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QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

LTO BARCODE LABELS

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1. Introduction

There are a range of options for storage of digital camera negative files including solid state disk, mechanical hard disk, and digital tape media such as LTO - this stands for Linear Tape Open, due to it being an open standard supported by several manufacturers.

LTO has become the predominant choice of long-term archive media for motion picture data because it is reliable, inexpensive, and widely available.

When using LTO to archive data it is critical that the media is catalogued and organised accurately so that files can be quickly and easily retrieved. Barcodes are used to achieve this.

Barcoding of tapes provide the following benefits:

- Each tape has a unique identifying barcode for accurate and consistent referencing.
- A Tape Library can read barcodes. This is a machine that can be loaded with many tapes and then read data from specific tapes based on the barcode so that data retrieval can be automated.

2. Barcode Label Information

Many companies can provide a customised set of LTO barcode labels for your production. The barcodes are normally in the following format:

The barcode has three sections:

- The first three characters ('LTO' in the above example) should be a code of letters unique to the production. They should be the same for all tapes used on the production, and to retain confidentiality these letters should have no reference to the production name.
- The next three characters ('000' in the above example) should be a unique number for the tape, normally starting at 001 and incrementing up from there.
- The last two characters are a code for the LTO media generation - L6 for LTO-6, L5 for LTO-5. This determines the capacity of the tape, and whether it is compatible with the tape drives being used.

3. Formatting of LTO media

LTO tapes are commonly formatted as an LTFS volume (Linear Tape File System). This is an open standard, and means the tape can be read on any system that has the correct drivers installed.

When the tape is formatted the volume is given a name – like a computer hard disk – and this is displayed when the tape is loaded on a system. If the tape has a barcode this should be used as the volume name when formatting the tape.

Notes

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