

All Tapes Are Not Created Equal



The image above was taken yesterday. This is a new order that just came into my studio. At first glance there doesn't seem like anything is amiss. These are 8mm tapes – could be Hi-8 or Digital 8 – but definitely something that we should be able to convert into a digital form.

Most people are aware of the [evolution of video tapes](#). First came the Betamax. Closely followed by VHS at which time the two of them battled for dominance in the market. VHS-C was introduced shortly thereafter allowing for the production of smaller camcorders. Then various versions of the 8mm camera and tape were introduced. Followed by the mini-DV tapes and

cameras. After that, digital cameras that were able to record onto memory chips or sticks became the rage.

But what was brought into my studio did not fall into one of these categories. True, they are 8mm tapes containing home movie footage of my client. But my client was raised in a European country and so these tapes were recorded with a PAL camera. They will not play on US machines which use the NTSC format of video recording.

Fortunately for my client, I have a PAL playback device that will not only allow me to play his tapes... it will allow me to pass them through an international converter to capture the files in the NTSC format thereby allowing him to watch them with his US equipment.

If you ever discover media that you aren't sure about... bring them by the studio. I'll be happy to take a look and let you know what it is that you found. And if I don't know, so much the better... I love learning about new obsolete media.

Michael Ondrasik and Home Video Studio specialize in the preservation of family memories through the digitalization of film, videotapes, audio cassettes, photos, slides, and more. For more information, call 352-735-8550 or visit our [website](#).