



Cinemasports: Compressing Movies

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GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are many ways to compress video and audio. Details often depend on your editing software and operating system, but this guide gives you a good starting point for experimentation.

Ideally, your compressed movie will be small enough in size to upload in a reasonable amount of time AND have good resolution and quality for a Cinemasports screening the very night of your submission.

MPEG4 COMPRESSION

We highly recommend that you submit the compressed version of your movie encoded through MPEG4. MPEG4 is an encoding standard that is normally packaged into a QuickTime (.mov) or Microsoft AVI file. Cinemasports will accept both .mov or .avi files encoded through MPEG4.

TOOLS

Here are some tools that will help you compress your movie using the MPEG4 format. Many editing tools may already give you the option of exporting a movie using MPEG4 compression. If your current editing tool doesn't feature MPEG4 compression for exporting movies, you may be interested in looking at the following:

QuickTime Pro 6.5 and Above (<http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>)

QuickTime Pro gives you a relatively simple interface for exporting QuickTime .mov files using an MPEG4 codec. You probably already have this if you have Final Cut Pro, but others may need to buy the relatively inexpensive software from Apple.

DivX (<http://www.divx.com/divx/download/>)

After install, the DivX codec should be available to you when you export from your regular editing software.

Xvid (source code: <http://www.xvid.org>) (windows binary:

<http://nic.dnsalias.com/xvid.html>)

Xvid is an open source project and works similar to DivX. Comes only in source code form from the official site, so if you need binaries, search their forum for locations. More suited to the tech-savvy.

AUDIO COMPRESSION

Audio compression can dramatically decrease your file size. The type of audio compression available to you may depend on your editing software and operating system, so again, it's best to experiment to strike the right balance between quality and file size.

SAMPLE COMPRESSION SETTINGS

The settings below are a good starting point for experimentation. Try different settings to see which settings give you the best quality for manageable file size. We are more likely to screen good quality movies at screenings. Therefore, we suggest that you try to maintain high quality even if upload takes time. We have successfully uploaded files around 100MB with good quality results. However, your own experience may vary depending on the speed of your connection. Adequate testing is the best way to arrive at the optimum settings for your encoding.

Video Format: MPEG4

The MPEG4 format maintains good video quality while giving small file sizes.

Video Settings:

MPEG-4 VIDEO

WIDTH 720

HEIGHT 480

Audio Settings:

MPEG-4 Audio

Sample rate 22.05kHz

Sample size 16

channels 1 (mono)

UPLOAD YOUR MOVIE

<http://www.cinemasports.com/upload/>

TEST YOUR PROCESS

The end of the Cinemasports day can be stressful as you try to submit your work by the deadline. Test your submission process before the event by exporting a similar sized movie from your editing software, compressing it, and submitting it through the internet. Testing will help you avoid heart stopping technical difficulties at the end of the day. Obviously, a broadband connection is required to submit a movie online.