

Definitions

Introduction to multimedia

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anti-aliasing	Smoothing the jagged edges of a bitmap graphic. When diagonal or curved lines are put in bitmap (non-vector) form for display on a monitor or a printout, these shapes must be made with square pixels; any lines that are not vertical or horizontal have a stair-stepped appearance. Anti-aliasing changes the pixels along the edges of the line into varying shades of gray or in-between color, in order to make the edge appear smoother.
ASF	<i>Advanced Streaming Format</i> . A streaming technology developed by Microsoft for transmitting audio and video over the Internet. Intended to supercede AVI.
AVI	<i>Audio Video Interleaved</i> . A file format for video developed by Microsoft. AVI file names usually end with <code>.avi</code> .
bitmap graphic	A.k.a. raster graphic. An image composed of a pattern of dots (pixels), each of which can take on a different color.
BMP	An uncompressed bitmap-graphic file format used by the Windows operating systems. Supports 24-bit color (16.7 million colors). BMP file names usually end with <code>.bmp</code> .
GIF	<i>Graphic Interchange Format</i> . A lossless-compressed bitmap-graphic file format commonly used on the Web for non-photographic images. Supports 8-bit color (256 colors). GIF file names usually end with <code>.gif</code> .
GIF89a	A variant of the GIF file format that allows one color in an image to appear transparent.
helper application	A program that a Web browser launches in order to display a file of a particular type. A helper application is similar to a plug-in, in terms of functionality; however, the former runs in a window of its own, whereas the latter runs within your browser's window.
JPEG	<i>Joint Photographic Experts Group</i> . A lossy-compressed bitmap-graphic file format commonly used on the Web for photographs. Supports 24-bit color (16.7 million colors). JPEG file names usually end with <code>.jpg</code> .
lossless compression	A.k.a. reversible compression. A type of file compression that decreases a graphic's file size without sacrificing the graphic's quality.
lossy compression	A type of file compression that decreases a graphic's file size by sacrificing some of the graphic's quality.
MPEG	<i>Moving Picture Experts Group</i> . A lossy-compressed file format for audio and video. Several variants of the MPEG standard exist: MPEG-1 is a standard for CD-ROM audio and video; MPEG-2 is a standard for full-screen, broadcast quality video; MPEG-3 (a.k.a. MP3) is a standard for digital sound files; MPEG-4 is a standard for video telephony.
multimedia	The computerized combination of several audio and/or visual media (<i>e.g.</i> , animation, images, music, slides, text, voices, video, <i>etc.</i>). Multimedia applications are often interactive programs like encyclopedias, games, sales presentations, <i>etc.</i> Multimedia software is often distributed on CD-ROMs,

	since multimedia files take up a lot of space. However, like other software, multimedia can also be distributed via the Web.
plug-in	Software that extends the capabilities of an application. For example, Photoshop's functionality can be enhanced by installing additional effects and filters into its "Plug-ins" folder. Similarly, the capabilities of Internet Explorer and Netscape can be extended with plug-ins that provide additional multimedia capabilities.
QuickTime	A file format for video developed by Apple Computer. More technically, it is a format for directly capturing digital multimedia, for editing that media, for delivering that media, and for playing back that media, and it includes a framework and a set of tools for assisting in these processes. QuickTime file names usually end with .mov.
Real Audio	The de facto standard for streaming audio data over the Web. RealAudio was developed by RealNetworks and supports FM-stereo-quality sound.
Real Video	A streaming technology developed by RealNetworks for transmitting video over the Internet.
Shockwave	A technology developed by Macromedia that enables Web pages to include multimedia. To create a Shockwave "object" (<i>i.e.</i> , program), you use a program called Director and then compress the object with a program called Afterburner. You then insert a reference to the "shocked" file in your Web page. To view a Shockwave object, you need the Shockwave plug-in for your browser.
TIFF	<i>Tagged Image File Format.</i> A bitmap-graphic file format commonly used for scanned images. Supports 24-bit color (16.7 million colors). TIFF file names usually end with .tif.
vector graphic	An image composed of lines and shapes, each of which is defined by a mathematical formula. File formats of vector graphics include EPS (Encapsulated PostScript) and PICT.
Vivo	A streaming technology developed by Vivo Software for transmitting video over the Internet. Vivo file names usually end with .viv.
WAV	A digitized sound file format popular on Windows computers. WAV file names usually end with .wav.