

OMF Export from Avid for use in ProTools

This document will help you with your OMF exporting settings coming from Avid Editing products into Digidesign Pro Tools export.

What is an OMF?

OMF is a MediaFile and a sequence format. OMFs can contain audio and video.

However Pro Tools can only import a sequence with imbedded audio but not video. This is why users try to import OMFs with video in them will get an error message about the video.

Also using an OMF 2.0 is more compatible across the board than an OMF 1.0, so whenever possible use the OMF 2.0.

Exporting from Avid – (Overview)



Link to Current Media (not recommended for Pro Tools)

This will not copy anything and will not consolidate anything. All this setting will do is use the same references that were being used in your projects. If you are planning to move your project to a different system or facility this may not be the setting for you. Also, keep in mind that this setting may be good for you if you are low on drive space, as none of the media will be copied. You must bring the audio files with you to the Pro Tools system. They will NOT be saved within the OMF.

Copy Media and Link to Copied Media (not recommended for Pro Tools)

This option will copy the media to a location of your choice, and it will re-link the media to the newly created copied media. This function will copy all media clips involved without consolidating. So for example, if you have an hour long clip that you captured and only use one minute of it, when you copy, it will copy the entire hour of media. Keep this in mind, for some situations this could be useful, other times it just uses up too much drive space on you. You must still bring the audio files with you to the Pro Tools system. It will not be saved within the OMF.

Consolidate and Link to Consolidated Media (not recommended for Pro Tools)

This selection will duplicate only the media that you have used and link to this newly created media. So the first thing you will notice is that your bin will create new clips of the media you just consolidated. When you consolidate, you will see a selection called "Handle Length". This setting will save the extra footage (in frames) at the edge of the clips that you do not necessarily see, but may later need to create dissolves or other effects.

So for example, if you have an hour long clip that you captured and only use one minute of it, the software will only copy the minute that you used plus the supplemental handle length that you specified in the export options. This setting is useful if you are trying to conserve drive space, yet want a copy of the media used in the project. You must bring the audio files with you to the Pro Tools system. It will not be saved within the OMF.

Embed Media – Use this one with Pro Tools

This setting will include the media within the OMF file itself. The file size of the OMF will be much larger than if you are just linking to the media. Also keep in mind that this is not a consolidated embed, so the same rules are there from "Copy Media and Link to Copied Media" If you have an hour-long clip it will duplicate the entire hour and not the minute that you used. Also keep in mind that it is a good idea to keep your OMFs under 2 Gigs in size. This setting is useful if you want all of the media copied, regardless of what was used in the timeline. This is the only file where the audio files will live within the OMF.

Consolidate and Embed Media – Use this one with Pro Tools

This selection will only duplicate the media that you have used and link to this newly created media. So the first thing you will notice is that your bin will create new clips of the media you just consolidated. When you consolidate, you will see a selection called "Handle Length". We recommend you set this handle length to 6 secs (150 frames in PAL). This setting will save the extra footage (in frames) at the edge of the clips that you do not necessarily see, but may later need in create dissolves or other effects.

And remember from before, that the embed will include the media within the OMF file itself. The file size of the OMF will be much larger than if you are just linking to the media but will use less space than Embed Media above. Also keep in mind that it is a good idea to keep your OMFs under 2 Gigs in Size.

This setting is useful for situations where you may need the media to fit in a smaller storage capacity. But also keep in mind that Pro Tools will not import embedded video. This is also the most commonly used setting that editors use.

Exporting from Avid – (How to do it)

Create a new sequence in Avid. Put all of the audio, and only the audio, in the new sequence. Make sure there is no trace of video in the sequence. Next, consolidate your new sequence. Now, make an embedded OMF v2.0

To check it works, make sure the Avid can open that OMF and reference its media. Take your Avid drives offline. Import your freshly created OMF into Avid. If you created the OMF correctly, it will open without complaint. If it complains, investigate what is missing and resolve it before you send it on the dubbing stage.

If the sequence opens with no media available then the editor did the consolidate AFTER creating the OMF document.

Exporting from Avid MC Adrenaline – (How to do it)

In Avid MC Adrenaline highlight the sequence to be omf'd and hit apple D to duplicate it.

1. Open the duplicated sequence and delete the video track.
2. Then click File>Export, and set the export setting to Untitled and hit Options button.
3. Set Export As to OMF 2.0
4. Check the box Include all Audio tracks in sequence.
5. Set Export Method to - 'Embed Media'
6. Set Convert Audio File Format to - 'Project' (this maintains the current file type as it is in the Avid)
7. Save it and then choose a name and save to your desired location.