

Its not just tape anymore

Because of the recent advances in both the consumer and professional electronics industries, there are now more than a dozen formats in which video programs can be delivered to the end user.

Although having this many choices can be beneficial, it can also be extremely confusing to the average user. We hope this brochure will shed some light on the various media choices and help you make an informed decision about which one is right for you.

For the purposes of this discussion, we will focus on the media formats that are most commonly used for the delivery of video depositions.

Remember, if you ever have any questions about media formats, please feel free to call us at any time.

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**LegalTek Legal Video
Services, L.L.C.**

UNDERSTANDING YOUR VIDEO CHOICES

*Raising the Bar with Video and
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VHS TAPE

The old standby VHS video cassette has been with us for almost thirty years. In that time, the VHS format has seen no improvements in image quality and only minor improvements in tape reliability due to better oxide formulations that are slightly more stable for long term storage.

PROs: The benefits of the VHS format are wide compatibility and low cost—almost everyone has access to a VCR that will play VHS tapes, and the tapes are relatively inexpensive to produce.

CONS: Specific video footage can be hard to locate and fast-forward/rewind searches can be very time consuming, as well as damaging to the tape. The image quality is very low compared to the newer digital formats. The VHS format is rapidly becoming obsolete and quality VHS tape stock is becoming harder to find.

DVDs

The Digital Video Disk (also called Digital Virtual Disk) is the highest quality video format readily available to the general public. DVD players are now very affordable and DVD recorders are even beginning to replace the VHS recorder as the home video recorder of choice.

PROs: DVDs offer image resolution that is far superior to VHS. In addition, interactive DVDRoms offer the ability to combine video with other information such as still photos, documents, or animations. They also offer the benefits of random access if the recording is properly “chaptered” during preparation of the disk.

CONS: DVDs can only be played by DVD players or on computers that have special DVD player software installed. The video data on DVDs cannot be directly used in trial presentation soft-

ware such as Sanction, Trial Director, nor even Microsoft PowerPoint. Finally, content-rich, multi-featured DVD-ROMs can be difficult and costly to make, requiring expensive authoring software and large amounts of preparation time.

VIDEO CDs

The VCD format is based on the MPEG-1 computer file format (Motion Picture Experts Group) and is the defacto video standard of the computer industry. This is the video compression format that allows video to be sent over the internet or to be easily inserted in computer programs such as Microsoft PowerPoint.

PROs: MPEG-1 files can be played on almost any modern personal computer and an MPEG-1 CD-ROM can also be played on most free-standing DVD players.

Because of this wide acceptance, MPEG-1 is the file format used in all trial support software such as Sanction-II, Trial Director, etc.

CONS: Because of the high compression ratios required for wide compatibility, image quality of MPEG-1 video is similar to VHS tapes, and the even higher compression needed to fit a 2-hour deposition on one disk can often make the quality slightly lower than VHS. *(MPEG's great usability makes this tradeoff worthwhile to most attorneys)*

YESLAW®

SYNCHRONIZED DISKS

An exciting new development in deposition video is the YesLaw synchronized video/transcript disk. YesLaw synchronizes an MPEG-1 video file with the typed transcript of the deposition.

The result is a powerful computer program that plays

your video while the transcript scrolls in an adjacent window.

PROs: The YesLaw disk allows the user to highlight any text and have the corresponding video play instantly. It also allows the user to instantly search the entire video by searching for keywords in the typed transcript. However, the most important feature of the YesLaw disk is the YesEdit software that is included on each disk. This allows the user to easily edit their own video clips and export them to other programs such as PowerPoint, Sanction-II, Trial Director, etc. This powerful feature means that even a non-technical legal assistant can now perform intricate video editing for trial preparation without hiring expensive outside video editing facilities.

CONS: Because of the time and effort required to encode the video to MPEG-1 and then to synchronize the video to the typed transcript, YesLaw disks are more expensive than other media formats. However, this cost is usually recovered many times over in the cost savings realized by using in-house office staff for video editing instead of hiring expensive outside contractors.

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