

Transcript of the video Labelling CDs

Video length: 00:02:03

Joe Iraci, Senior Conservation Scientist: “When recording information onto a CD, the contents are often identified with an adhesive label. However, the use of adhesive labels on a disc is not recommended for a couple of reasons.

First, adhesive labels can lead to a disc becoming unbalanced and likely unreadable in a high spinning drive.”

[Text on screen: Cross-section of a CD: the label; protective coating; metal reflective layer and polycarbonate base.]

Joe Iraci: “Second, these labels can also lead to delamination of the thin disc layers, which reside close to the top surface of a CD.

These layers are essential to the functioning of the disc and damage is not repairable.

To simulate the problem caused by adhesive labels and to illustrate the fragility of the top of a CD, we can use the duct tape test. The test is simple. A piece of duct tape is applied to the top surface of the CD and then pulled off.

For some CDs, nothing will occur. For others, where the manufacturing may not be as good, the top layers of the CD will delaminate from the disc leading to loss of the disc.

In a real life sample, here we have a recordable CD in which the contents have been identified with an adhesive label. It is clearly visible that over time and with the normal day-to-day fluctuations that occur in temperature and relative humidity, the label has delaminated the disc layers of the CD as in the demonstration with the duct tape. The disc is obviously ruined and not repairable.

Ideally, optical discs should be labelled by writing in the hub area of the disc with a water-based permanent marker because there is no data in this location.

This labelling method will ensure the layers within the disc are not damaged and no information is lost.”

[Canadian Conservation Institute signature and Canada wordmark]