



Major Markets: Video Ad Specs

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Media Specs

Digital Video Preferred Spec

File Format	Frame Size	Frame Rate	Video Codec	Audio Channels	Audio Codec (uncompressed)	Sample/bit rate
.mov	1920 x 1080 (1080p)	23.976 (23.98 / 24)	MAC: Apple Pro Res 422 HQ PC: Avid DNxHD*	5.1 + Lt/Rt	MAC: PCM (.aif) PC: PCM (.wav)	48kHz/24-bit

Additional Acceptable Video Specs

File Format	Frame Size (Resolution)	Frame Rate (fps)	Video Codec
.mov .avi .mp4	2K Flat (1998 x 1080)	23.976 23.98 24 29.97 30 59.94 60	Animation
	2K Full Container (2048 x 1080)		Apple Animation
			Apple ProRes 422 (HQ)
			Apple ProRes 422 (LT)
	2K Scope (2048 x 858) (2048 x 854)		Apple ProRes 422
			Apple ProRes 4444
	1080p (1920 x 1080)		AVC Coding
			AVdn
	HDV (1440 x 1080)		Avid DNxHD
			DVCPRO HD 1080i/60
	720p (1280 x 720)		DVCPRO HD 1080p/30
			DVCPRO HD 720p/60
	SD (720 x 486) (720 x 480)		H.264
			HDV 1080i60
SD Widescreen (720 x 404) (720 x 405) (720 x 406)	HDV 1080p30		
	HDV 720p30		
	HDV 720p60		
	Sony XDCAM		
	Uncompressed 10-bit 4:2:2		
	Uncompressed 10-bit		
	Uncompressed 8-bit 4:2:2		
	Uncompressed 8-bit None		
	V210		
	WRAW		
	YUV422		

Please Note

- All media will be converted for playback in the theatre environment by NCM's expert staff using state-of-the-art production tools. NCM's conversion process minimizes unwanted artifacts or interlaced video fields which often occur with software NLE up-conversion methods. ANY formats NOT listed above will be rejected.
- Audio tracks are typically included as a complete file, but separate files are accepted.
- All files are subject to review and may be flagged/rejected for issues beyond basic file format. The FirstLook pre-show is shown in a 16:9 aspect ratio. Any video formats not using a 16:9 aspect ratio will be minimally stretched and/or cropped.
- The Avid DNxHD Quicktime codec is available for free at http://avid.force.com/pkb/articles/en_US/download/en423319. If video was shot and edited at 1080p, export your video using the 1080p/23.976 DNxHD (RGB 444) 360 10-bit preset. If this selection is not available, export your video using the 1080p/23.976 DNxHD 175 10-bit preset.

Audio Specs

<p>*PREFERRED*</p> <p>Discrete 5.1 Channel</p> <p>Down-mixes to Lt/Rt in theater environment</p>	<p>Best Quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing discrete channels allows for better control over the audio. • Channel Designations: 1=Left, 2=Right, 3=Center, 4=LFE (sub), 5=L-Surround, 6=R-Surround (Optional but preferred: 7=Lt, 8=Rt) • If you have ONLY 5.1 discrete audio (and not Lt/Rt) please provide. • If you cannot provide a 5.1 mix on tape or as a digital file, please submit as individual mono 48 kHz .wav files on disc, but clearly identify each file as to the channel it represents (i.e. L,R,C,LFE,Ls,Rs).
<p>Lt/Rt</p>	<p>Very Good</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consists of 2-channel matrix Lt/Rt mix (analogous to Dolby Pro Logic). • This audio will provide both Left total (Lt) and Right total (Rt) sound channels and will decode into Left, Center, Right, Sub and Mono Surrounds when decoded at the theater.
<p>Stereo</p>	<p>Good</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consists of 2-channel discrete audio. • Stereo sound may not enable playback in all speakers in the theater.
<p>Dual Mono</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT USE! Dual Mono is often confused with stereo, but in fact it is the exact same audio in both left and right channels (often caused by not panning audio tracks in video editing software prior to export). • Mono will only come out of the center channel speaker. Either will result in low quality playback in the theater and may be rejected.
<p>Mono</p>	<p>Poor</p>	

Digital Audio Specs

File Format	Channels	Compression	Sample Rate	Sample Size
.wav	5.1 + Lt/Rt	PCM (Uncompressed)	48 kHz	24-bit
.aif	5.1		44.1 kHz	16-bit
.mp3	Lt/Rt Stereo			

**Must be rendered using the Highest Quality setting and should be rendered at a CONSTANT bit rate.*

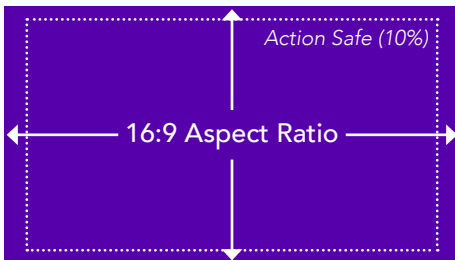
Please Note

- There must be some form of audio on every ad — it cannot be silent.
- Any client/agency providing audio tracks must have appropriate distribution, sync and/or licensing rights and must be able to provide written documentation and authorization to that end.
- NCM does not require a Dolby® certified mix in any case.
- All audio tracks are subject to quality and content review.

A: Cinema Creative Best Practices

Video Best Practices

- **Produce in High Definition 1080p** from capture to delivery: This will enhance the color space, resolution, motion, and image quality while reducing unwanted artifacts.
- **Use bold contrasting colors** to make the visuals “pop”: use of dark colored backgrounds and light colored text is best. Ambient light in the theater auditoriums tends to wash-out ads that are very light. Use thick, bold fonts rather than thin, script fonts.
- **Live-action footage frame rate:** edit and render your final spot at the same frame rate that the video was captured at to avoid interlacing and other field issues.
- **DO NOT up-convert your video file(s)** to match NCM’s preferred spec. Instead, provide NCM with the original, untouched spot and our professional digital encoding technicians will up-convert it for you.
- **SD Content:** DO NOT extend essential elements or graphics over the upper and lower black bars.
- **Images SHOULD fill the full frame**, but DO NOT place chyron, copy, or other essential elements outside the Action Safe margin. Elements that fall outside of the Action Safe margin may be cropped.



Aspect	Frame Size	Action Safe
16:9 (HD)	1920 x 1080	1728 x 972
16:9 (HD)	1280 x 720	1152 x 648
4:3 (SD)	720 x 480	648 x 432

Audio Best Practices

- Provide 5.1 discrete audio as well as an Lt/Rt mix.
- When mixing Lt/Rt, it is recommended that you boost the surround channels an additional 4dB in order to fill out the surround channels better in the large environment.
- Many auditorium subwoofers are set up on crossovers of 120Hz or lower so take that into consideration when setting up your bass management.
- Final playback in the auditorium will be 75-78 dBc average on an SPL meter. NCM recommends using this as a guide when mixing your audio.
- NCM prefers content that does not exceed -10 dBFS peaks. If using an LKFS meter it should not exceed -24 LKFS. The VO track should start no sooner than :01 and end no later than :01 before the end of the spot to avoid clipping.

B: Content Guidelines

While striving to meet the needs of our advertisers, NCM must also be sensitive to the interests of moviegoers, theatre circuits, and movie studios alike. NCM has established the following guidelines to ensure the *FirstLook*, LEN, digital and lobby promotion programs promote an entertaining, relaxing atmosphere to enhance the movie-going experience.

NCM reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject, ratings-restrict, or request modifications to any ad it deems inappropriate for certain viewing audiences. Therefore, the tone and texture of material must be suitably mild, per the MPAA ratings standards. Any stylistic approach that presents material in a dark, threatening, frightening, morbid, aggressive, alarming or sexual nature or depicts alcohol may be deemed inappropriate and may be subject to ratings restrictions.

The promotion or inclusion of the following subject matter is PROHIBITED:

- Adult-oriented subject matter, including without limitation, nudity, sensuality, sexual aids, toys, clubs, entertainment, 900 numbers or events
- Promotion of tobacco, tobacco use, including smoke shops, cigar bars, e-cigarettes, vape shops and hookah lounges
- Graphic, disturbing or unattractive medical images
- Obscene or confrontational language
- Promotion of drug use or any illegal activity
- Personal messaging including marriage proposals, anniversaries, birthdays, etc.
- Psychic advertising
- Birth control products, pro-life or pro-choice organizations, campaigns or causes, any mention of abortion counseling or services
- Use of images, photos, logos, video, music or voice-over talent for which the advertiser has not secured all applicable licenses or authorization for in-theatre use
- Use of MPAA banner or any imitation thereof, unless advertiser has received and can provide an appropriate copyright license
- Anything that reflects negatively on circuits, movies or movie-going (i.e., ticket/concession pricing, movie quality, etc.) or anything that may adversely affect attendance
- Products of services that violate any circuit beverage agreements or exclusive contractual relationships, including food or beverage advertising deemed competitive with circuit agreements
- Display of inactive web addresses
- The promotion of firearms, weapons, ammunition, shooting ranges, gun clubs or firearm sales, etc.
- Shock advertising or fear campaigns
- Political advertising – the only exception is a generic, non-partisan “get out and vote” message
- No “text to donate” messaging and absolutely no fundraising of any kind

The following subject matter will be flagged for review, and NCM may require edits:

- Religious ads, except on a local basis, advertising time and location for religious services, events or activities
- Promotion of alcohol or alcohol use
- Support organizations and mention of specific diseases, testing and related medications
- Violence, explosions, or incidental appearance of firearms or weapons
- Promotion of lottery, lotto or gambling will be restricted to PG13 & R ratings
- Drug prevention campaigns will be restricted to PG13 & R ratings
- Reproductive health
- Texting/call-to-action campaigns may not be permitted in some circuits

Please send story-boards, rough cuts or demo media for advanced preview, as all creative is reviewed internally by NCM. Please contact your local Account Director if you have additional questions or concerns.

C: Common Media Rejection Issues

	Problem	Solution
Media	Unsupported Digital Media	Supply media per NCM specs. See Media Specs on page 2 .
	Pillarboxed Video Placing a 4:3 aspect ratio file within a 16:9 aspect ratio frame	
Video	Action Safe Critical elements like logos and text outside of the Action Safe frame will likely be cropped by the theater screen masking.	
	Interlaced Video	Review and reformat your media per the Media Specs on page 2 of this document. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-render • Re-edit • Check Video Signal & Equipment • Check Time Code • Check Frame Rate
	Digital Video Hit	
Rolling Video		
	Video Drop-out	
Audio	Audio Drop Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Audio Signal and/or tape for damage. • Provide audio files per Audio Specs on page 3 and Media Specs on page 2.
	No Audio	NCM will add stock music unless directed otherwise.
	Audio Levels	NCM does not have a loudness measurement requirement, however, we prefer content that does not exceed -10 dBFS.
Content	Content Violations Some content may be rating restricted but occasionally some content is not permissible and will result in a rejection.	Review Appendix B: Regional Content Guidelines on page 5 .