



Electronic Records Management: What Formats Should I Use for Born-Digital Video?

Purpose: Provide guidance to state and local government agencies on the sustainability of born-digital video file formats for transfer and long-term preservation with the Washington State Archives.

When planning for the future of your born-digital video content, please consider the formats below and make sure the file(s) are either uncompressed or of the highest possible quality.

	<i>Recommended</i>	<i>Acceptable</i>	<i>Not Recommended</i>
<i>Video File Formats</i>	<i>MP4 (.mp4)</i>	<i>WMV (.wmv)</i>	<i>Flash Video (.flv) & other discontinued formats</i>

The Washington State Archives recommends formats that are:

- Open-source
- High-quality
- Widely adopted

These characteristics extend the life of your video and are valuable considerations when making ALL formatting decisions.

PLEASE NOTE: Use of proprietary video formats can make playback of archival or otherwise older recordings difficult or impossible in the future. Unless you are able to export the file to a more open format such as MP4 or WMV, proprietary formats cannot be readily preserved without significant additional resources and software, and are not recommended.

Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available from
Washington State Archives:

www.sos.wa.gov/archives
recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov