sermon.net: Audio 101

Revised March 2014

WELCOME!

To help get you get started uploading audio, here is a basic overview of the Sermon Studio system. Our system currently accepts .mp3 and .wma format audio files.

BEST PRACTICE: For best results name your files something simple with only letters and numbers in the filename. For example, the March 9, 2014 service could be SundayMorning20140309.mp3. This will sort the files easily on your computer to locate them later, and will insure our system doesn't have trouble processing a file with "bad" characters. Please also be sure your files are uploaded from your computer, rather than a flash drive, external storage device, or a networked drive on another computer.

IS YOUR AUDIO ON A CD?

If your audio is on a CD, you will need to rip the CD and create an upload friendly audio file on your computer system. You can use any CD ripping software to perform this task, just make sure the file you save to your computer is an accepted format. Once you upload this file, our server will convert your file to the settings you have set up in your Transcoding Profile Template (very bottom of Episode page below the Upload Center). There are links to ripping programs at the end of this document.

IS YOUR AUDIO FILE ON YOUR COMPUTER SYSTEM?

If your audio file is on your computer system, you may want to reduce the size of the file to save time during upload. You can use any file conversion software to perform this task, just make sure the file is an accepted format. Once you upload this file, our server will convert your file to the settings you have set up in your Transcoding Profile Template (very bottom of Episode page below the Upload Center). There are links to conversion programs at the end of this document.

Our system accepts the following formats (more formats will be added in the future):

.mp3 , .wma

To reduce storage usage within your archive, and to save time uploading the file, we recommend reducing the file size by using the settings below.

Once your files are uploaded our servers will convert them to our default settings, or the settings you have saved in your Transcoding Profile Template. Target these settings when creating your files, then match them when publishing into an Episode for best results.

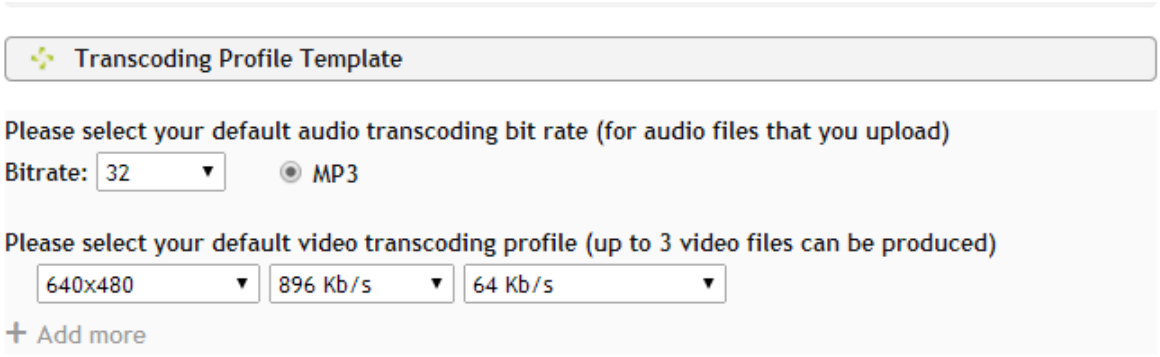
Audio Format: mp3
Audio Bitrate: 32, 64, 128 or 196 kbps
Audio Sampling rate: 44100

Audio Channel: same as source (if recording in stereo use stereo, if not use mono)

Please note that if your settings are higher than these the file will be compressed to the level you choose within your Transcoding Profile Template.

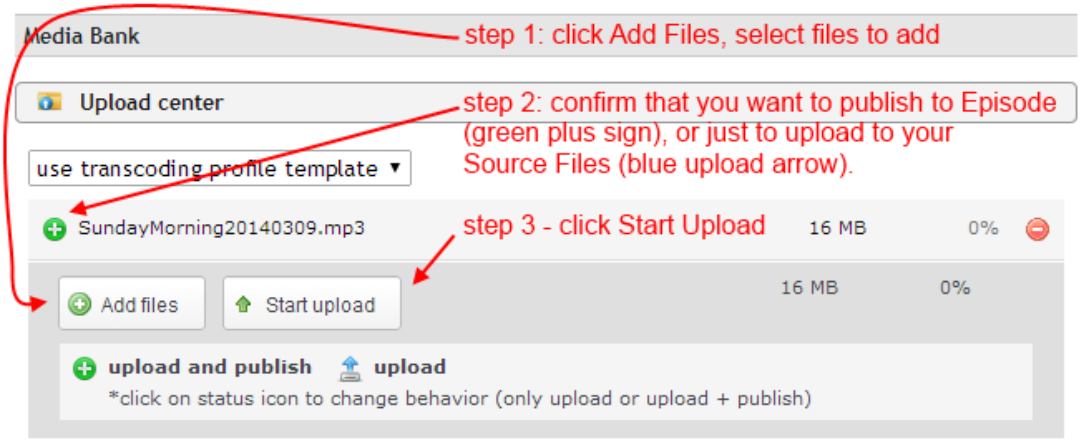
TRANSCODING PROFILE TEMPLATE

Please take a moment to set this up before you add media. After you add a new Episode, or within any existing episode, at the very bottom of the Episode page you will see your Transcoding Profile Template. This is where you set the defaults for how our system processes your files when you publish from your Media Bank > Source Files into an Episode. If you upload an .mp3 file at 128 kbps, and have selected 64 kbps in your Profile, then it will save the final copy for your audience to access at 64 kbps, and you can see the new file in the Media > Audio section within this Episode once the Publishing/Conversion process is complete.

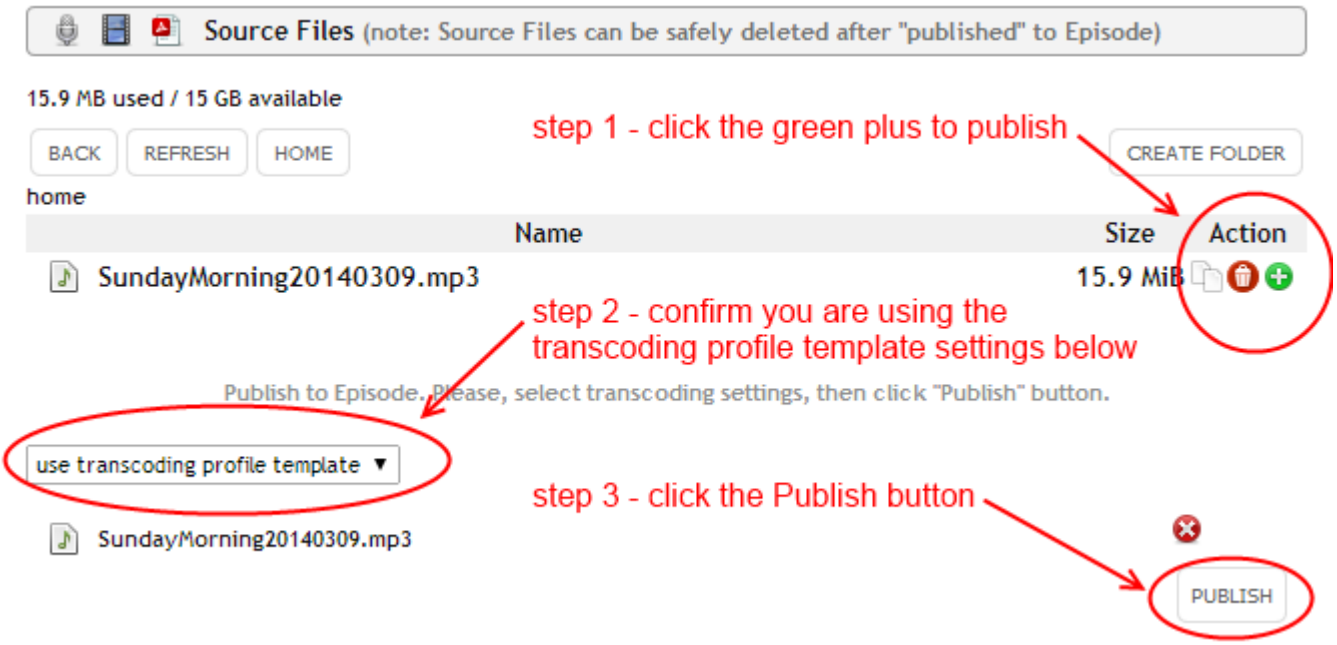


UPLOADING YOUR FILE

Now that your file is in an upload friendly format on your computer, you can login to your sermon.net Sermon Studio, add a new Episode, enter the Details, then scroll down the Media Bank > Upload Center. Click Add Files to select the files to upload, then Start Upload. By default they will upload and publish to the Episode you are working in (making them available to the user), you can click the green + icon next to the file name to change it to only upload (will just put the file in your Media Bank > Source Files so you can publish it to an Episode later).



All uploaded files go to your Source Files in the Media Bank. If you upload and publish you can delete the file from the Source Files once you've confirmed it published correctly into the Episode and is available for the audience – you can scroll up to the Media section within this episode and click Published Media to preview what was published.



Your Source Files are available within any Episode in your Archive. First Visit the Archive page, click the Episode you wish to assign files to, then scroll down to the Media Bank > Source Files. Click the plus sign on the right side to publish a file into the Episode you are viewing. You'll then select to use the transcoding profile template or manually set your profile for this particular file to be converted. Then click the Publish button on the right side. After a few minutes the file will be complete and you can see details under the Media section just above the Media Bank section on the Episode page.

SOFTWARE TO PREPARE YOUR FILES

To rip your audio file from a CD, we suggest using Format Factory or iTunes. Either of these programs will also convert files that are already on your computer.

Download Format Factory: www.formatoz.com
Format Factory Help File: http://snstudiosupport.sermoncampus.info/pdf/20000772

Download Audacity (edit and convert to .mp3): http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/
Audacity Help File: http://snstudiosupport.sermoncampus.info/pdf/20000771

Download iTunes: http://www.apple.com/itunes/download/

In iTunes you can set your preferences to import as .mp3, as well as merge multiple tracks into one .mp3 file.

To import as .mp3, go to Edit > Preferences, a popup will appear. On the General tab click Import Settings, then another popup labeled Import Settings will appear. Choose MP3 and the bitrate that corresponds with your CD (higher is higher quality), then click OK. Any CD you rip in the future will be saved with these settings.

If you have files in your library that are not in .mp3 format, you can right click them and then select “Create MP3 version”.

RIPPING A CD WITH MULTIPLE TRACKS

If your sermon audio is in multiple tracks on a CD you will need to "join" these tracks as you rip the CD. We recommend installing and using itunes to do this (free download).

1. Download and install itunes: http://www.apple.com/itunes/download/

2. Once installed, run the software (iTunes).

3. If this is your first time to rip a CD using iTunes, you'll want to change the preferences iTunes uses. Click on the Edit menu, then click Preferences. A popup window will appear, on the General tab click the "Import Settings" box. In the "Import Using" section select "MP3 Encoder", you can adjust the "Setting" to the quality level you desire (our system will let you choose between 32, 64, 128, 296, the latter being higher quality). Then click OK. This will return you back to the Preferences popup window.

4. To make it easier to locate the files you save when ripping CDs: From the Edit > Preferences popup box, click Advanced at the top, and you will see the location that iTunes is saving your media to on your computer. If you'd like to create a new folder for the CDs you will be ripping you can click "Change" and add a new folder (then click Select Folder). Once you're done click the OK button to close the Preferences popup window. For example you can create a “Sermons” folder on your desktop to keep them from getting mixed in with your music library.

5. Insert the CD into your CD-Drive (the tracks will show in the iTunes display window).

6. Right click on Track 01, and click "Get Info". In the popup that appears click the "Info" tab at the top, then enter the Name of the service - this will allow you to locate it more easily on your computer.

7. Go to ‘Edit’ and click on ‘Select All’ (all tracks will be highlighted in blue)

8. Go to ‘Options’ above the list on the right side and click on ‘Join CD Tracks’

9. In the upper right click on Import CD – the system will then begin the joining process

10. Once completed, log into your Sermon Studio and use the Media Upload Center to select the audio file from your computer, and Begin Upload.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us through the Help Desk within your Sermon Studio, by email at support@sermon.net, or by calling 800.807.1014 x2.