

iVCD 1.0.5, by Mireth Technology

Posted: **30-Sep-2003**

4 out of 5 Mice



Vendor: [Mireth](#)

Reviewer: [Bob Whinnery](#)

Type:

COMMERCIAL

Class:

MULTIMEDIA

Description

This software creates Video CDs (VCDs) and Super Video CDs (SVCDs) from movie files, such as QuickTime ".mov" files. VCDs permit low-resolution, full-length movies to be played from a CD. SVCDs have, I believe, about twice the resolution of VCDs. VCDs can be played on VCD players, some DVD players, and computers with VCD-player software.

VCDs and SVCDs

In some areas of the world (Asia, for example), VCDs and SVCDs are the common method of viewing movies. Low-cost players are available in those markets. In China, DVDs are rare and VCDs are everywhere. I was interested in the Mireth software as a means of sending home videos to friends and relatives in Asia.

Domestically, VCDs might be used for kiosks or marketing displays. However, there probably is not a significant market niche in the developed world, since we have DVDs, QuickTime, and Windows options. The exception for home users would be for creating and viewing movies, but you don't have a DVD burner. Some domestic DVD players can play VCDs and SVCDs.

Requirements

Macintosh G3 or later

- Mac OS X 10.2
- CD-RW drive

Note that not all drives are currently supported, and Roxio's Toast may be required. According to Mireth, the CD-RW drives that are known to work are:

- HL-DT-ST RW/DVD GCC-41208
- LITE-ON LTR-52246S
- MATSHITA CD-RW CW-7121
- MATSHITA DVD-R UJ-815
- SONY ATAPI DVD RW DW-U10A
- SONY CD-RW CRX140E
- SONY CRX820E
- TOSHIBA DVD-ROM SD2002

The following CD-RW drives are known to require additional CD burning software (like Toast from www.roxio.com):

- PIONEER DVR-104 (A04)
- PIONEER DVR-103 (A03)
- USB Drives

Note from Mireth: If you don't see your drive on the list above, then try Apple's built-in Burn function, and send an email to support@mireth.com to let Mireth know if it works or not. Don't assume that because the PIONEER 103 and 104 drives do not work that other PIONEER drives will not work. You need to try the burn function with each model from each manufacturer.

Evaluation

Initially I used iVCD Version 1.0.1. This created a VCD that had the expected video, but sound that played at perhaps twice the natural rate for a period, went silent, and then

played again at twice the natural rate. I emailed Mireth's support desk, which responded within 30 minutes and suggested that I download version 1.0.5 to solve my problem. Version 1.0.5 fixed the problem, and iVCD worked as advertised.

Installation was a snap. Similarly, first use was very straight forward once I got version 1.0.5. The user screen displayed step by step instructions for creating a VCD which was very helpful.

I created several VCDs from QuickTime movies. Conversion is a slow process. I didn't measure the time, but a 10-minute movie might take 30 minutes to convert to VCD format before burning. There are a large number of calculations that have to be performed during the conversion process. The production process is displayed nicely in the iVCD window, and the resulting VCD was very good.

I wanted to play the VCD on my DVD player, but ran into the problem that my particular DVD player cannot read CD-R disks, and won't read most CD-RW brands. Therefore, I used Mireth's MacVCD to review the VCDs I created on my Mac, and they played fine.

For those with CD-RW drives that aren't supported by Apple's built-in burn functionality, I also created a VCD with Toast and confirmed that it played correctly with MacVCD.

Summary

iVCD is a simple product to use for creating VCDs as an alternative to DVDs. If you are looking to create VCDs, I suggest that you test drive the demo version of iVCD, create a disk, and determine that it plays on the device you want to play the VCD on. Note that some DVD players cannot play CD-R disks. Mine will recognize some brands of CD-R disks, but not others. This has nothing to do with VCDs, or Mireth's product. Mireth does have a VCD player

product that can be used to play VCD/SVCDs on a Mac (called MacVCD). All-in-all, the iVCD software functions quite well, creating DVD quality movies on a CDR. If you are interested in VCDs or SVCDs, I strongly recommended that you give iVCD a try.

Pros

- Attractive user interface
- Step-by-step instructions
- Reasonably priced at \$30
- VCDs allow you to put a DVD length movie on a standard CDR

Cons

- Not all CD-RW drives are supported
- If you are using Toast 5 Platinum, then you can create VCD's directly in Toast and do not need iVCD

Overall Rating

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