

## ETC, Several Studios to Create Voluntary IMF Spec

The Entertainment Technology Center @ USC has announced a collaborative project between several movie studios to create a voluntary specification for Interoperable Master Format (IMF). The core contributors will be Disney, Paramount, Sony, and Warner Bros. The project's goal is to encourage the adoption of a uniform voluntary specification for data types and metadata, which will facilitate efficient workflow processes within and between studios and production houses.

The project will ultimately create a specification for a single digital package that can be used to output an arbitrary number of versions for varying screen sizes, resolutions, bit rates, codecs, service providers, etc. The IMF project grew out of previously independent work at the major studios. The project will also utilize input and implementation guidance from content service providers and manufacturers with close and frequent participation. Walt Ordway, formerly chief technology officer of Digital Cinema Initiatives, will act as the project director.

"The focus of ETC's work is around creation and distribution of content at any time on any device. We are pleased to help to bring together industry giants to streamline the process of creating and preparing content in a way that can more cost-effectively reach the growing plethora of distribution channels. This specification will go a long way to smooth the convergence of entertainment and technology by simplifying the preparation, storage and management processes of digital media files," says David Wertheimer, CEO and executive director of the [Entertainment Technology Center @ USC](#).

"We've been fortunate, for many years, to have standard formats for interchange – both film and tape. Now that all-digital workflows are commonplace, we need the same kind of universally-understood formats for digital master files," says Chris Carey, EVP, Worldwide Technical Operations, Paramount Pictures. Wendy Aylsworth, senior vice president, technology, Warner Bros. Technical Operations, agrees saying, "Especially considering the increasing downstream distribution channels, a master that enables cost-effective transcoding is critical."

"As a media company, we're encouraged to see ever-expanding platforms on which we can distribute movies, TV shows, and other properties. With that growth comes complexity – so we are supportive of efforts to provide more efficient means of content preparation for reaching a broader range of viewers," says Bob Lambert, senior vice president of worldwide technology strategy for The Walt Disney Company.

Bi-weekly meetings will be taking place at the studios and at ETC@USC's Anytime/Anywhere Content Lab in Los Angeles, with report-outs and input opportunities for collaborative groups periodically.

The Entertainment Technology Center @ USC [www.etcenter.org](http://www.etcenter.org)

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