

VoiceThread Video File Compatibility

Find below the details forwarded to us by VoiceThread regarding the video codecs supported by the tool. The information is rather vague and basically boils down to a trial-and-error approach.

We have been informed that VoiceThread is preparing a more comprehensive video-specifications sheet that will eventually be posted on the VoiceThread website's help page <http://voicethread.com/help/faq/#voicethread>

In the meantime you may use the information below and ask for the assistance of one of the instructional design consultants.

VoiceThread message follows

“It seems like we should have a list of all the video file types we accept but it gets a little complicated. There are a number of 'container' formats like QuickTime, WMV, and AVI, that are like an envelope containing the video; i.e. a QuickTime movie can be encoded by close to 40 different codecs. We can convert the vast majority of them but not all, so I can't say we can accept 'all' QuickTime, wmv, or avi videos, but we do accept most. Unfortunately a little trial and error is the only way to know for sure; we're constantly adding to the list of file types we support. Having said that, I can definitely recommend the best formats, both for us to convert and to attain the highest quality possible. Here are the two favorites:

FLV: This is native Flash video file type. When you upload an flv video we don't convert it at all. What you saw before you uploaded it is what you'll get. If you're a bit savvy with video, you can export from QuickTime Pro to flv, and you can adjust the settings to get the best quality. Here are the best settings: Resize the image to 600 X 450 pixels, set the frame rate at around 15 fps, choose medium quality, and set the frequency of keyframes to that of the frame rate, i.e. if you set the frame rate to 15fps, then create a keyframe every 15 frames. If the intention of the video is to allow video doodling, than this is really important, you can even make the key frames more frequent. Our video player can only stop on key frames when pausing to allow doodling, so if they are very infrequent it will appear to jump ahead.

H.264: This is the future of video codecs in Flash. It is the highest quality Flash codec and will soon replace flv. So if you want to 'future proof' your videos I suggest using this codec to encode your videos. The same settings as before apply to get the best results, 600 X450 pixels, 15fps, a key frame every 15 frames.

You'll almost always get best results if you can go directly from the source to one of the options above, but if you have to you can use a web service like <http://zamzar.com> or similar, to convert the file to one that we can use in a VoiceThread.”
