DARTECH, Inc
DART CD-Recorder 4.0
By Dale Swafford, Alamo PC

Always on the lookout for a better music CD recorder program led me to explore the DART CD-Recorder 4.0 at <www.dartpro.com/products/download/trycdrec4.asp> for a free, full function, 30 day trial download (6.2 MB). This is one sweet program. Similar in function to Adaptec's Spin Doctor, but so much better. This program has an organized, non-intimidating, professional look and feel rarely found in burner software. After a painless Windows setup, double click the Dart icon on the desktop to get the Main Screen. Click Help - Guided Tour -Play all on the Menubar for a really excellent 20 minute overview of the entire program and procedures. I wish every program on my computer had this straight-ahead, intuitive, and thorough introduction. It really flattens the ol' learnen curve. I'm happy to see, finally, someone got it right. For a beginner, or a guru, you can be ripping and messaging your music mo' ricki-ticki without the usual frustration associated with new burner software.

The opening screen (**Figure 1**) has a menu bar, a tool bar with huge buttons, a file panel with two windows to acquire and manage the music files, and a playlist manager panel to organize and message the music files with The Producer audio tool kit before the burn.

With DART CD-Recorder 4.0 you can: capture music from CDs, or any analog source plugged into your sound card, or WAV, MIDI and MP3 files from your hard disk; convert MP3 and MIDI files to wav files; use DART's Digital Audio Restoration Technology to clean and improve your sound files prior to burning; shape your music files with the 9 band equalizer, add fade in/out, and normalize the volume of all the tracks; unpack (separate) multiple music tracks ripped as one track; and download the song titles for CD tracks from the CD Data Base.

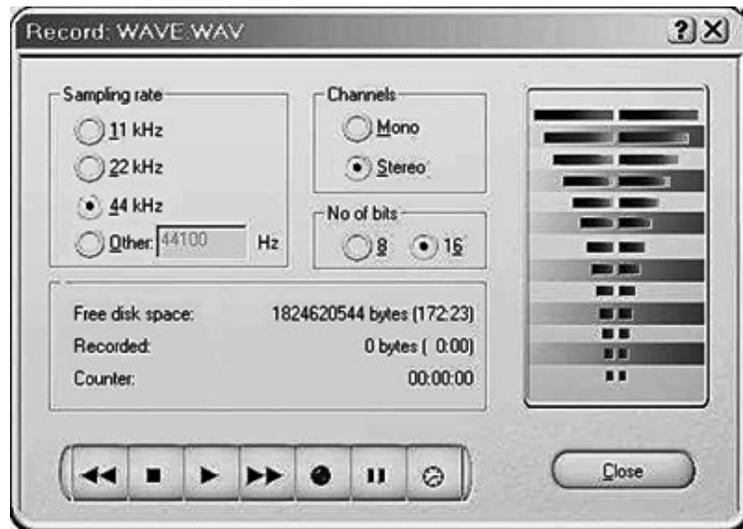To set up for an analog source, right click the folder in the File

Figure 2

Panel where you want to create a subfolder to store the music files. Click the Record button (**Figure 2**), name the music file, and click save. Click Pause to set the record level. Cue the record track and hit record. You can record an entire record side or tape as one track, and use Unpack to separate the song tracks. Play the new tracks and use the DirectX filters to improve the quality. Then drag & drop your selected tracks to the Playlist panel. Click the Producer button (**Figure 3**)to declick, dehiss, equalize, fade-in, or normalize any or all the selections on the playlist. When you have the playlist all squared away, click the Record button. Select your recorder, the desired burn speed, and my favorite feature, "Simulate disk creation". You might remember from my Nero review how I raved about simulate. It will simulate the entire burn process without messing-up the blank CD, and if successful, will then burn the CD. Except for a power failure or act of God, burning coasters should become nothing more than a distant bad memory. It's the next best thing to Burn Proof (your burner must support it out of the box, I think). Click Write and your custom CD is on the way. After the burn, click List - Print on the menu bar and print an insert of the song titles for the jewel case (no disc cover in the version I have).

The straight skinny — The simulate feature alone makes this very serious software indeed, but these tired old ears are telling me that the CDs I've burned with DART are richer, cleaner, better sounding than any software I've worked with yet (and I've looked at a bunch lately). You really need to download it and check it out for yourself.

The price is $50. to unlock the download after 30 days, or $50. plus S & H for a CD, or $25. if already a registered DART user.

System requirements: Windows 95/98/ME/NT/2000; 233 MHz + CPU; Windows compatible sound card connected to a preamp out on a stereo set; 16 MB RAM +; a fast hard disk with 1.2GB temporary work space and 6.2 MB for the program; SCSI or EIDE CD recorder.
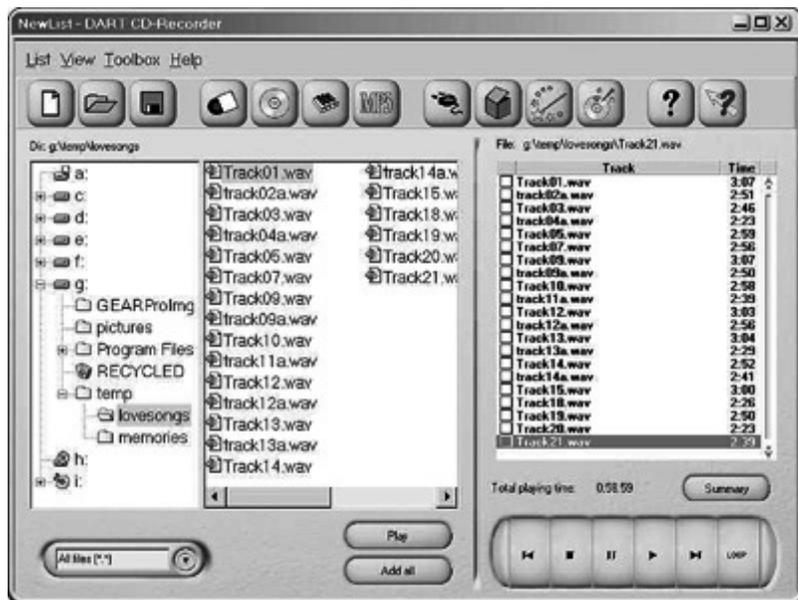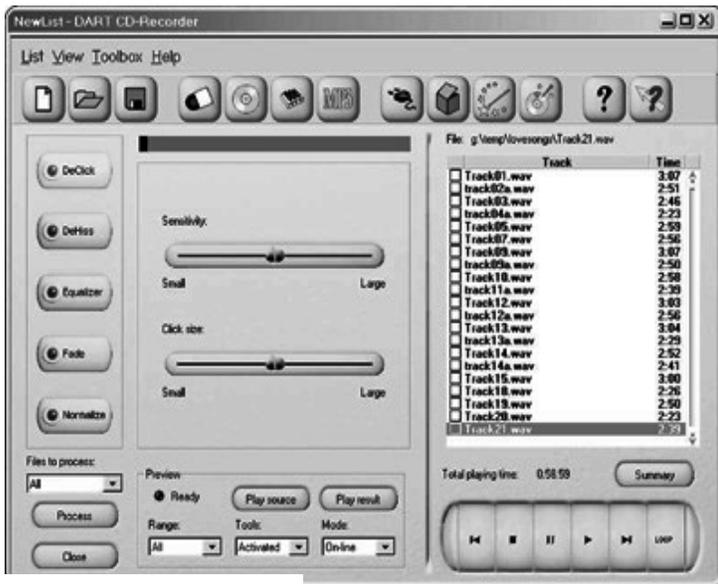
Figure 1

Figure 3

DARTECH has some other interesting audio software products:

- **DART PRO 98** - For the serious audiophile desiring to restore and save music to CD.

-

- **DART Karaoke Studio** - For the seriously karaoke inclined who want to remove a pop singer's voice from a tune and record their own in its place to CD. This does it all. Works with MP3s too.

Dale Swafford was born in California, grew-up in over 30 years in the Army, Retired to Texas for the good life and to try to comprehend the magic in computers. Yeah right. Comments and questions to dales65@worldnet.att.net].