Primera DP-XRn

Network disc duplication has never been easier, with Primera delivering a classy solution

Primera has always specialised in CD/DVD duplication systems and its latest model claims to make this process as simple as printing to a network printer. The DP-XRn certainly looks the business, as this large desktop chassis combines dual input bins, allowing it to record and print on both CDs and DVDs – a feature Primera claims makes this model unique.

At its foundation is a PC running XP Embedded and the system is designed to be headless, as users access it via the network using Primera's PTPublisher software. You can add a keyboard, mouse and monitor for local management or access it remotely over RDP. The unit combines a standard CD/DVD burner and 4,800dpi inkjet printer, and uses a motorised picker arm to place discs in the drive or the printer tray.

Installation is swift, as you follow the instructions on the backlit LCD panel, which also shows the percentage remaining in both colour and black ink cartridges. A simple menu provides access to jobs archived on the system and tools for print-head cleaning and system calibration. For remote management, you use the Administrator Utility, where you can restrict access to specified systems and users. Email notifications can be issued to selected users when each input bin has a specified number of blanks remaining, and you can designate the CD and DVD media type in each one.

PTPublisher provides a one-stop shop for burning media in which you create data and audio projects, add files and send them to the DP-XRn. It's simple to use and provides plenty of wizards. Currently, the Copy DVD and Copy Project functions aren't supported by the DP-XRn, but Primera insists these will be available in future free firmware upgrades.

The project includes disc labelling, which comes courtesy of Primera's SureThing label design software. This can be accessed directly from your project and it allows free reign on what text or graphics you want on your discs. It can also be run locally, allowing you to maintain label design libraries. We used Windows Vista Ultimate for testing and encountered one error where PTPublisher terminated if you used the file search tool. We advised Primera, which agreed to the fault and stated this would be fixed in the next release.

Disc creation is an enjoyable affair and we started by creating a new Windows Server 2008 RC0 boot disc with a few snazzy graphics on the label. After PTPublisher copied the 1.8GB of data from our source DVD to the DP-XRn the disc was burned and printed, dropping into the output bin in 16 minutes. With the source data now stored locally, multiple copies were much quicker, with each subsequent DVD taking around five minutes apiece. The printed results on budget-priced DVD blanks were excellent, but it's worth noting that a range of media with toughened and water-resistant coatings is available, and these can also be laminated using Primera's Ascent systems.

The DP-XRn delivers a smoothly automated network disc publishing and printing solution that we found a pleasure to use. Businesses that want their optical media to look its best should put this product at the top of their list. **DAVE MITCHELL**

The dual input bins in the DP-XRn enable recording and printing of CDs and DVDs.

PERFORMANCE
★★★★☆

FEATURES & DESIGN
★★★★★

VALUE FOR MONEY
★★★★★

OVERALL
★★★★☆