

3 July 2009

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[No Codec Requirements for the HTML 5 Standard](#)



Browser makers have failed to find common grounds in codec support for the proposed HTML 5 standard
W3C

As the browser makers have failed to find common grounds

Among squabbles and disagreements, specific codec requirements for the `<video>` and `<audio>` tags may be removed from the proposed HTML 5 standard. Ian Hickson, editor of the HTML 5 specification for the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) made his concerns and decisions known saying that without a general consensus among browser makers he could not make any codecs mandatory in the standard, for now.

"After an inordinate amount of discussions, both in public and privately, on the situation regarding codecs for `<video>` and `<audio>` in HTML5, I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that there is no suitable codec that all vendors are willing to implement and ship," Hickson [wrote](#). "I have therefore removed the two subsections in the HTML5 spec in which codecs would have been required, and have instead left the matter undefined, as has in the past been done with other features like `` and image formats, `<embed>` and plugin APIs, or Web fonts and font formats."

The `<video>` and `<audio>` tags are being proposed for introduction in the HTML standard to allow web developers to use a single, simple and preferably non-proprietary way of adding media to web sites. Most browser makers support the tags, with the notable exception of Microsoft's Internet Explorer, not exactly known for its groundbreaking features in the past; however, a consensus on what codecs to use to power the video and audio support hasn't been met.

Most browser makers and experts would prefer using the open-source, royalty-free Ogg Vorbis codec for audio and Ogg Theora for video. These are currently supported by Mozilla in Firefox 3.5, Opera 10 and the latest Google Chrome builds. Another popular proposal is the H.264 video codec supported by Google Chrome and Apple's Safari. However, Mozilla and Opera refuse to use it as it requires a license they claim too restrictive, in Mozilla's case, and too expensive in Opera's. Apple on the other hand has no support for the Ogg codecs in Quicktime, the multimedia backend for Safari, and doesn't plan to introduce one with worries of issues with the uncertain patents and lack of hardware support.

While Google does support both codecs in its Windows implementation of the Chrome browser, it couldn't secure licensing for the open-source offering, Chromium. With none of the browser makers willing to change their views there will be no codec requirements in HTML 5 for now.