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Subject: Archaic Storage Media Sermon

Posted by [Dean Kukral](#) on Tue, 03 Feb 2004 15:30:44 GMT

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The old geezers on the group reminiscing about magnetic tape brings to mind the issue of preservation of music. I am still using thirty year old speakers and a twenty-five year old amplifier, but I have seen media come and go. Reel-to-reel tape suffers from bleed-through and should be rewound every now and then. Also, heat will degrade the data over time, so tapes need to be stored in a freezer. I don't know how serious these problems are, but when I worked at NCR, we stored our back-ups in salt mines far below ground. I wonder if there are still a bunch of (unplayable?) tapes down there? Wayne's point about pro equipment is well-taken, but still delays the inevitable. Vinyl is not final. It is a fluid. Every time a record is played the highs are worn off a bit. When it just sits, it flows, and the highs flow away. It's a joke what some people will pay for a turntable to play scratchy old vinyl on. (I gave my collection to the Goodwill. Can you believe that some people are willing to actually pay money for forty year old vinyl!!!) So, copy your stuff to cassettes? I'm surprised you can still buy a cassette player! Can you get an 8-track? (Long ago I gave the neighborhood kid my cassettes and player.) Cassette tape suffers from the same problems stated above for reel-to-reel. Copy your stuff to Hi-Fi Beta. Or VHS. Several years ago I purchased an expensive S-VHS. Shortly after that I got a TIVO, and have not used the VHS since. What DVD has not done, TIVO has. VCR's are dead. Of course, they are magnetic tape, too. Got any software in 5" floppies? (Or 8" floppies??) Fat chance trying to find a player. Even if the s/w would run under your O.S. Who needs any floppy when you can use a gigabyte compactflash card to transfer data or a cd to distribute it? And, floppies are magnetic media, too, and suffer from heat. CD's, even DVD's won't be around much longer. Twenty years from now every piece of recorded music currently in existence from Marlena Dietrich to Britney Spears will be unplayable and lost, unless someone copies it time and time again to the latest medium. Oops, I misspoke myself. Some of Thomas Edison's stuff may still be playable. You know, those old cylinders. Because they do not require hi-tech to be played.

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