

A 'stone-like' optical disc that lasts for millennia

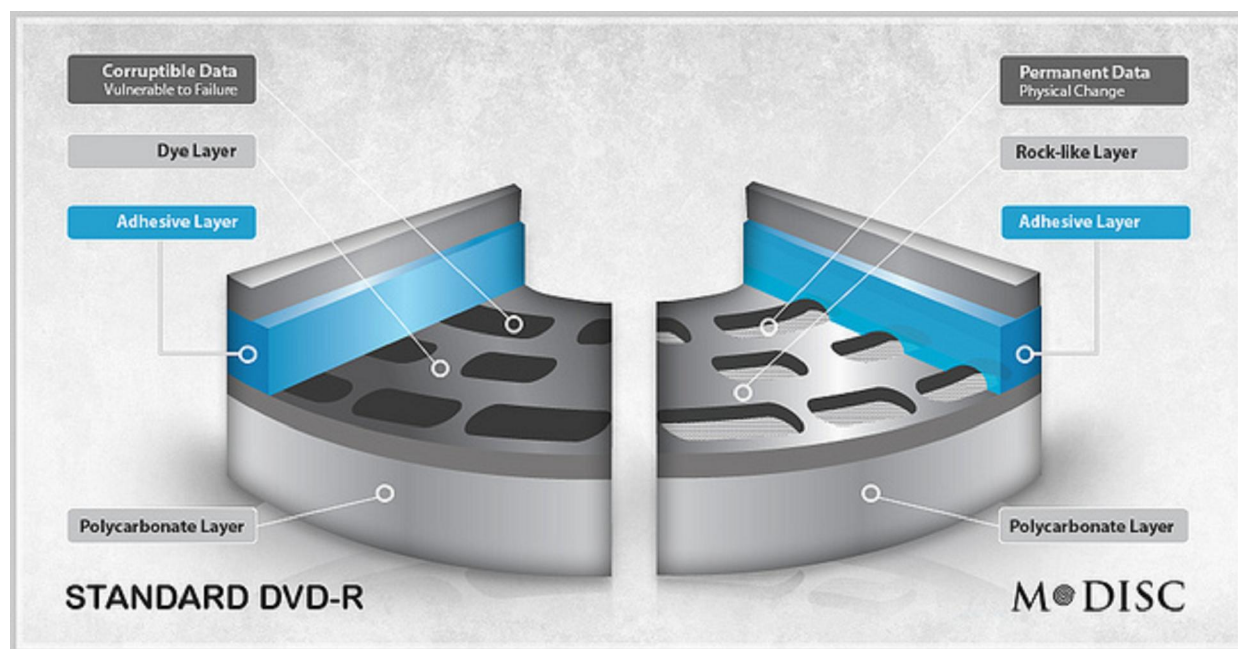
By Chris Jablonski | August 9, 2011, 11:16am PDT

Summary: With a belief that there's a future in optical drives, start-up Millenniata and LG have partnered to commercialize a disc that lasts 'forever.'

Start-up Millenniata and Hitachi-LG have teamed up to create a new optical disc along with a read/write player that will store any data — movies, photos, and music — forever. The disc is compatible with any current DVD or Blu-ray player.

Millenniata calls the product the M-Disc, and claims that it “cannot be overwritten, erased, or corrupted by natural processes.” In fact, if you were so inclined, you can dip it in liquid nitrogen and then boiling water without harming it (See video).

The M-Disc platters resemble typical DVDs and Blu-ray discs in that they are made up of multiple layers of material sans a reflective or dye layer. During the recording process, a laser “etches” permanent pits onto a proprietary rock-like data layer using higher temperatures and as much as five times more energy than ordinary optical discs.



Credit: Millenniata, Inc.

A U.S. Department of Defense study found the resiliency of the product to be greater as compared to other leading optical disc competitors.

The platters can be read on any machine that can read a DVD, however, Millenniata's machine is required to write it. Currently, the discs can store about the same amount of data as a DVD (4.7GB) but only write at 4x or roughly half the speed of today's DVD players. Plans to ramp up recording speed are underway.

Millenniata will target consumers first when it launches the M-Disc read-write player in early October. After that, the company plans to make a foothold in the long-term data archive market as an alternative to cloud and other storage and backup technologies.