



Media Contact Information:
Jan Johnson
MultiPath Communications
T +1 714-633-4008
jan@multipathcom.com



Ecma International
Rue du Rhône 114
CH-1204 Geneva
T/F +41 22 849 6000/01

Archival quality test for optical discs

OSTA and Ecma Join Forces to Establish Industry-wide Optical Disc Archival Testing Standard

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Optical Storage Technology Association (OSTA) announced today that it has signed an agreement with Ecma International to work together to finalize an industry-wide archival-grade optical disc specification. The purpose of this initiative is to address end user needs calling for established practices in media archive life testing and classification. The final goal is the issuance of an ISO standard available to industry for broad implementation.

Since its formation in Sept. 2005, OSTA's Optical Disc Archival Testing (ODAT) Committee has worked with a multi-national group of industry experts to develop a draft specification for an archival standard. The ODAT Committee is composed of global manufacturers of 120mm optical media and drives, as well as university and government members. Participating manufacturers include Fuji, Imation, MAM-A Inc., Maxell, Memorex, Panasonic (Matsushita Electric), Ricoh, Sony, TDK, Toshiba, and Verbatim. The committee has also received support from other industry organizations, including Japan's CDs21 and the Digital Content Association of Japan (DCAJ), and has held seminars and working sessions in the U.S. and Japan. Technical editing of the specification is led by Fred Byers of the US government's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) organization.

The **ODAT Committee's** defined charter is to develop optical media archival test methodology and promote its implementation. Two working groups have addressed the technical and business promotion aspects of the archive test specification. Recently, the technical working group completed a first Ecma draft of the proposed archival test standard. The project was unanimously accepted by the Ecma TC31 committee at its recent meeting in Sapporo, Japan in late June. Further processing will take place under its charter.

Ecma is the inventor and main practitioner of the concept of "fast tracking" of specifications drafted in international standards format through the process in Global Standards Bodies such as the ISO. "Since 1986, when fast tracking was introduced to

ISO, over 75 percent of the total of about 300 fast-tracked standards have been managed through Ecma," said **Jan van den Beld, Ecma Secretary General**.

"Under the OSTA organization, we brought together various independent groups that were working on similar ideas, in order to reach consensus on test methodology. Now we are partnering with Ecma in order to leverage their expertise in the creation of broadly adopted international standards," said Chris Smith, chairman of OSTA's ODAT Committee, general manager of Sony Corporation's Data Media Business Development Center in Boulder, CO, and active member of Ecma TC31 that will develop the international standard. The anticipated end result is increased user awareness of archival quality of optical media as a critical purchase parameter," explained Smith. "This will enhance customers' ability to make informed purchases appropriate to their application needs by providing a standardized evaluation result indicator. This product differentiation is intended to eliminate any guesswork that takes place when deciding which media to use when long life of data is a desirable attribute."

"From consumers who want to protect treasured photos and important school, business or tax records to commercial users who must comply with an increasing array of regulations requiring archival of correspondence, email and financial records, we believe there is a demand for a reliable optical disc archive standard rated for a longer life for storing important files on CDs and DVDs," said **David Bunzel**, president of the **Optical Storage Technology Association**.

About the Optical Storage Technology Association (OSTA)

The Optical Storage Technology Association (OSTA) was incorporated as an international trade association in 1992 to promote the use of recordable optical technologies and products. The organization's membership includes optical product manufacturers and resellers from three continents, representing more than 85 percent of worldwide writable optical product shipments. They work to shape the future of the industry through regular meetings of DVD Compatibility, Commercial Optical Storage Applications (COSA), MPV, ODAT and UDF committees. Interested companies worldwide are invited to join the organization and participate in its programs by contacting an OSTA representative at (408) 253-3695, by fax at (408) 253-9938, or by addressing its Web site at <http://www.osta.org>.

About Ecma International

Since its inception in 1961, Ecma International (Ecma) has developed standards for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Consumer Electronics (CE). Ecma is a non-profit industry association of technology developers, vendors and users. Experts from industry and other organizations work together at Ecma to develop standards. Ecma submits its work for approval as ISO, IEC, ISO/IEC and ETSI standards and is the inventor and main practitioner of "fast tracking" of specifications through the standardisation process in International Standards Organisations (ISOs) such as the ISO and the IEC. Publications can be downloaded free of charge from <http://www.ecma-international.org/>

Contacts

Industry contact

Jan W. van den Beld
Ecma Secretary-General
jan@ecma-international.org

Press contact

Christa Rosatzin-Strobel
Ecma Media Relations
media@ecma-international.org