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From: [Erica Sadun \(erica@mindspring.com\)](#)

Subject: FAQ: Streaming Video

Newsgroups: [rec.video.desktop](#)

Date: 2002-06-11 10:35:54 PST

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VIDEO STREAM FAQLET
Updated 11 June 2002

Corrections, comments, suggestions to erica@mindspring.com

BIG NEWS: Free Video Hosting at Single Reel is BACK!
See below for details--Their agreement is a doozy

Q: What's video streaming?

Streaming provides immediate access to Internet video files without having to download the entire file first.

Streaming works by establishing an Internet connection between a video data server and a viewing program, called a player. It provides controlled, on-demand delivery of both real-time (live event) and previously recorded data.

The server delivers this video content at a specific rate determined by two things: the compressed video stream and by player data requests. Your player receives this content, decompresses it, and displays it for the viewer just as it might when playing directly from a local hard disk.

Q: What are the ways that things stream?

- * Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP)
Allows you to play the data as it comes from the network or save to a file to play later. This method lacks control uplinks: you may be unable skip to different parts of your movie or replay a section that just downloaded. Many sites also use this method to download a small redirect file that connects to a normal stream.
- * User Datagram Protocol (UDP): provides a real-time data-transfer protocol that receives high priority for Internet transmission. If data is lost or corrupted during a UDP transmission, the receiver does not request that it be re-sent.
- * Real-Time Streaming Protocol (RTSP)
With RTSP, your player remains in constant touch with the server. It gathers, displays, and then quickly discards the video data, making it an excellent technology for viewing live events and long videos.

Q: What types of video streams are out there

STANDARD EXT PLAYER SOURCE

| | | | |
|-----------|------|----------------------|---|
| Real | .rm | Real Player | (http://www.real.com) |
| Quicktime | .mov | Quicktime Player | (http://www.apple.com/quicktime) |
| Windows | .asf | Windows Media Player | (http://www.microsoft.com) |
| | .wmf | | |

You may also run into the now archaic Vivo format (not developed since 1997).

Q: What's a codec?

Codecs are COmpression and DECompression standards. You may be familiar with such popular codecs as JPEG, GIF and MPEG. Streaming formats are basically codecs or families of codecs. (Technically any format that stores data in a compressed format and then must be decompressed for display does qualify as a codec. Windows stores many codec algorithms as system DLL files.)

Q: What about DIVX?

DIVX don't stream.

Q: How do I convert to these formats?

| STANDARD | TOOL |
|-----------|--|
| Real | Real Producer (free), Real Producer Pro (\$\$), Cleaner (\$\$\$\$). Several Windows movie editors (like VideoWave, VideoStudio, etc.) allow you to export to Real. |
| QuickTime | Quicktime Pro (\$29), iMovie (free), HipFlics (\$100), Cleaner (\$\$\$\$), produce QT output. |
| Windows | Windows Media Encoder (free), Cleaner (\$\$\$\$). As with Real, movie editors may allow you to export to WMF. |

Q: How do I "capture" these formats?

| STANDARD | METHOD |
|-----------|---|
| QuickTime | Use your Netscape/IE cache or spring for QT Pro (\$29). |
| ASF | Use Google to search for "ASFRecord" |
| Real | Use Google to search for "Streambox VCR" |

Q: How do I edit these formats?

| STANDARD | METHOD |
|-----------|--|
| QuickTime | QT Pro (\$29, www.apple.com/quicktime) |
| Real | Search for "rmeditor" from Real (www.real.com). It's bundled with the RealProducer Basic package. http://service.real.com/help/library/guides/producer85/htmfiles/command.htm (combine lines for URL) |
| ASF | Virtual Dub 1.3 (http://www.vcdhelp.com/virtualdub13c.zip) or Windows Media ASF Indexer, found at www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/en/technologies/tools.asp (combine lines for URL) (Note: VirtualDub 1.3c decodes asf files made with Microsoft Media V1/V2 or V3 codecs. More recent files cannot be read by this software.) |

Q: How to convert from these formats?

| FROM | TO | TOOL |
|-----------|-----|---|
| Real | AVI | tinra (http://evc.to/tinra/) |
| Real | ?? | eo-video (http://www.eo-video.com/) |
| Real | MPG | rm2mpeg (buggy, http://www.amtec.com/Service_pages/rm2mpeg.html) |
| Quicktime | any | Use Quicktime Pro (\$29, http://www.apple.com/quicktime) |
| ASF | AVI | Virtual Dub 1.3 (http://www.vcdhelp.com/virtualdub13c.zip) |
| WMV | AVI | Virtual Dub 1.3 (http://www.vcdhelp.com/virtualdub13c.zip) |

or see instructions below

Please note that AVI is something like the lingua franca of video. If you can convert to AVI, you can probably convert *from* AVI to nearly any other format. Like QuickTime, AVI is a "wrapper" format that can contain files from nearly any "encoder known to man". If you cannot read an AVI file, chances are likely that you're missing a system codec file.

Q: How do I process these formats?

Cleaner (<http://www.discreet.com>, \$600) allows you to fully process your clips while preparing them for streaming. Features include image correction, filters, overlays and just about anything else you can think of. CleanerEZ offers a less-expensive (often bundled) alternative with fewer features. If you just want to stick with Quicktime streams, check out HipFlics (<http://www.totallyhip.com>, \$100), which is like a quicktime-only "little brother" to Cleaner, with a fairly friendly interface and a decent variety of correction and overlay options.

Q: Are there other ways to convert WMV/ASF?

Do a search for "wmv graphedit" on Google. You'll find conversion directions. For example, here's one I pulled off the net. If anyone can find me a proper attribution for the original author, I'd appreciate it.

The following method works best when you use the hacked 3920 build included in the Tsunami codec pack

What is "Graph Editor"? It's actually GraphEdit and it comes with the Microsoft DirectX 8 SDK, which you get with MSDN or download from Microsoft's web site.

: It lets you see and alter the path of software (codecs and drivers)
: used to read and play or write a multimedia file.

When I get GraphEdit, what do I do?

- : 1) Use the File->RenderFile menu option to load in a file.
- : 2) Remove the last two "filters" (or software components) from the graph. These default to your sound card driver and your video card driver. We don't want that, we want to convert to a different file format.
- : We'll do AVI, because that's what you'll want if you're using AVI editors to edit the movie.
- : 1) Use the File->RenderFile option and choose your ASF file (can use WMV, etc)
- : 2) The default graph is built for you
- : 3) Delete any filters after (but not including) the Windows Media Audio Decoder filter
- : 4) Delete any filters after (but not including) the ASF ICM Handler filter
- : 4) Insert a new filter (Graph->InsertFilters) called "AVI Mux" from the DirectShow filters section
- : 5) Link the ASF ACM Out to XForm In of Windows Media Audio Decoder
- : 6) Link XForm Out of Windows Media Audio Decoder to Input 1 of AVI Mux
- : 7) Link ASF ICM Out to Input 2 of AVI Mux.
- : 8) Insert a new filter called "File writer" from DirectShow section and choose a file name
- : 9) Link the AVI Out of AVI Mux to the In of your file writer
- : 10) Right-click the AVI Mux filter and choose Properties
- : 11) Choose the Full option of the Interleaving section and click OK (this makes the sound and video match up and is the whole point of the AVI format)
- : 10) Press the play button
- : 11) Wait until the play button is active again - this means the thing is finished (you can right-click on AVI Mux and look at the Current Position and Duration count to see how far in seconds the conversion has progressed during the conversion)
- : 12) Have fun editing your AVI

Q: What streaming sites are out there that I can use for free or nearly for free?

iTools.mac.com

Fairly limited QuickTime streaming. 20 MB free.
Pay for extra space (online form). Don't even bother trying to get help.

www.imagestation.com

support@imagestation.com
877-488-2880
Free limited size account. Powered by the now-defunct Zing Video.
See <http://www.imagestation.com/tour/pagefour.html>

www.singlereel.com *AND* www.radicalzoo.com

They're baaaaaaaaaack (and taken over by Radical Zoo?? It's less clear than it was last month).

"RadicalZoo is a free hosting site for streaming video, and Flash animation...Currently we are hosting QuickTime, Real Player Windows Media and Flash." (Except the help page says QuickTime only supported)
Read through their user agreement. It's a whopper. They'll own your clip and part of your soul...but it's FREE!
Contact: <http://www.singlereel.com/feedback.php>

www.playstream.com

support@playstream.com
800-874-8855
Real, Windows Media, and QuickTime formats
Accounts start at \$5/month

www.spotlife.com

www.support@spotlife.com
Real and Windows Media formats
Accounts start at \$5/month
Yahoo offers some Spotlife functionality with their new videomail services. Windows users only, apparently.

www.apple.com/idisk

(not much support)
Free 20 MB account. More space available for \$\$

www.audiovideoweb.com

questions@audiovideoweb.com
781-453-0303 Ext.202
From about \$10/month

www.guygraphics.com

support@guygraphics.com
1-800-307-4150
Commercial site with free space. Up to 25 Meg per clip.
Windows Media only

In addition, check out your ISP. Many ISPs are starting to provide video streaming as a service associated with your webspace.

(RIP iClips. 14 Feb 02)

Special thanks to: Meme Engineer, Hugh Seagraves, Heiko Recktenwald, CU from Amerzone.

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www.ericasadun.com

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iMovie Solutions from Sybex Books. In Stores Now.

Grep Foo whilst ye may, Oh Daemons of the Spring...

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