

EcoDisc Poll Highlights UK's Ongoing Love for DVD over Download

LONDON, July 8, 2010 /PRNewswire/ -- EcoDisc, a leading provider of environmentally friendly optical media discs and covermounts, has revealed the results of its social media poll. It has found the public continues to hold strong affection for CDs and DVDs, despite the growing popularity of download as a means to receive content. While EcoDisc's social media survey highlighted convenience as the great benefit of download, almost 50 percent said they still preferred to receive everything on disc rather than download. The primary reason for this preference: 'I just like to have the physical disc'.

The industry estimates global demand for DVDs will remain at around eight billion discs[1] in 2010, which is gradually declining compared to previous years, but at a slower rate than originally predicted. While many of these are used for distributing music or films, a large number are used by companies simply wanting to get content and information into the hands of the public in the most convenient and cost-effective manner.

"It's a combination of a fairly basic psychological connection with the physical object as well as the flexibility and convenience of an optical disc," said Ray Wheeler, sales and marketing director for EcoDisc, a new sustainable and environmentally friendly format for DVD production. "Newspapers and magazines report a 20 percent increase in sales when they put a DVD on the front cover, while putting a link to a download doesn't have anything like the same effect. It's that sense of getting something for your money."

Survey respondents agreed, with 67 percent admitting they had purchased a newspaper or magazine just because it had a free covermount disc on the cover.

"From an industry perspective, it is the flexibility and convenience that has never been improved on since the DVD was first introduced in 1993," adds Wheeler. "The biggest mobile phone manufacturers will distribute 100 million discs this year alone as a means to share instructions and drivers for their devices. Those manufacturers would probably prefer to do everything by download but the challenge is how to get the new customer to your Website to get those downloads. A disc bridges that gap between the physical and the online and makes sure customers are using the most up-to-date software. It's the same reason why marketing departments often distribute discs containing marketing collateral. They want you online but they have to get you there first and discs achieve that. Almost everyone has a player at home and we are familiar with the format, so it works."

The challenge created by the continued dominance of the disc format is environmental sustainability. While a third of survey respondents admitted to having ten or more discs lying around in desk drawers, 85 percent were unaware that DVDs use polycarbonate, an oil-based derivative that is in short supply, and a similar number were unaware that toxic resins are used in bonding the two layers of the disc. Seven out of ten did not know that standard discs cannot be recycled.

"Even if you just look at it from the perspective of obtaining the raw materials, the continued demand for discs in their current format is unsustainable," said EcoDisc's Wheeler. "It's been a question-mark in the industry for a number of years but all previous attempts to solve that question created problems because the resulting disc wouldn't work in the players."

After significant investment in research and development, EcoDisc is the resulting solution and is now available in the UK.

While working across all standard disc-drives and DVD players, it uses 50 percent less polycarbonate, 50 percent less energy in production and removes toxic resins so that it is entirely recyclable. In addition it costs less than standard DVDs, meaning that companies can switch from standard DVD to EcoDisc without any negative impact on their ongoing operations.

"It's one of those sustainability issues where we had to fix the engine while the plane was still in the air," said Wheeler. "You couldn't just tell people to stop using discs until we solved the problem."

"When you think about the numbers of discs being distributed by media companies or consumer electronics companies, switching to EcoDisc can have an immediate positive impact on carbon reduction commitments and environmental policies," said Wheeler. "For that reason a lot of companies see it as a no-brainer. We've had immediate uptake from magazine publishers, marketing departments of various large corporate brands and some software companies. If we can get broad acceptance for the format, then it will mean we can sustain our ongoing love of the DVD."

The survey was conducted in June using Survey Monkey with distribution via Twitter and with 128 people responding.

[1] Future Source, 'Understanding and Solutions', 10/2008, predicts that DVD demand will fall from 8.38bn in 2008 to 6.2bn by 2012.

About EcoDisc

The EcoDisc DVD only consists of one layer of plastic (polycarbonate) instead of the two bonded layers of a conventional DVD. By using only half the polycarbonate, the EcoDisc DVD is not only thinner and lighter it also requires only half the energy in production. This means that producing an EcoDisc DVD emits 52% less carbon dioxide (CO₂) than producing a conventional DVD⁵. Because EcoDisc is only one layer, it requires no toxic bonder, which makes it fully recyclable. Additionally, as EcoDisc DVDs are only half the weight of conventional DVDs, they offer substantial CO₂ emission reductions in shipping and transportation.

The EcoDisc was developed by EcoDisc Technologies AG (EDT), a research and development company, which licences the technology, patents and manufacturing know-how to optical disc manufacturers around the world. A list of all licensed manufacturers and distributors can be found on the EcoDisc Website: <http://www.ecodisc.org>

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