

## **Exploring Earth and Planetary Data Via Interactive and Multimedia CD-ROMs**

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The increasing pace of discoveries in science and the rapid progression in technology have presented educators and scientists with the challenge of getting scientific information and data out to the students and public in an intuitive and interesting manner. The Data Distribution Lab at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory/California Institute of Technology has attempted to do this by presenting some of NASA's exciting datasets through a series of educational and/or informational CD-ROM products. These titles, to name a few, include "Welcome to the Planets" (1994), a collection of the greatest planetary images with captions; "Geomorphology From Space" (1997), a digital version of a beautiful NASA Special Publication of remotely sensed images; "Visit to an Ocean Planet" (1998), an interactive educational CD-ROM that covers many details about the TOPEX/Poseidon satellite, how it measures ocean topography, and what the oceans tell us about our Earth and its climate. "Ways of Seeing" (1999) highlights the Cassini mission to Saturn and features science curriculum resources focusing on the electromagnetic spectrum and remote sensing. The "DataSlate Plus" (1999) educational CD-ROM features 12 curriculum modules and the DataSlate viewer to explore intriguing earth and space data. "Digital California", currently in production, provides a collection of various types of high resolution imagery allowing users to zoom into and analyze their houses and schools. The CD's include exciting graphics, such as QuickTime VR representations of the spacecraft, and interactive games, such as planning an expedition to the Gulf of Mexico or selecting the proper orbits for various satellites. These activities make teaching and learning science and technology a more fascinating experience. Most products not only come with planetary or earth science data and statistics but also come with a stand alone graphical user interface, narration, images and movies. Some products also come with classroom activities that have been aligned with accepted curriculum standards, such as the National Science Education Standards and the California Science Framework.