

The primary types of large scale data storage devices that should be considered include:

- CD-ROM - optical disks which are pre written with specialized equipment. Typically well suited for distribution of multiple copies of data via physical means, but not very useful for data that changes over time.
- WORM optical disks - optical disks that can only be written once by standard equipment, but can be read many times. Well suited for storage of data that does not change. These disks have good long term reliability (as much as 25 yrs)
- DAT tape - a digital, high density optical tape. Best suited for back-up due to serial nature.
- Re-writable optical disks - similar to WORM disks but can be re-written. Well suited for large volumes of data that do not change rapidly (write times are typically slow). Long term reliability of disks is good (5 years) but not as long as WORM type.