

Why Compromise?

PROTECT YOUR IMAGE BY ARCHIVING ON FILM.

"If you want to create images that have a lasting value over time, the only way to do that right now is on film."

Bill Dill, ASC,
Cinematographer/Professor



WHY TRASH YOUR WORK?

You invest time and money into creating your story. Why risk its future life once the current distribution run is complete? Film is the only format with a demonstrated archival lifetime of 100+ years. We can still access and view Thomas Edison's first film, "The Sneeze." Conversely, the best digital storage media have a short life span, even under optimum conditions, and digital formats are constantly changing.

When stored according to archival storage standards, black-and-white separations will last for up to 500 years, and color negative and intermediate stocks will last for hundreds of years.¹ Digital video is an improvement over analog video signals, but the storage medium is still either a magnetic tape or disk that is comparatively volatile. Once a digital signal is gone, it's gone forever.

11X THE COST.

Film has a proven track record as an archival medium. It costs about \$1,059 (US) a year² to preserve a film title. Compare that to digital files that require ongoing spending to maintain accessibility. The annual cost of preserving a 4K digital master is estimated at \$12,514 (US) per year³ — 11 times more expensive than film.

Managing the sheer volume of digital information poses its own issues, especially if you require access to original source images. Digital acquisition using uncompressed digital recording systems generates the equivalent of 13,000 to 436,000 DVDs worth of data⁴ — a significant number of disks to continually maintain for just one production. Using film separations or original film assets, you can store and ignore for hundreds of years — when stored according to archival storage standards.⁵

"Digital storage seems to be less stable and it seems to be less reliable, and it seems to be less proven. And of course that's worrisome. I mean, whenever you do work that you care about you hope that that work can exist in that condition as long as possible."

Adam Kimmel, Cinematographer

"There's also the issue of cost. You can't migrate an entire library every four to five years. It would be astronomical."

Milt Shefter, Archivist, Miljoy



"As soon as we move to a new file format, guess what? You can't access it. And that's one of the major issues."

Milt Shefter, Archivist, Miljoy

"When I die, hopefully I've left some sort of legacy. That I've got, you know, this film stock on a shelf some place and someone can resurrect it ... I don't want to leave tapes."

Sam Bayer, Director/Cinematographer

"The resolution's fantastic and you know that in 10 years, 20 years, 50 years, you can rescan at ...whatever they think of in the future."

Asa Shoul, Senior Colorist

"Advances in scanning and technology (will be) able to draw out more detail from that negative, but I am not sure there is going to be any process that will draw more detail out of a digitally acquired file."

Ben Baker, Head of Digital Lab, Framestore

"You've got to ask yourself whether that data tape drive will be around in three to five years — you take DTF: DTF2 came out and then people switched over to LTO ... and now we are up to LTO3."

Ben Baker, Head of Digital Lab, Framestore

OBSOLESCENCE. WHO SAID HISTORY NEVER REPEATS?

Since 1956, more than 80 video formats have come and gone, along with their related equipment. Not one video format is forward or backward compatible. And even if the media survived, in many cases, there is no equipment for playback. We are seeing the same trend with digital files — changing formats mean lost footage and lost opportunity.

Film has been around for more than 100 years, and it remains the state-of-the-art image capture format available today. In all of that time, the evolution of film technology has never outdated the investments people have made in cameras and related equipment. With a fresh roll of film, a filmmaker is as technologically advanced today using cameras that were made 30 or 40 years ago.

WHY LIMIT FUTURE CASH FLOWS?

Think about future revenue streams. Directors' cuts, retrospectives, online pay-per-view, mobile viewing, and whatever other distribution systems may evolve. Only film is compatible with the quality and technical requirements of any current or future broadcast or distribution format.

When you capture digitally you lock in quality to the format standard of the day. With film, as scanners and signal processing technologies continue to evolve, the same material can be rescanned to take advantage of improvements in postproduction equipment and techniques or display technologies. In other words, today's best films will look even better tomorrow.

MAKE YOUR IMAGE IMMORTAL.

Turn on your television and scan through the multitude of channels. Chances are you will see memorable motion pictures and television programs that were produced on film more than half a century ago and still look good, if not better, than when they originally appeared. If you want to leave a similar legacy for future generations to enjoy, and you want your grandkids and their kids to see your achievements, shoot it on film today and create content for tomorrow.



"In the last two years we delivered data on four different formats, two of which are completely obsolete now... 35 mm has stayed a standard for 100 years now and there is a reason for that."

Ben Baker, Head of Digital Lab, Framestore



¹ ANSI standard IT 9.11.

² The Digital Dilemma, The Science and Technology Council of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, 2007, P.1.

³ The Digital Dilemma, P.2.

⁴ The Digital Dilemma, P.13.

⁵ ANSI standard IT 9.11.

Film. No Compromise.

Kodak