

# BUSINESS SERVICES

## World's Largest Privately Held Software Publisher Depends on Rimage Disc Publishing for the Production Edge

**Customer**  
SAS

**Challenge**  
Cost Effective  
Distribution of  
Customized Business  
Analytics Software

**Solution**

- Eleven Producer disc publishing systems
- Everest® Thermal Printer
- Producer Software Suite

SAS is the largest privately held software firm in the world. At more than 40,000 business, government and university sites, SAS business intelligence software provides the enterprise intelligence edge. SAS software solutions empower firms worldwide to manage and gain insights from vast amounts of data, resulting in faster, more accurate business decisions, more profitable relationships with customers and suppliers, compliance with governmental regulations, research breakthroughs, and better products. At SAS world headquarters in Cary, N.C., 17 members of the SAS data center's technical staff depend on the reliability and quality of Rimage Producer disc publishing systems to meet the company's high-volume software delivery challenges.



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Ken Howell, Senior Systems Developer, SAS

### The Challenge

SAS publishes thousands of discs containing its software each day. To ensure a quick response to customers around the world SAS has a highly efficient distribution process, which creates pressures on the technical staff to meet deadlines for urgent jobs. “When a customer places their order, they want their media today,” said Ken Howell, principal systems developer for SAS. Not only do the discs have to be created quickly, they need to be professional looking. “Years ago, when we first began producing CDs, the labels were created on a laser printer,” explained Howell. “Operators had to apply them to the CD-ROM by hand. If they weren’t exactly centered, you could have an out-of-balance CD, which could cause problems in readers. We did try other vendors’ robotics, but nobody has been as reliable as Rimage.”

### The Solution

Howell’s department, which has used Rimage disc printers since 1995, began using the publishing system in 1999. Today, the company has 11 Producer systems continuously working—seven days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year—allowing SAS to deliver professionally labeled CDs and DVDs to customers with speed, accuracy, and ease. Rimage’s Producer systems allow

SAS to roll two essential processes— writing the software to the disc and printing and applying the label—into one simple step. “Rimage technology allows us to provide a quick and accurate turnaround on a variety of large and custom jobs,” said Howell. In the past year, SAS produced more than 500,000 discs using Rimage Producer systems.

## The Results

### Quality Control and Speed

The Producer software’s unique architecture includes a patented datastreaming feature that enables the publishing system to receive multiple data streams from the SAS network. Unique discs are continuously recorded while data for subsequent jobs is prepared, staged and waiting in queue for the next available publisher. “We may run one image (the software plus its respective label) on one Rimage publisher and run another image on a different Rimage publisher. This allows us to produce all the media for one customer a lot faster and a lot more efficiently,” said Brenda Pittman, group manager of computer operations.

Howell notes that the in-house CD and DVD printing capability is significantly faster than working with an outside printing operation. “Conventional CD publishing involves a lot of back-and-forth with a piece of media to make sure that it’s correct,” said Howell. “With Rimage equipment on site, we can burn test copies in-house, get approval from quality control, and then turn around and start shipping the product very quickly.” This speed is valuable when a software update is issued, as well. Changes can be integrated immediately and discs produced and shipped with speed.

### Durable, Photo-Realistic Labeling

SAS is particularly satisfied with the durable, photo-realistic labeling that is a hallmark of Rimage print technology. Rimage’s innovative thermal retransfer technology enables SAS to create permanent, high-resolution prints bonded directly to the surface of a disc. The resulting print is professional looking and virtually indestructible—impervious to water, scratches and dirt. “Another impressive thing is that Rimage guarantees the media, so if you have writing problems on a piece of media or it fails to verify, they’ll actually replace that disc,” noted Howell.

### Internal and External Responsiveness

“We have a certain time of day reserved to run jobs that must be delivered to distribution that day for afternoon or overnight shipping,” said Dabrian Wilson, computer operations specialist. With the Rimage systems, SAS can easily turn around a large publishing run in 24-to-48 hours. “Often our distribution center will contact me and ask, ‘What can we get from you tonight?’” said shift supervisor, Regita Jones. The large number of Rimage publishers in place has made SAS even more responsive to requests. “Where once we could produce 1,000 to 1,200 pieces a night, now we are able to produce 2,500 to 3,000 a night. This is very important to both the distribution center and our department.” With Rimage publishers at work, the job gets done—beautifully, accurately and quickly.

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Ken Howell, Senior Systems Developer, SAS

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