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Introducing SureThing CD Labeler

Welcome to SureThing CD Labeler—intelligent labeling software that gives you the tools to create attractive labels quickly and efficiently.

You can use SureThing CD Labeler to create any type of CD label. Our SmartDesign system is perfect for music CDs, interactive multimedia titles, PhotoCDs, or even simple backups, for example. It doesn’t matter whether you’re a novice designer or an art director, SureThing CD Labeler gives you ease of use and professional results at the same time. SmartDesigns are capable of building just about any type of layout simply by clicking your choices. You can also modify them or even build your own layouts from scratch.

There’s no need to worry about measurements or lining things up properly because SureThing CD Labeler handles that for you automatically. It’s pre-configured to work with many popular label stocks, leaving you free to be creative and focus on your designs.

SureThing CD Labeler also comes with a large collection of backgrounds, textures and clipart you can use in your labels and designs, and of course you can also incorporate your existing images and artwork into any label design.

You can even merge information from CD playlists, a database or CSV file, and print sets of labels, or numbered series.

About this manual

The SureThing CD Labeler User Guide provides the essential information you need to get up and running as quickly as possible. The goal of this manual is to give you a good overview of the program’s features and functionality. It’s not so much a command reference as it is a general reference. The program’s built-in Help system is the best place to find typical command reference information. The Help system also contains a number of useful mini-tutorials, tips and techniques for using SureThing.

We assume you have a basic working knowledge of your computer and operating system, including how to choose menu commands, operate the mouse, select text, and work with files (opening, closing and saving, for example).

System requirements

Here are the bare bone requirements needed to run SureThing:

- PC with 486 or faster processor
- Windows 95, 98, ME, 2000 or XP
- 16 MB RAM (64 MB for 2000/XP)
- 64 MB of available hard disk space
- Internet Explorer 5.0 or later
- Inkjet or Laser printer recommended
- Windows Media Player 9 recommended
Installing SureThing

This section describes how to install the SureThing CD Labeler software on your computer.

We recommend that you quit all currently running programs. Doing so frees up memory and resources and minimizes the chance of installation errors.

1 Insert the SureThing installation CD into your CD-ROM drive. The Autorun will attempt to launch the installation program automatically. If you have Autorun turned off, go to step #2.

2 Double-click the file named Setup.exe.

This launches the installation that will walk you through the process of installing SureThing CD Labeler on your hard disk. If Auto-run is turned on, the Setup program will load automatically when you insert the SureThing CD.

Starting SureThing

Double-click the SureThing icon on the desktop, or launch it from the Start menu (look under Programs > SureThing).

If this is the first time you’ve started SureThing, the “SureThing First Time Wizard” appears. If this is not the first time you’ve started SureThing, depending on how you’ve configured your startup options (choose the Program Options command under the Tools menu), you may or may not see this wizard. If it doesn’t appear automatically, choose the New command from the File menu.

Registration

Please take a moment to register SureThing. Registering the software entitles you to technical support as well notification of program updates and upgrades. To register the software choose Register SureThing from the Help menu to go directly to our registration web page. If you don’t have access to the Internet, you can register by calling MicroVision at 800-998-4555, or 760-438-7781.

Getting Help

SureThing CD Labeler has a complete help system accessible anytime the program is running. Much of the help is context-sensitive. In other words, it will jump directly to the specific topic related to the feature or command you are working with. When no specific feature or command is detected, choosing Help takes you to the help system’s index or topic list. The Help system also contains a number of helpful tutorials, tips and techniques.

To access help:

• Press the F1 key any time you are using SureThing CD Labeler, or choose the Contents command from the Help menu.

• In many dialog boxes you can press a Help button, which opens the help topic for that dialog box (and even if you don’t see a Help button in a dialog box, you can still press F1).
**Technical Support**

If you have a question or problem with SureThing CD Labeler that you cannot adequately answer or solve using the manual or help system, technical support is available from MicroVision Development.

**SureThing on the Web**

If you have access to the Internet, this is definitely the best option. Our website is kept current with answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), program updates and patches, and a user-to-user support forum. Visit our website at www.surething.com

You can access our website directly from SureThing’s Help menu. Options are available to register the software, order label supplies, and check for software updates. Choose *SureThing on the Web* from the Help menu at any time to automatically launch your web browser and go to our site.

**Online support**

Online support, including e-mail, FAQs and user-to-user forums are just a click away. Set your web browser to the following URL and follow the links to our support section:

www.surething.com

**Fax or mail support**

You can mail or fax questions to us at the following:

MicroVision Development
P.O. Box 130023
Carlsbad, CA 92009

Fax line: 760-438-7406

**Telephone support**

You can also phone us directly and speak with a technical support representative. Telephone support is available Monday–Friday 9:00am–4:30pm Pacific time.

Support line: 760-438-0305
The SureThing Environment

The SureThing environment is not too different from what you're already familiar with in other Windows applications. It includes a menu bar at the top of the screen, the tabbed label window (the number of tabs depends on the brand of label you are using), and a collection of tools for creating and editing elements such as label text, text effects, backgrounds, images, borders, etc.

At the bottom of the screen are buttons you click to cycle through the many Smart-Design variations.

* Speed Tools are turned off by default, but you can turn them on by choosing View Options from the View menu.
Panels

The collapsible panels along the left side of the window provide shortcuts to commonly performed tasks such as selecting backgrounds, inserting symbols, images and text effects, and working with Playlists.

Click this button to expand a panel, displaying additional commands and options.

Control Strip

Object tools list:
- Text Frame tool
- Picture tool
- Text Effects tool
- Line tool
- Rectangle tool
- Round-Corner Rectangle tool
- Ellipse tool
- Insert OLE Object tool
- Text tool
- Object selection tool
- Rotate tool
- Transparency tool
- Crop Picture tool

Font menu
Font size menu
Font color menu
Bold, Italic, Underline options
Text alignment menu
Vertical text alignment menu
Get contents from CD
Import a playlist, Manage playlists
Zoom In, Zoom Out
Fit in Window

Speed Tools (default set)

Calibrate Printer
Print, Printer Setup
Undo/Redo
Cut, Copy & Paste
Text Frame tool
Picture tool, Text Effect tool
Find, Replace
Find Next
Bring to Front
Send to Back
Select All, Set Options
Show Item
Set Merge File
Change Label Stocks
Template Info

Alignment Tools

Centers selected objects horizontally
Centers selected objects vertically
Left-aligns selected objects
Right-aligns selected objects
Top-aligns selected objects
Bottom-aligns selected objects
Center-aligns selected objects horizontally
Center-aligns selected objects vertically

Click this button on the Control strip to show or hide the Alignment Tools, which will appear on the right side of the window.
Label Design Area

The Label Design Area is where you create and edit your label. Each label block has its own tab at the top of the design area. The number of tabs displayed here depends on the label stock you are using (specific to each label sheet). The example above contains blocks for the CD label itself and a jewel case spine. By default, only the CD Label block is active – the others appear in parentheses. Clicking a tab activates the block, however, and also turns it on in the Print dialog box. If you don’t want to edit and/or print these blocks, you can turn them off again by choosing the Blocks command from View menu, and then selecting Show/Hide.

The area displayed in crosshatch indicates the area outside of the label. If you place an object, such as a text frame or logo, over the crosshatch, the portion that overlaps the crosshatch will not be displayed on screen. You can turn off crosshatching by toggling the Clip to Label command under the View menu. When Clip to Label is turned off, all objects are displayed regardless of their placement on the label.
**Label Blocks**

We mentioned the concept of “blocks” in the preceding section. A *block* is a group of identical labels found on a label sheet. For example, all of the CD labels on a sheet form a block of CD labels.

On many label sheets, you will find multiple blocks of labels on the same sheet where each block of labels is intended for a different purpose. For example, SureThing CD Labels include two blocks: CD labels for the CD itself and spine labels to go on the spine of a CD jewel case.

Consider the following example:

![A typical label sheet (SureThing CD Labels)](image)

The circles in the center are, of course, the CD labels. The first tab in the design window corresponds to this block. The thin rectangles to the left and right of the CD labels are jewel case spines, and correspond to the second tab in the design window.

**Turning blocks on and off**

You select the blocks you want to design and edit by clicking their corresponding tabs at the top of the design window. This turns on a block and activates its design window if it wasn’t already activated. You can turn off blocks using the Blocks > Show/Hide command under the View menu. When you turn a block off, its tab appears in parentheses, and it’s no longer displayed in blue in the Print dialog box, indicating that it will not be printed. If it is on, however, it will be printed.

In the following Print dialog box, you can tell that only the CD label block has been turned on, because it’s the only block that appears in blue. The blue areas indicate active blocks, letting you know which ones will be printed.

![Print dialog box](image)

After activating the other blocks, notice that they now also appear in blue:
The Actions Panel

The commands in the Actions panel (New, Open, Save, Print Design, etc.) perform the same function as commonly used File menu commands. They’re located here for your convenience.

The Add command makes a copy of the current design. You can then edit the copy, changing background, text, and layout, for example, leaving the original intact. It provides an easy way to produce a series of labels with different layouts and data. The Delete command deletes the current label. The << (previous) and >> (next) buttons let you navigate between labels. All four buttons correspond to the commands under the Designs menu.

(Note: The Add command is not the method you use to print multiple copies of a label – use the Print command and enter the number of copies you want to print for that – but rather a means to create different layouts, backgrounds, text, etc., within the same file.)

The Transfer Design command (new to version 4.0) provides a convenient way to transfer, say, a CD label design to a jewel case label.

Variation Bar

The Variation Bar lets you cycle through the various SmartDesigns available to a particular label stock. The first button, Background, lets you choose from various backgrounds for your label design. The second button controls the overall layout of your label. The third button contains font variations appropriate for each layout. Click the arrows to the left or right of a button to move back and forth between the variations, or click in the center of the button for a pop-up list.
Selecting Tools

You can select tools either from the object tools list on the Control Strip, or from the Tools menu. Some tools bring up dialog boxes (such as the Picture tool, for example), others change the shape of the cursor, indicating you can create an object based on the type of tool you selected. These are also known as the Object Tools.

Using Object Tools

The tools used to create objects work in the following fashion:

1. Select the tool (either from the tools list on the Control Strip, or from the Tools menu).
2. Click and continue holding down the mouse button at the location on the label where you want to create the object.
3. While still holding down the mouse button, drag the size you want the object to appear.
4. When you are satisfied with the size of the object, release the mouse and the object is created.

Most object tools work in the manner described above. Some tools display dialog boxes where you can open and insert files, enter text, etc. Some of these options are set in the Options dialog box (choose the Program Options command from the Tools menu), others are turned on and off under the View menu. These settings are saved each time you exit SureThing.

To change View Options:

• Choose View Options from the View menu to turn the display of selected items on or off. The commands under this sub-menu toggle on and off – a check mark next to an option indicates it’s on; select it again to turn it off.

To change settings in the Options dialog box:

1. Choose the Program Options command from the Tools menu (or click its button at the bottom of the Design bar).
2. Make any changes you see fit. Press Help for more information about a specific option.
3. Click OK to save your settings and close the Program Options dialog box.
You can also turn on or off the display of certain items by choosing View Options under the View menu.

**User Info Tab**
SureThing labels can be designed to use merge fields from databases or from the User Info tab of the Program Options dialog box. We encourage you to take a moment to fill this information out.

Fill in information in any of the fields that are appropriate for you. Leave any unnecessary fields blank (you should delete the sample text).

**Internet Tab**
The Internet tab of the Program Options dialog box lets you select an Internet Playlist Server, enable reading of CD Text, and configure a proxy server.

**Internet Playlist Server**
SureThing defaults to the server www2.freedb.org/cgi-bin/cddb.cgi, but you can change this to another server that provides playlist information. To change the program back to the default server, click the Use Default Server option.

The Connect to server without prompting option is primarily intended for users who are online all the time, such as those who use cable modem systems or LAN connections for example. If you connect to the Internet via a dial-up service, you may wish to be prompted.

**Enable Reading CD Text**
CD Text is a recent addition to the CD audio specification allowing disc and track related information to be added to standard audio CDs for playback on suitably equipped CD audio players.

If the Enable Reading CD Text option is turned on, SureThing will first attempt to read CD Text when gathering playlist information. If no CD Text is detected, SureThing will then search the Internet Playlist Server for information about the CD.

**Proxy Server**
Enter the address and port number of the proxy server you wish to connect to. If you're unsure about proxy server settings, chance are you are not using one.

**Appearance Tab**
The “Appearance” tab of the Program Options dialog box lets you personalize the look and feel of the SureThing interface.

**Zooming In and Out**
You can magnify or reduce your view of the design area using a couple of different methods. When you first open a file, or when you create a new one, the zoom level is set to fit within the current window. This means that the view size of the label is dependent upon the size of the window; increasing or decreasing the SureThing window zooms in or out of the label.

You can also set the view size to a specific zoom percentage, such as 50% to view it...
at half the actual size, or 300% to view it at three times the actual size, for example. When you choose a specific zoom level, the size of the current window does not affect the view size of the label.

**To zoom in:**

Do one of the following:

- Click the Zoom In button on the Control Strip. Each time you click it increases the zoom level.
- Press Ctrl+Plus key (numeric keypad)
- Choose Custom Zoom from the Zoom sub-menu under the View menu and select a zoom level from the list, or enter your own zoom level (must be between 30% and 400%).

**To zoom out:**

- Click the Zoom Out button on the Control Strip. Each time you click it decreases the zoom level.
- Press Ctrl+Minus key (on the numeric keypad)
- Choose Custom Zoom from the Zoom sub-menu under the View menu and select a zoom level from the list, or enter your own zoom level (must be between 30% and 400%).

You can return the zoom level to the actual print size or to the size of the current window by choosing *Actual Size* or *Zoom to fit in Window* from the Zoom sub-menu under the View menu. Clicking its button on the Control Strip does the same thing.
In this chapter, you’ll learn how to create a new SureThing label design, as well as the basics of editing, saving and printing labels. The information is often presented in a step-by-step format intended to give you a good overview of SureThing’s features and capabilities. To learn more about a specific command or feature, please refer to the Online Help.

Creating a New Label

The New Label wizard steps you through the process of selecting a label stock and specifying initial design characteristics.

Select a label stock

Select a product type and label stock from the lists on the right side of the wizard. The preview image should match your actual label stock. (*Note: Deluxe Edition users can change the stock later with the Change Label Stock command under the Edit menu.*) Click the Next button when you’re satisfied with your choice.

The next step of the wizard presents you with the option of using SmartDesign templates, or designing a blank label from scratch. We recommend you choose Use SmartDesigns.

Select an initial SmartDesign

There are three categories of SmartDesigns: Audio CD, Data CD and General Purpose. These categories determine the type of information, such as playlist track titles, that will be part of your design.

For most designs, a background is already selected for you. You may choose to select a different background or none at all.

This wizard lets you change the SmartDesign options for your label. You can change these options after you’ve created a label, so don’t worry about being locked into a particular SmartDesign or background.

Click the Finish button to complete the wizard and start editing your label. Or...
Click the Next button to add playlist information to your design if you are creating an Audio CD or Data CD design.

**Tip:** SureThing remembers all selections you’ve made in the wizard. If nothing changes for the next label you want to create, click Finish on the first screen of the wizard.

The Design window appears with the label you just created using the wizard, and is now ready for editing. The text you see is the initial sample text, and the background is the same one you selected in the wizard.

The Design Window

By default, all new labels start out with a SmartDesign for the product type and label stock you chose in the New Label wizard. SmartDesigns are templates that act like a design assistant. They provide a variety of layout choices, sample text, and font and point size suggestions.

The sample text included in a SmartDesign is intended to give you ideas about the type of information you might use in your design. You can, of course, enter anything you like in each field. Several of the SmartDesign layouts also include sample images to use as placeholders until you insert your own graphics, logos, etc.

If you chose Audio or Data CD in the Wizard, please refer to the section titled “Working with Playlists” later in this chapter.

**SmartDesign Basics**

SmartDesigns are interactive design templates built into SureThing. Unlike traditional templates that simply place a few objects on a page and leave the rest up to you, SmartDesigns allow you to modify many aspects of the design with a few mouse clicks. We call them ‘smart’ because they’re designed for specific label stocks by people with a good eye for graphic design. SmartDesigns let you put together attractive label designs without actually having to do anything more than click the mouse.

SmartDesigns display sample text, a variety of layouts, and a series of font selections for each layout. SmartDesigns don’t require you to draw and align objects (lines, rectangles, gradient fills, etc.) or format text. You simply browse the SmartDesign for a look that fits your taste and use it.

And of course, you can override or modify the SmartDesigns at any time; you’re not locked in to any designs.

SmartDesigns are manipulated using the Variation Bar at the bottom of the window.
The Variation Bar consists of menus for Background, Layout and Font variations.

To use SmartDesigns:

- Click the left or right arrows on one of the three Variation menus. You can also click in the middle of a Variation menu to display a pop-up list of choices.

Background menu with pop-up list

The first Variation menu controls the various backgrounds you can select. The second menu contains several pre-designed layouts appropriate for each of the backgrounds included with SureThing. The third menu lists font variations for each of the layouts from the second menu.

When you're satisfied with a background and layout, you're ready to move on to editing the various objects and text fields in the label.

SmartDesign Tip: Use the Variation Bar to find a background, layout and font that suits your tastes before customizing the label.

Working with Text

Text can take a couple of different forms in SureThing: text frames and text effects. Text in text frames behaves much like it would in a word processing program, for instance – with characters, paragraphs, tabs, indents, etc. Text effects, on the other hand, behave more like graphic objects – you can bend, warp, and twist the text, add drop shadows and fill patterns, etc. You'll want to know how to work with both types while designing your labels.

Editing Text Frames

Text in SureThing is displayed in boxes called text frames that function much like fields in a database. The sample text frames you see are a bit different from the ones you create yourself – the sample text is linked to the underlying SmartDesign to allow SureThing to automatically generate new layouts and font variations.

Selecting text in frames

When editing a SmartDesign layout, the text frames have been arranged so that replacing the sample text is like filling in fields in a database.

- Press the Tab key to move to the next text frame in the design.
- Press Shift-Tab to move to the previous text frame.
Maybe you’re wondering how to enter a tab in a text frame? Press Ctrl-Tab to insert a tab without moving the cursor to the next text frame.

Moving between text frames with the Tab key only works in text frames that were created with SmartDesigns. For new text frames you create yourself, you must click into the frame with the mouse. Pressing the Tab key in a manually-created text frame inserts a tab (like Ctrl-Tab).

The fields are sometimes logically grouped together. For example, an address may consist of a street address, city, state and zipcode fields. So that they can be moved as a unit, they are grouped together. When you select one with the Object Tool, you select the entire group.

To edit the text in a text frame:

1. Select the Text tool if it’s not already (it’s the one that looks like an I-beam). You can easily switch between the Text and Object tools by clicking the right mouse button and selecting the tool.

2. Click the mouse in the text field you want to edit. Either backspace over the default text, or press Ctrl-A to select all and hit the Del key.

3. Type the new text in the field.

A text frame group consisting of two text frames: the CD title and subtitle.

The fields in each SmartDesign reflect the typical use for the label, but you can use them any way you like. You can even turn off selected fields if you find them unnecessary by simply deleting them with the Del key or the Cut command under the Edit menu.

Adding a New Text Frame

In the preceding section you learned how to change the default text that appears in a SmartDesign template, but you can also add your own text frames. SureThing provides a couple of ways to do this.
To create a new text frame:

1. Click the “Text” panel located on the left of the window. Doing so displays a list of options:

   ![Text panel]

2. Choose Create Text Frame from the list. A text frame is drawn near the top of the CD label containing the default text, “Your Text Here.”

3. Enter the text you want to appear in the frame. You can enter as little or as much text as you want. Notice how the text frame expands (or shrinks) to accommodate the text you type. You can use the Tab and Return keys to insert tabs and line breaks. If you don’t press the Return key, line breaks will occur automatically as they would in a word processor.

To create a new text frame (Method #2):

This method of creating a text frame is similar to the one above, but with a couple of subtle differences that highlight some important SureThing features.

1. Choose the Text Frame tool from the Object Tools list.

2. Click and drag to create the frame. When you release the mouse, the frame is drawn and the text cursor blinks inside it waiting for you to enter your text.

3. Enter the text you want to appear in the frame. Unlike the first method, the text frame does not expand to accommodate the text you type. If you type more text than can be displayed in the frame, you’ll see a red bar in the bottom of the frame, letting you know you’ll need to either make the frame larger, or decrease the font size of the text.

Under certain circumstances, the red bar can occur in the default text fields created by a SmartDesign. The default text frames can grow to a point, but it is possible to receive a red bar in a frame if you enter too much text or set the font size too large. Re-size the frame, delete some text, and/or change the font size until you can see all the text in the frame.

Changing the Size and Position of a Text Frame

First select the object (pointer) tool from the Control Strip, or right-click the mouse and select Object Mode, then click the text frame to select it. You can drag the frame to any location on your label. To change the size of the frame, click one of the red
Inserting Merge Fields in Text Frames

SureThing lets you insert many different types of merge fields in text frames. Examples of merge fields are date and time, auto-incrementing serial numbers, your name, company and address from the User Information tab of the Program Options dialog box, audio playlist information, or even fields from an external database (dBASE or CSV text file).

To insert a merge field into your design:

1. Place the text cursor in the text frame where you want the merge field to appear.
2. Choose Insert Field from the Insert menu. The Insert Field dialog box appears:

   ![Insert Field dialog box]

   3. Select the tab for the type of merge field, such as Special Fields.

4. Select the type of field you want to merge from the scroll list on the left, and any field options from the list on the right.

4. Click OK to insert the field into the frame.

If the “Show Field Codes” option is on under the View menu, the field appears as a code, with the field name enclosed in brackets. If this option is off, you will see the actual data (except for fields from an external database, which will always show the record you specify using the Set Merge Record command under View Options).

A popular example of using merge fields is the Serial Number function. Say for example you were printing several CD labels for a software product, and wanted a unique serial number printed on each label. A typical serial number might be something like “MVD300-010-AC0001,” with only the last four digits incrementing. You would type the text “MVD300-010-AC” and insert a Serial Number merge field immediately after it (choose the Zero Fill option and set the maximum number to 1000 to create a four-digit repeating field beginning with “0001.”

The frame containing the serial number field might look something like this:

![Serial Number field example]

An example of a Serial Number field viewed with Field Codes off (left), and Field Codes on (right).
Formatting Text in a Text Frame

You can format text in text frames much as you would in a word processor or page layout program:

1. Select the text you want to format with the text tool.

2. Choose the Character command from the Format menu. You are presented with several options for formatting your text, including font, size, color, style, underlining, and spacing options. Many of these options can also be changed directly from the Control Strip.

3. Choose the Paragraph command from the Format menu. The Paragraph dialog box lets you change indents, line spacing, alignment, and tab positions, as well as other options such as border lines and fill patterns.

Note that when you click the text cursor within a text frame, you can change many of the paragraph formatting options from the ruler bar at the top of the design window. If you don’t currently see ruler bars to the top and left of your CD label, you can turn them back on by choosing View Options from the View menu, and then selecting the Show Rulers command.

Editing Text Effects

Text Effects in SureThing let you apply special effects to text, such as circular text, slanted text, perspective text, drop shadows and more. Text Effects add spice to CD titles, for example, but are also useful for more ordinary tasks such as copyright notices, trademarks or even track titles.

To edit a text effect:

1. Double-click the Text Effect object in the
design window (or right-click it with the mouse and choose Object Properties).

Note: You must click the text portion of the effect to select it. This is different from previous versions, allowing you to more easily select other objects in your design, especially any objects that are behind a text effect.

2 Edit the sample text (under the Effect tab). Click OK when you are done.

Adding line breaks in the Text Effect dialog box causes text in the effect to align in different ways. You can add up to three line breaks: the first line will be on top; the second line will be in the center of the CD (which could be a blank line); and the third line will wrap around the bottom. You can experiment with your text to see how it will appear in the label.

Selecting different types of Text Effects

There are several types of Text Effects you can choose from. To select a different style, click the Type tab in the Text Effect dialog box.

Click the button to see the available categories of text effects. If this button is grayed, you are already viewing categories. Click the button to view variations on the selected category. Double-click on a variation to select it.

Note: If you select another layout from the Variation Bar after you’ve formatted text in any of the sample Text Effects or Text Frames, SureThing warns you that your edits will not be included in the next variation. This only applies to the sample text frames & effects, however. New frames and effects are not affected.

Adding a New Text Effect

In a preceding section you learned how to change the sample text that appears in a text effect object. Here you’ll learn how to create a new text effect object from scratch.

1 Click the “Text” icon on the Design Bar located on the left of the window.

2 Choose Add Text Effect from the list.
This opens a wizard that guides you through the process of creating a text effect.

3 Select the type of effect you want to create, then click the Next button.

4 Select a variation on the type you chose in step 3, then click Next.

5 Select from a list of preset colors. The check boxes at the bottom of the wizard let you turn certain characteristics on or off. You can always change your mind later. Click Next when you're satisfied with your choices.

6 Enter the text you want to appear in the text effect (first delete the sample text).

7 Change the font and style options to suit your tastes. For certain types of effects, you can also choose whether or not they are to be created with perspective, stretched to a curve, or drawn flat (Normal). Click the Preview button to view your edits in the wizard. Click the Finish button when you are ready to create the effect.

The effect is created on your label. The next thing you'll need to do is adjust its size and position.
**Adding a Circular Text Effect**

The Circular Text Effect has been changed considerably in SureThing version 4.0. Circular text effects were part of previous versions, but the feature has been significantly expanded and improved in v4.0, so much so that we gave it its own menu command separate from the other text effects.

There are three distinct types of Circular Text effects:

- Circular
- Spiral
- Spoked

**To create a Circular Text Effect:**

1. Click the “Text” icon on the Design Bar, then choose the Add Circular Text option from the list.

The Circular Text dialog box is displayed:

2. Enter your text (first delete the “Sample” text). This could be a copyright notice, audio track titles, list of files, etc.

3. Choose the type of effect you want from the “Circle Type” list (Circular is the default, but you can also choose Spiral or Spokes).

4. Click the Effects tab to change the character style (font, point size, color, etc.)

5. When you are satisfied with your choices, click OK to create the effect.
The example above uses the Circular effect. Here’s how the Spiral and Spokes effects might have looked:

![Circular effect example]

Spiral effect

Spoke effect

After you’ve created a circular effect, it’s very simple to change any aspect of it: simply double-click it (but make sure to double click on the text itself, not the white space).

**To change the size and position of a circular text object:**

1. Click the object once. Make sure to click directly on the text of the object and not the white space.

   You’ll notice a red border appears around the object.

   - Click one of the red squares on the border and drag to change the diameter of the object. Drag away from the center to make it larger; drag toward the center to make it smaller.

   - Click one of the rotate icons to rotate the object clockwise or counter-clockwise around its center.

The size and rotation can also be controlled numerically under the Size/Position tab of the Circular Text dialog box (double click the object to open the dialog).
Working with Backgrounds

Backgrounds are images SureThing places in the background of a label design. All other objects – text frames, text effects and clipart – appear on top of the background image.

When you start the New Label Wizard, there is usually a background already selected for the SmartDesign you are using, but you can always change the pre-selected background later. A number of background images are included with SureThing that have been specially designed for CD labels. You can choose your own images to use as backgrounds as well. Or you can decide to use no background at all.

To change the background image:

1. Click the “Backgrounds” panel. This will open the backgrounds menu:

2. Choose SureThing Backgrounds from the list. The following dialog box appears:

3. Select a category in the left pane, which displays the folders where backgrounds are stored. Expand or collapse the tree structure as needed.

4. Select a background image from the dialog box by clicking it, then click OK.

To help sort through the many backgrounds that come with SureThing, the Background Browser includes a Favorites Folder. When you see an image you like and might want to use again, click the Add to Favorites button.

Here’s another way to change backgrounds:

The Variation Bar at the bottom of the window provides a quick way to change backgrounds, layouts and font choices. The left-most variation bar lets you select backgrounds.

Click the mouse in the middle of the Variation Bar on the left. A list of backgrounds appears. You can also click the left- and right-pointing arrows on either side of the variation bar to cycle through the images.
Using Your Own Backgrounds

The background images supplied with SureThing have been sized correctly to fit the CD label area. Before using your own backgrounds, you should make sure that they have been sized properly, (about square for a CD Label) in an image editor such as Photoshop or Paint Shop Pro. However, if you have not done that, you can tell SureThing to “Fill Design Maintaining Aspect Ratio”. This is an option in the “Properties” area of the Background menu.

If you wish to use your own backgrounds, you’ll also need to know the directory, or folder, they’re stored in.

To use your own Background image:

1. Click the “Backgrounds” panel. A menu is displayed.
2. Select Use Your Own Background. The Backgrounds dialog box appears.
3. Select the drive and directory where the image you want to use as a background is located. Click the Browse button to view thumbnails of any images in a directory.
4. Choose an image from the list and click OK. The image appears as a background in your label.

Using a Background Color

If you decide not to use a background image, you can specify a background color. You can even create interesting fill patterns, shades, and gradients (blends).

To set the background color:

1. If you are currently using a background image, you must first clear it. Choose Clear Background Image from the Backgrounds menu.
2. Now, from the Backgrounds menu at the top of your screen, choose Set Background Color. A dialog box appears.
3. Choose shades or patterns, and/or pick colors from the color menus. You can mix colors and shades, or colors and patterns. To create a gradient blend, choose a foreground color and a background color, then choose the type of gradient you want to create from the Blend menu (you can also click the Blend button for a dialog with more specific options).
4. Click OK.

The background color options you selected
are applied to the label. If you later apply a background image, the color options you specified will no longer be displayed, but you can get back to them by choosing the No Background option from the background menu on the Variation Bar.

Creating a Collage

One of the cool new features of SureThing CD Labeler 4 is the ability to create a collage background. A collage background is one main background image made up of several images of your choosing. You can have up to 100 images on a background, which would be made on a grid of 10 images down and 10 image across. To start your image collage select Create a Collage from the Backgrounds menu bar. The Background Collage Properties dialog box appears.

First you need to decide what kind of grid you would like to use. You may choose from a grid of 1 image to a grid of 10x10 images. A 2x2 grid needs 4 images, a 10x10 grid needs 100 images. Select your grid size from the Grid Size drop down menu in the “Collage Properties” area.

Now you can choose your images.

Click on the Select Images button. This will open a new dialog box similar to the Choose your own background box. Navigate through your files, and when you find an image you would like to include in your collage select it by clicking on it and then click on little yellow arrow icon. The image will then be copied to the right panel of selected images. You may want to keep count of the number of images you choose for your collage, it will be important for the grid you chose to use. Once you have enough images in your selection box, click OK.

A simple preview of your collage will be located in the Preview area. Now you’ve got a few options in the “Image Arrangement” area.

Checking the “Unique Images Only” box will deselect any images that you may have selected twice.

Checking the “Shuffle” box will allow you to click on the “Reshuffle” button, which changes the order of the images in some quasi-random fashion.

If you don’t have enough images to fit the grid size you’ve chosen you can check the “Shrink Grid to Fit” option. This will alter the collage grid to use all the images you selected.

By default the images you selected will be stretched to fit a square block in the collage grid. You may however choose to “Maintain
Aspect Ratio”. This will keep the original format of your images. By choosing this option, the image collage will have borders around all the images in order to fit them in the grid. You can choose a Fill Color from the “Collage Properties” area to make it look a little more professional.

Once you’ve got the Collage you want, click the OK button.

**Altering Your Background**

Another very cool new feature in Sure-Thing CD Labeler 4.0 is the ability to “Touch Up” or add special effects to your backgrounds or images.

Once you have selected a background click the Touchup and Effects option in the Backgrounds Menu. This will launch the Edit Picture dialog box.

You have several options in the Edit Picture dialog box.

The Edit Picture dialog box is made up of a few areas. The first area is the image preview. This is the top left area of the dialog box where your image is prominently displayed. To the right of the image preview is the variation selector. This area will show you various levels of the particular effect you have chosen. Click on any of the variations and your image preview will take on that effect.

Choose the effect you would like to use by clicking on the Options at the bottom of the dialog box. Your options are to Colorize, Emboss, Mosaic, Oilify, Posterize, Sepia, and Solarize.

You may also choose to zoom in on the image to apply touch up effects such as Red Eye elimination. Other options include the ability to crop your image and adjust it’s exposure.

If you have made any changes to the images that are not to your liking, you can always go back to the original image by clicking on the History Bar. Using the history bar you can go back a single step or go back as far as the original image.

Sometimes when you insert a background image, it doesn’t quite sit where you would like it to. To fix this, you can use the “Size and Position” option in the backgrounds menu. Clicking on this option will display little red boxes at the edges of the background image.
Move your mouse over the red boxes, click and hold down the button, drag up down or left or right to increase the size of the image, then left go of the mouse button. Now move the mouse over the image and a little hand icon will show up. Use the hand to move the background around. Once you are done, click outside the CD Design area and the red boxes will go away!

**Background Properties**

There are many useful tools in the Background Properties dialog box. To access this box click on *Properties* option in the Backgrounds menu.

The newest addition to the background properties dialog box is the “Fill Design, Maintaining Aspect Ratio” option. This option will resize your image and crop out what isn’t needed in order to fill the label design area.
The “Background Properties” dialog box also allow you to adjust the size of your image by using the Scale Factor. You may make a simple adjustment to the image brightness using the brightness control.

**Acquiring and Scanning Images**

SureThing supports TWAIN, an interface that lets you create images using a device such as a scanner or digital camera attached to your computer and import the images without leaving SureThing. Your device must support TWAIN in order for you to take advantage of this feature.

You can acquire images for use as regular graphics or as backgrounds by clicking on File, Scan Images.

**Working with Logos, Pictures and Clipart**

Working with images in SureThing is a cinch! You can easily import graphics and clipart yourself using the picture tool (under the Tools menu), or by selecting a file from the Pictures/Clipart menu on the Design Bar.

**Adding a Picture or piece of Clipart to your label...**

Adding graphic images such as logos, clipart and symbols to your labels is a snap with SureThing. A number of useful images are included with SureThing, and were copied to your hard drive during installation.

1. Click the “Pictures/Clipart” panel located on the left of the window. Doing so displays a menu.

2. Choose *Browse for Pictures/Clipart* from the menu. A dialog box is displayed where you can choose from a selection of ready-to-use images, or to other drives and directories.

3. Click an image, then click OK.

The image is placed on your label, at which point you can change its size and position to fit within your design.

**Using the Picture Tool to insert an image**

Select *Use Picture Tool* from the Pictures/Clipart menu. The Picture Tool icon will appear as your mouse cursor.

Move your mouse cursor to the label, click and drag to create a rectangle about the size of the image you want to insert. When you release the mouse, a dialog box appears prompting you to select an image file. Many popular graphics formats are supported (BMP, JPEG, TIF, EPS, etc.). Select the drive and directory where your image is located, choose it from the list and click OK. The picture appears in your label. You can change its size and position to fit your design (and your fancy).

SureThing does not support the GIF image format. If you have GIF images you would
like to include in your label designs, we suggest converting them to another popular image format such as BMP or TIF.

**Picture Touchup and Effects**

All of the Touchup and Effects options available for backgrounds are available for images you may insert into your designs. To use the Touchup and Effects options, simply select the image you would like to work with in your design. When your image is outlined in red, click on the Picture Touchup and Effects option in the Pictures/Clipart menu. Refer to the backgrounds section of this manual for more information on the Touchup and Effects dialog box.

**Changing the Label Stock**

The Deluxe version of SureThing lets you change the label stock at any time. Say, for instance, you've created some label designs for Memorex CD labels, but you later purchase a box of Avery CD labels. You don't have to re-create your designs to work with the Avery labels, but rather change the stock. SureThing adjusts your design to print properly on the new labels.

**To change the label stock:**

1. Choose the *Change Label Stock* command from the Edit menu. A dialog box appears.
2. Select the stock you want to use from the New Stock list.
3. Click OK.

You have the option to apply the stock only to selected blocks. For example, you could apply the Avery stock to the CD label face, but keep the spine and jewel case blocks set to a stock from a different label manufacturer. In the *Blocks to apply* list, click a block to deselect it; click it again to re-select it.

**Duplicating a Label Design**

The *Add* command in the “Actions” panel can be used to make copies of the current label design. You can then edit the copies, changing background, text, and layout, for example, on each copy while leaving the original intact.

Some users have mistakenly assumed the *Add* command is how you print multiple copies of a label. While you could in fact use it that way, it’s much simpler to set the number of copies you want to print from the Print dialog box. So when should you use the *Add* command?

The *Add* command provides an easy way to produce a series of labels based on a common design. Say you’re creating labels for a clipart CD collection – the first CD contains clipart of animals, the second sports, and the third cartoons. Let’s also say you want a different title and logo on each label to identify each collection. Design the first label, “Animals” in this example, then click the *Add* button. The Add Designs dialog box appears:
Enter “2” in the No. of copies field and click OK. You now have three copies of the same design. You can then change the title and logo on duplicate labels #2 (“Sports”) and #3 (“Cartoons”) accordingly.

Click the << and >> (previous and next) buttons in the Actions panel to move from one label to the next. (If you are currently on the last label, clicking the >> button asks you if you’d like to duplicate the label.)

The Designs menu lets you add, delete and navigate labels in case you’ve turned off the display of the Command Bar.

Deleting duplicate labels

If you want to delete any duplicate designs you’ve created, click the Delete command in the Actions panel and specify which designs you want to delete.

The No. of designs to delete field tells SureThing how many duplicates to get rid of; the Beginning with design field specifies the first duplicate to be deleted. The tab at the top of the Design Area indicates the number of the current design:

Saving Your Label

Saving a design in SureThing is a very simple process, and one you should do with regularity. Every few minutes is recommended. That way, if anything unexpected happens (e.g., power outage, meteor impact, etc.), you’ll always have a recent version of your label.

To save a label choose the File > Save (or Save As) command. Select the drive and directory where you want the file to be saved, give it a name and click the Save button. You don’t have to enter a filename extension; one will be added automatically if you don’t. Following are the specific steps.

To save a new document:

1. Choose the Save (or Save As) command from the File menu. If it’s the first time you’ve saved the label, the Save As dialog box appears:

2. Select the drive and folder where you want the label to be saved from the Save In list. If you want to create a new folder, click the new folder button and give it a name.

3. Type a name for your label in the File name box.
You don’t have to type an extension because SureThing automatically gives all labels the extension *std*.

4 Click Save.

The design is saved to your hard disk with the filename you typed, and you can resume working with it.

After saving your design the first time, you still need to save your work periodically. Choose Save from the File menu, or press Ctrl+S. The label is saved, with all of your updates.

**Saving a design with a new filename**

There are times when you want to give a SureThing label design a new name, such as when you want to edit an existing design, but keep an unchanged copy of the original. If you were to open the label, edit it, and use the Save command, the edited version would replace the original. The *Save As* command provides a way to save your changes as well as retain a copy of the original. After opening the original label design, choose the Save As command from the File menu and enter a different filename, or the same filename but a different location on your hard disk (or a different disk).

**Calibrating Your Printer**

Because each printer is full of moving parts, the precision in each is slightly different. Sometimes this may cause SureThing to slightly miss the mark when printing. If this happens, you need to calibrate your printer.

To calibrate the printer:

1 Choose the *Calibrate Printer* command from the File menu. The Calibrate Printer dialog box appears.

2 Confirm that the correct printer is listed in the Printer field.

3 Press the *Print Calibration Sheet* button.

4 Fold the Calibration Sheet according to the printed instructions and enter the values in the Offset fields.

Your printer will now be offset by these values to accommodate for any errors in precision.

Before calibrating, be sure that you are printing the correct template for the paper you are using. Select *About Template* from the Help menu if you’re not sure.

**Printing**

Printing your label designs is simple. SureThing manages the actual layout of the designs on the page, and sequences them as they print. All you need to do is tell it how many copies to print, and on which label to start.

To print a label design:

1 Put the correct paper in the paper tray of your printer. Use plain paper if you are doing a test-print; use your label stock if you are printing final output.

2 Choose *Print* from the File menu, or click the *Print Design* command in the Actions list. The Print dialog box appears.
3 Make sure that the correct printer is selected, and that the printer is setup properly.

4 Enter the number of copies you want to print in the No. of Labels field. You can specify the number of designs to print based on either individual labels or label sheets. Whether you choose Labels or Sheets, SureThing tells you how many sheets of label stock you will need (listed below the Sample window).

5 Under Label Set Options, choose Print All Labels in Set to print all of the designs (i.e., any designs you’ve created using the Add command); choose Print the current label only to print only the current design; choose Print range of labels and identify the beginning and ending design to be printed if you want to print more than one, but not all of the designs, or to print one design which is not the current design.

Note: If your document only contains a single design, the Label Set Options will appear greyed out.

6 In the Sample window, click the label position where you want printing to begin. Normally this would be the first label on the page, but if you’ve already printed a label in the first position, you’ll want to click a different position. The beginning position is indicated in blue. Also, only the active blocks appear in blue (use the Blocks > Show/Hide command under the View menu to turn blocks on or off prior to printing).

7 If you are not going to print from the default paper source, you can specify which bin the paper should come from. This is useful if you have more than one bin or want to force the printer to use the manual feed (if available).

8 Click OK to print.

Note: We recommend that you do not run label sheets through your printer after you have peeled off any labels. Doing so may damage your printer.

Printing Merge Jobs

If you’ve set a merge file for your design, you can control which records from the merged database will print. The Merge button is available to select a range of records from the database you’re merging. Choose None to print the current design as you see it on the screen without merging. Choose All to print all of the records in the database. Choose Range and identify the beginning and ending records from the database you want to print.

Unless you have chosen None, the number of copies represents the number of sets to print. If you select two, you will get two copies of each design for each record in the database.
Working with Label Templates

Templates in SureThing are designed for two primary uses:

- You can create customized layouts for labels not found within SureThing using the Template Creation Wizard under the File menu (Deluxe version only).
- You can save your existing label designs as templates and use them as the starting point for new labels.

Creating Customized Layouts using the Template Creation Wizard

If you need to print labels not found within SureThing, use the Template Creation Wizard located under the File menu (Deluxe version only). The wizard steps you through the process of creating a new label type.

Before proceeding with the wizard, you will need to know the precise measurements for the type of label you are creating, including:

- page size
- height and width of each label
- starting position of the first label (measured from the top and left edges of the page)
- number of labels across and down the page
- horizontal and vertical span (horizontal span is the distance from the left edge of the first label to the right edge of the last label across the page or block; vertical span is the distance from the top edge of the first label to the bottom edge of the last label down the page or block)

To create a new layout template:

1. Choose Template Creation Wizard from the File menu.
2. Click the Next button.
3. Enter the page dimensions and orientation of the label sheet and click Next when you are ready to proceed.
4. Enter a description for the layout, select its shape (rectangular or circular), and the size of individual labels on the sheet.

You can optionally specify bleed settings (the amount of space outside the bounds of the label into which SureThing will print), and choose from a list of template SmartDesigns. Selecting a SmartDesign from the list will initially set the height and width of the label size, but you can change it. This is useful if the label template you are creating is similar to one that already exists in SureThing, but has slightly different measurements. If you don't wish to use
SmartDesigns, choose “(Other)” from the list.

Click Next when you are ready to proceed.

5 Enter the number of labels across and down the sheet, the position of the first label, measured from the left and top of the page, and the horizontal and vertical span.

Why measure span instead of the space between labels? This is done to minimize rounding errors. If you measured the space between individual labels, and were off by one-tenth of an inch, for example, this error would be applied to each label. But by measuring the label span, i.e., the distance from the left/top edges of the first label to the right/bottom edges of the last label, if you were off by one-tenth of an inch, this error would be divided by the number of labels. If you had six labels across a sheet, an error of one-tenth of an inch for span would amount to one-fiftieth of an inch for each label.

Click Next when you are ready to proceed.

6 Enter a name for the template, and choose a category.

The category you select is where the new label will appear when you create new designs in SureThing. If you don't want the label to appear under the listed categories, select “Other” from the list. You will be prompted to enter a name for the new category – “My Labels,” for example.

Click Next when you are ready to proceed.

7 Click Finish.

Now, whenever you choose the New command from the File menu, you will be able to choose the label template you just created from the list of label types.

**Tip:** For more information about creating templates, choose SureThing Tutorials from the Help menu, and select “Creating a Custom Label Template.”

**Saving Existing Designs as Templates**

You can save your existing label designs as templates that can be used as the starting point for new labels.
To save a design as a template:

1. Open or create the design you want to use as a template.

2. Choose Save As from the File menu.

3. Enter a name for the template.

4. From the Save As Type list, select “Template (*.stt)”.

   Optionally select a category for the template. The category you select is where the new label will appear when you create new designs in SureThing. If you don’t want the label to appear under the listed categories, select “Other” from the list. You will be prompted to enter a name for the new category – “My Labels,” for example.

5. Click Save to save the label as a template.

When you start a new label using the New command under the File menu, you can select the template you just created from the list of label types.

Deleting Templates

Templates you create are stored in a folder named “User Templates” located within the folder where SureThing is installed. If you accepted the default settings when you installed SureThing, you would open the following folders to locate the templates:

To delete a template, open the User Templates folder, select the file you want to remove and delete it (or move it out of the User Templates folder).

SureThing templates have the extension STT.
Working with Playlists

SureThing makes it easy to use playlists to create labels for your CD collection. A playlist is a list of information describing the contents of a media collection. A playlist typically consists of things like the album title, the name of the artist and the titles of each audio track. SureThing can read music playlists from the following sources:

- The CD itself (CD-Text)
- Database on the Internet (FreeDB)
- Playlist file on your computer, such as an M3U file.
- Jukebox program, burner or media player
- Individual audio files (mp3, wma, etc.)

Playlists are most commonly associated with audio CDs, however, the concept applies equally well to a data CD where you may want a list of filenames, sizes, and creation dates. SureThing uses playlists for both types of CDs.

The beauty of using playlists is that you don’t have to type the information on to your label. You simply import the playlist, and SureThing takes care of the rest. Once a playlist is retrieved, the playlist information is automatically placed on your label. You can then choose from a number of attractive backgrounds, layouts, and font combinations, i.e., “SmartDesigns.”

SmartDesigns

SmartDesigns are very handy for making a great looking label quickly and easily. When used with playlists, you can make a couple of quick choices, import your playlist and you’re done. That’s why we highly recommend using SmartDesigns for all your playlist labels, even if you just use them as a starting point for creating custom designs.

We have created a number of SmartDesigns specifically to be used when creating audio or data CDs. These SmartDesigns have specified where things like the CD title, artist’s name, and track listings will be placed. When you import a playlist, SureThing automatically reads the information, and places it into these designs. You can then click your way through the SmartDesign choices to find the look you’re after.

You choose the type of SmartDesign you’d like to use in the New Label Wizard. You have three choices: Audio CD, Data CD or General Purpose. The General Purpose layouts are freeform and do not place any playlist information on the design. The other two include designs which match their purpose.

A Quick Walk-Through

Nothing shows how easy it is to use playlists better than a quick exercise. Follow these steps to create your first label using playlists:

1. Open SureThing and choose the Label Wizard from the Welcome screen.
2. Select the CD type you want to create a label for (Audio CD, Data CD, or General Purpose).
3. Choose a SmartDesign from the list to use as your starting point.
4. Import your playlist by selecting the Choose a Playlist button and selecting your playlist file.
5. Customize your design by selecting different backgrounds, layouts, and fonts.
6. Preview your design in the Label Preview window to make sure everything looks the way you want it.
7. Print your label using your printer and label paper of choice.

That’s it! You’ve just created your first label using playlists in SureThing.
1. Select New from the File Menu or click the New command in the Actions list.

2. Choose SureThing CD Labels 2-Up, click Next.

3. Make sure “Use SmartDesigns” is checked and select Audio CD in the SmartDesigns list. You can quickly click through the available SmartDesign layouts. When you’re ready, click Next.

4. On the final screen, select the second option, “Use the Playlist Manager.” We have a sample playlist already set up just for this exercise. Click Finish.

5. You will now be presented with the Playlist Manager. In the list of playlist selections, select “Team SureThing/Follow the Sun” and then click the Apply button.

You are now looking at a fully completed label ready to print. It’s that easy! You can now browse through backgrounds, change the SmartDesign layout, or change the fonts to get just the right look for you. Have fun!

If you had already burned your CD, you would select “Import the playlist from CD, a file or player” from the Finish screen. Sometimes you’ll want to play with font sizes, move text blocks slightly, or delete unwanted fields from the design of the label. It’s all easy, and we’ve just saved you a whole lot of typing and formatting!

**Importing Playlists**

You have a number of options when it comes to importing your playlist information:

1) **Import a playlist from a player or burner**

This option is used to import playlists from programs with playlist options, such as MusicMatch Jukebox (7.5+) or Windows Media Player (8.0+). If you do not have any compatible players installed you will not be able to select this option.

Along the bottom there is a pulldown for choosing the application you’d like to retrieve your playlist information from. First, set this pulldown menu to the application of your choice. Once the choice is made the application’s stored playlists will appear on the left. Some applications will have playlist categories and some will not. If categories are listed, you will see an icon for the category and a “+” sign indicating that the view can be expanded. Double-clicking the “+” sign will show all of the playlists contained in that category. Generally you will want to select the playlist corresponding to your burned CD. When you select a play-
list, the playlist information will appear in the right-hand side. Clicking OK will apply that playlist to your current design.

2) Import playlist from a file on my computer

Some applications do not maintain a database of your playlists, but do allow you to save your playlists to a file. Choosing this option allows you to browse for your playlist files.

Just select the file and click Open to place the playlist on your label.

3) Import playlist directly from CD

If you’ve burned CD-Text or you want to attempt an Internet match, you should choose this option. CD-Text will contain all the information you need. If no CD-Text is found, SureThing connects to the Internet to attempt to make a match. This method compares the number of tracks and their lengths with an online database of retail CDs. If the lookup fails, you can choose to “Edit the Playlist.” SureThing will automatically import the track lengths; all you will have to do is fill out the track titles.

*Note:* Playlist cover art (for use in the background collage feature) will not be retrieved automatically if you use the “Import playlist directly from CD” option. You can browse for the mp3 or wma files later if you want to retrieve the associated cover art.

Import playlist from an MP3 CD

If you have burned an MP3 CD, you'll need to use this option. An MP3 CD is NOT a redbook audio CD. This type of CD should not be confused with audio CDs burned using MP3 files. These CDs cannot be played in many standard CD players, and are burned using a standard ISO data format. An easy way to tell the difference is to put the CD in your CD-ROM drive. Right-click on the drive and choose “Explore.” If the files have “.mp3” as their extension (e.g., greensleeves.mp3), you have an MP3 CD. If the files show “.cda” as their extension, and have no track name, you have a redbook audio CD (e.g., Track01.cda). The “.cda” extension is not really a file-type, but a way for Windows to indicate that this is an audio CD.

The Playlist Manager

The Playlist Manager serves as the nerve center for all playlist activity within SureThing. Whenever you import a playlist, it is added to the playlist manager’s built-in database. You can then use these saved playlists in the future, even if you don’t have the CD, Internet connection or application to import the playlist from. Simply open the Playlist Manager, select the desired playlist and click Apply. You can use these selections on any label.

In addition to using the Playlist Manager to select playlists for use on labels, it also allows you to create custom playlists. You can add a new playlist, edit an existing playlist, delete a playlist, import an individual file’s track information or import a playlist directly into the playlist database.

There are actually two groups of playlists being managed by the Playlist Manager at
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all times. The first is the playlist database, which, as has been discussed, is a collection of all playlists which have been imported into SureThing. The second is a set of active playlists used by the current document. SureThing makes a copy of a playlist to be saved within a document so that it can be customized specifically for that document. SureThing makes this process almost entirely transparent to you, but you will see mention of it in the software so we thought it should also be mentioned here.

Compilation Music CDs

If you have created your own compilation CD, and you are unable to import an associated playlist, you may have some trouble retrieving the track information. The database of CD playlists on the Internet only applies to CDs you buy in stores. Someone has previously submitted the playlist to the database, hence it is available for you to access when you insert your CD.

This doesn't help when making compilation CDs of your favorite songs. A compilation CD is your own personal collection, so no one could have previously submitted it to the Internet. This is where SureThing’s playlist import capabilities really shine. You have three options:

The first is to make sure to record the CD with the CD-Text option turned on in your CD recording software, e.g., Roxio/Easy CD Creator, Nero, etc. This will record the playlist information directly to your CD, and will eliminate the need for SureThing to look for it on the Internet. Most CD-R drives and recording software support CD-Text but not all. Consult the respective user guides for more information on recording CD-Text.

The second is to assemble the playlist in your favorite media player and then save it. SureThing can then import the playlist from the program’s media database, or from a saved playlist file. After you’ve created the playlist, just use the Import from player or burner option.

The third is to use the Playlist Manager to create a custom playlist from its own database. You would first insert each of the master CDs from which your compilation was created, and then select each song to be added to your new playlist. You can then save the compilation playlist in the playlist database for future use. You will find step by step instructions for this below.

For Advanced Users

For those of you who want to know how everything works, read on. For others, the following might be interesting reading, but not essential. The important thing to remember is that for most typical playlist designs, SureThing and SmartDesigns will take care of the details for you.

A label design with playlists is much like a mail merge document in a word processor. You insert fields into the document which are placeholders. At some point, the inserted fields are replaced with the actual data you want to print.

In SureThing, you can view a playlist design at any time showing either the playlist fields, or the actual playlist data from a CD
(title, artist name, song titles, etc). This essentially gives the label design two modes: Playlist Field mode and Playlist Data mode.

*Display Playlist Fields* mode is like creating a template or a blueprint. Anything you do here, like formatting text, changing headers, inserting new playlist fields, affects how the Playlist data will appear once it is merged into the document. You only need to switch to this mode if you feel such a change is necessary.

In the example below, note that Playlist fields are set off with curly brackets `{ }`. The information inside the brackets is the name of the field from the Playlist.

This brings up another important point to remember: Whenever you start a new design, read a new playlist from a CD, switch to a new playlist in the Playlist Manager or edit the contents of a playlist, SureThing regenerates the Playlist Data. Your old Playlist Data will be thrown out, and the new Playlist Data will replace it, so any changes you made while in *Display Playlist Data* mode will be lost.

You can easily switch between the two modes from the Playlist menu. There are also a few instances where SureThing will automatically switch between the two modes. For example, when you want to insert a playlist field, you must be in Playlist Field mode so SureThing switches to it. If the playlist fields are showing when you apply a playlist, SureThing will automatically switch the mode to show the new data.

For those of you who like to know about the nuts and bolts, here's a breakdown of the hierarchy of playlist data in SureThing:

1) Design: This is the text on the design itself. Changing the data directly from the design area will not change the data in the associated playlist, or in the database. Only that particular label’s information will change. If you later edit or change the local playlist the fields will be re-populated with the new playlist information. The program will prompt you before re-populating the playlist fields since you will lose any changes made at the design level.

2) Local: The second level is the local playlist(s). These are listed in the *Playlists in Document* section of the manager. Every
playlist that has been applied to your current design file will appear in this section. Editing a local playlist will change the data on any label which that playlist is currently applied to. (This is especially important to remember if you have multiple playlists on multiple labels and label blocks.)

3) Database: The third level is the playlist database which is independent of any one design file. When you apply a playlist from the database the artist, title and track information are transferred into the design file as a local playlist (Playlists in Document), and the data will populate the playlist fields on the design. Changes to the database playlist will only change the database entry, and will not effect the current local playlist or the actual design.

In summary, SmartDesigns take care of most, if not all, of the underlying details for playlist designs. It helps, however, to understand how things work so if and when you want to tweak the designs, you’ll know what you’re doing.

**Applying a Playlist from Your Playlist Database**

You can quickly apply any existing playlist from your playlist database, which makes it easy to use your design for different CDs. You won’t have to create a separate design for each CD.

**To apply a playlist from your database:**

1. Click the “Playlists” icon and choose *Playlist Manager* from the list.

2. The Playlist Manager dialog box displays all the playlists already stored in your database. To select the playlist you wish to apply, click it in the list.

3. Click Apply.

**Creating a Custom Playlist with the Playlist Database**

Need a label for your CD of favorite songs? SureThing lets you choose the songs from your existing playlist database to create a custom playlist.

**To create a custom playlist with the Playlist Manager:**

1. Click the “Playlists” icon and choose *Edit Active Playlist* from the list.

2. Enter information about the CD on the General tab.
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Click the Database tab.

Double-click an album title in the CDs column to see its songs. Click on the song you wish to add to the Current Tracks column and click the Add button, or simply double-click the song to add it.

If you wish to remove a song from the playlist, click it in the Current Tracks column, and click the Remove button. This just removes the track from the active playlist; it does not delete it from the database.

If you wish to clear the Current Tracks column of all songs, click the Remove All button. This removes all the tracks from the active playlists in document; it does not delete them from your database.

5 Repeat step 4 to add additional songs.

6 When you're finished, click OK.

To change the track order in your playlist:

1 Click the Tracks tab.

2 Do one of the following:
   • Click the Move Up button to move the highlighted track up once each time you click this button.
   • Click the Move Down button to move the highlighted track down once each time you click this button.

Creating Your Own Playlist Data

You can create new playlists or edit existing ones for either audio or data CDs. The steps below describe how to create an audio playlist.

TIP: Creating a data playlist is done the same way but has a few different options. See Data Playlist Options for the options that apply to a data playlist.
To create your own playlist data:

1. From the Design Bar, click the Playlist icon and choose Playlist Manager.

2. Click the New button.

3. Enter information about the CD on the General tab.

4. Click the Tracks tab and enter the track information, or click the browse button, “...”, to retrieve the information directly from the file. Click the Add button to add each track.

As you continue to do this, your tracks will be added to the list.

- If you wish to delete a track, click it in the list and click the Delete button.
- If you wish to edit a track, click it, make your changes and then click the Change button.
- If you wish to clear the track info fields, click the New button.

5. When you’re finished, click OK. You are returned to the Playlist Manager dialog.

6. Click OK to apply the custom playlist to the design.

More Info on the Playlist Manager

The Playlist Manager lets you create, edit, and apply playlists to your designs. You can open the Playlist Manager either from the top menu bar or from the Design bar.

The first thing you’ll notice is that there are two primary lists: Active Playlists in Document (the top-most list), and Playlist Database Selections.

Playlists in Document are playlists in use in the current document only. They’re not available to other documents or to new documents you create unless you choose to save them by clicking the Add button, which adds them to the Playlist Database Selections list, available to all SureThing documents. They’ll always be part of the current document whether you save them or not, however (unless you delete them, of course).

Playlist Database Selections are global playlists, available to all SureThing documents.

Following is a description of the buttons along the bottom of the Playlist Manager dialog box:

Import

Opens the Import Playlist dialog box.
Add

Adds selected playlist from Active Playlists in Document to the playlist database.

New

Creates a new playlist in either the Active Playlists in Document, or in the Playlist Database, depending on which list you've selected prior to clicking New.

Edit

Edits the selected playlist (can be either a document playlist or one from the playlist database).

Delete

Deletes the selected playlist (either a document playlist or one from the database).

Apply

Accepts any changes you've made and applies the selected playlist to the current design.

Close

Closes the Playlist Manager dialog box without applying a playlist to the current design.