creating a Data DVD, Data CD, Music CD, Music & Data CD, Video CD, or a Copy of a DVD or CD. The PP-100 will use your existing DVD drive in your computer as your source drive for making straight copies. You can create a label from the professional templates provided or use your own background image. BMP or JPEG images can be imported, but unfortunately the software does not support Photoshop (PSD) files. Text is easy to add and manipulate with basic drawing tools as well as the ability to add thumbnail images to your disc.

Once the disc design is complete, you can then move on to the Publish button. From here, you have the



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Here are two samples of the Discproducer's print quality.

The software will also tell you the status of the DVD burners, including when the printer is printing discs. You can also see what jobs are pending and keep tabs on the jobs that are completed.

NOTABLE FEATURES

The Discproducer allows you to save each job with its own filename. The next time the software is loaded, you will see previously saved jobs available to open. This is a real timesaver if you have reorders for past duplications.

The robotic arm is equipped with an AcuGrip mechanism that ensures the robotic arm reliably grabs only one disc, and it has a cool LED light that shines down to let you know what it's doing. It even has the ability to separate discs that are stuck together when picking up the disc from the stack.

Because the Discproducer uses six separate ink cartridges, you need to replace only the ones that are empty.

The average speed for printing a full-color disc without burning is little more than a minute. Speeds for duplication will vary on the type of media used, but I've produced 30 discs in less than 45 minutes.

Since the discs are stored inside the unit, they remain free from fingerprints and dust. Single-run discs are

quick to remove and only require you to slide out the tray on the bottom to retrieve the disc.

CONCLUSION

The Discproducer is an innovative, high-quality solution that makes duplication and printing easier than ever with its dependable, automated operation for disc production work. Whether you want to use it for an individual disc or a batch job, its high reliability, superb print quality, and cost-effectiveness make it the ideal system for videographers who are looking for an all-in-one solution for unattended disc production.

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Spotlight

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