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Handling New Media
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Assignment #2

FILE/ENCODING FORMAT—WMA

File Format Name: Windows Media Audio

File Extension(s): .wma & .asf

Date Introduced: April 1999

Dates in Use: 1999 to present

Variations: Windows Media Audio 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 Professional, 9 Lossless, 9 Voice, 10, 10 Professional

Developers: Microsoft Corporation

Open Source/Proprietary: Proprietary

Associated Operating System: Windows

Associated Application(s): Windows Media Video (WMV); WMA is a subtype of Advanced Systems Format (.asf), a wrapper for WMA and Windows Media Video

Associated Media: Hard-drives/hardware that have Video for Windows or Windows Driver Model (WDM) drivers

Compression: Lossy or Lossless

Primary Usage: storing audio data streams; create, store, “Rip” and “Burn” audio files

Risk Assessment: While it is a proprietary format, it continues to be widely adopted. The Advanced Systems Format is fully documented and available for research.

Conservation Actions: Within the Windows Media family, the lossless encoding formats are preferred (for example, WMA9 LL). However,

according to the Library of Congress, the preferred encoding format for archival recorded sound is WAVE Audio File Format with LPCM (Linear Pulse Code Modulation) audio.

Sources

PRONOM

[Sustainability of Digital Formats: Planning for Library of Congress Collections](#)

Microsoft Windows Media webpage accessed at <<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/default.mspx>>.