MPEG or AVI? Which one to choose? by Desiree

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Choosing AVI over MPEG, or MPEG over AVI, is a simple choice to make, and should take maybe 10 seconds to decide. However, videographers and hobbyists make this appear to be a harder choice than it really is. Why I say its simple? I have some simple reasons.

Ask yourself this one question: Do you plan to do advanced editing* with the video?

= If yes, then use an uncompressed (YUY2) or low compression (HuffYUV or MJPEG) codec using the AVI file format. Use this AVI to edit in your favorite editing program (like Adobe Premiere) and then encode to MPEG-2 (for DVD) or other desired final format.

= If no, and you merely want to convert the video to VCD or DVD format, then encode directly to MPEG-1 or MPEG-2. You gain no benefits** by capturing AVI then encoding to MPEG afterwards. In fact, all it does is take more time.

* Capturing in MPEG format assumes you have a decent MPEG capture card and capture program, such as an ATI All In Wonder card using ATI MMC. Many cards and many software give poor MPEG capture results. Non-ATI users can try other programs, but the options are few and disappointing. This is the main reason I suggest ATI cards. Cards like Matrox, Canopus and Hauppauge can also give great results, using their supplied software.

** Removing commercials and cutting away unwanted footage is NOT considered advanced editing. That is basic cutting and splicing of footage. You can do this with either AVI or MPEG without reconverting the video or harming quality.

Note: Capturing in high compression codecs, like that of XVID, QuickTime or Windows Media, is not suggested. It will give lower quality video output using that method. For best results, capture with an uncompressed or low-compression codec, and then re-encode the material to the higher compression ratio.

Read more: http://www.digitalfaq.com/guides/video/introduction-record-capture.htm#ixzz0pkpZICcZ

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