

GE's breakthrough will make 500 GB holographic discs possible

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Is the death of Blu-ray, but a few years away? If GE can bring its holographic technology to the masses, then it very well may be.

The concept of holographic storage has been around for decades, but until recently the technology has been more science fiction than fact. On Monday, GE announced a scientific breakthrough in the materials used to make micro-holographic storage discs. Brian Lawrence, who leads GE Holographic Storage project, described the breakthrough on this blog:

“However, very recently, the team at GE has made dramatic improvements in the materials enabling significant increases in the amount of light that can be reflected by the holograms. In fact, just a couple of weeks ago, we demonstrated reflectivities as high as 1% in our materials using our holographic recording test setups. This represents a 100x to 200x improvement in performance. More importantly, the higher reflectivity indicates that when we scale the holograms down in size to those that would correspond to the marks created using standard DVD or Blu-ray optics, the reflectivities will be sufficient to enable the storage of up to 500 GB of data in a single CD-size disc.”

In its press release, GE did not outline a timeframe for bringing its micro-holographic storage technology to the consumer market, but according to an article in The New York Times, the technology could be available sometime in 2011 or 2012.

GE isn't the only company developing holographic storage technology. If you have deep pockets and can't wait until 2011, InPhase Technologies offers a holographic storage system aimed at the commercial market. The company's tapestry 300r system can store 300 GB of data on a single disc. Back in April 2008, Robin Harris wrote about the tapestry system in ZDNet's Storage Bits blog.



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