

SACD (Super Audio CD), MP3 and possibly others. I have found that MP3 files play from a CD but usually do not from a DVD. (Actually, it's even more complicated than I've indicated. A good reference on DVD-A is the *DiscWelder Chrome II* User Manual.)

Incidentally, SACD does not use PCM files and is totally different from a "Red Book" CD. As I mentioned above, it is DVD-A that is the next step up in music CDs. DVD-A is technically superior to SACD but it won't be the first time that better performance has lost out to advertising hype and product availability.

There are now several computer programs that can write audio to DVD. Some support the DVD-A specifications and some do not. I'll cover several of them in order of increasing price and give you my impressions and recommendations as a result of having used the full program or a demo. The first three are in alphabetically order since the price is virtually the same.

Disc Welder Bronze. \$99. Supports the DVD-A Specifications. You can download a demo and a copy of the User Manual from:

<http://www.discwelder.com>. File name is discWelderBronzeDemo.exe, file size: 7.6 MB.

The User Manual is Bronze.pdf and it's file size is 2.8 MB.

The primary problem with this program is that it supports only one group and 99 files within that group. What this means is only 99 individual tracks (selections or songs) that can be named. For popular music in 2-channel stereo this results in wasting about half the space on a DVD although for classical music in stereo or surround sound it may be quite acceptable. (And personally I don't like the type of copy protection they use on all the "Disc Welder" products so check it out before you buy.)

This "entry level" software does not support video menus to make song selections so it would play as a "long" CD. This is not necessarily a problem, just something to take into consideration.

I added these comments on 2 July 2007.

In spite of the reservations I mentioned above, I bought a copy of *Bronze* and it works very nicely. It's easy to make a "long CD" that will play on any player that supports DVD-A. Unfortunately, I have found that many new, inexpensive (under \$200) players don't provide this support. Still, if you want three to four hours of uninterrupted music, this is a good way to go.

Nero 7 Ultra Edition. \$80. download, \$100 boxed version. Does not support the DVD-A Specifications. You can download a demo and the User Manuals (and Help files) from:

<http://www.nero.com>. File name is Nero-7.0.1.2_eng_yt.exe, file size 105 MB (yes, it's rather large!)

Nero 7 supports recording wma, acc, mp3 and mp4 files to DVD. These are all compressed formats and do not have the quality of uncompressed wav files so this software may not be of too much interest to audiophiles. Also, none of these formats will play on any of my CD/DVD players – I tried. However, Nero 7 does a good job of making audio CDs and it's very easy to use.