

TV VIDEO MASTER FILES

In terms of the master format for the tape itself, DigiBeta is the best quality to submit to your distributor, or the dub house that will duplicate your tapes. When you send the master, make sure you have a protection master in your possession, and provide the name of the producing agency with phone number in case there are questions.

Bars/Slates/Tones

One of the most important things to include on the master tape is referred to as "bars slate and tone." Stations have their equipment set to "unity," which simply means that it translates the digital signal on the tape or DVD one-to-one, so no calibration by the station is necessary. However, on master materials, bars and tone are always included for the rare moments then some manual override is used -- as in "off the unity grid." Simply stated, it is important to ensure that everything that was on the master tape is replicated onto all dubs made from the master and if it isn't on the master then it won't be on the tapes that stations receive.

Kill Dates

If you used union talent in your PSA, it is very important to put a "kill date" on the master tape – the date when talent payments expire. If you fail to do this, and the PSAs run beyond the buyout cycle, you could be liable for substantial union payments, and it is likely they will know.

Spot lengths/Labeling

When replicating PSA tapes for stations, it is important to know that we buy video tape stock in five-minute increments, meaning that you pay for 5 minutes of video tape, whether you use it or not. Thus, you should try to use all five minutes by providing stations various spot lengths, because you are using the full capacity of the tape and you will get more airtime by providing stations with greater scheduling flexibility.

Obviously all spot titles need to be listed by spot length, with a "TRT" Total Running Time on the master, so the dub house will know what they are dealing with.

Finally, if you encoded the master with the Nielsen SpotTrac code and/or handled the closed captioning, you need to notify your distributor or dub house of that, because that is something normally handled by the dub house prior to distribution.

Spanish Version

If you are including spots in Spanish, all PSAs should be on the same master and labeled appropriately.

TV- Digital Formats

It is not going to be long until all PSAs will be sent to the media in digital format, and Goodwill Communications is surveying stations in our database to determine which stations can accept digital files, what file formats they can use, and how they want them delivered. In the meantime, here are some guidelines for broadcast quality digital files for TV:

H.264 is capable of providing good video quality at substantially lower bit rates than previous standards (e.g. half or less the bit rate of MPEG-2, H.263, or MPEG-4 Part 2. It is used in such applications as Blu-ray Disc, videos from YouTube and the iTunes Store, DVB broadcast, direct-broadcast satellite television service, cable television services, and real-time videoconferencing.

WMV (Window Media File), .MOV (QuickTime), MPEG-4 (good format for pod-casting – codec required), DVD (Mpeg2), Digital Beta, DVCAM, DVCRPO, Beta SX, and IMX are other broadcast quality digital formats.