

# Digital Videotape Masters

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These days, there is no good reason to make a videotape master unless someone requires it of you, but if your film does well, odds are high that you'll have to deliver it to someone on digital videotape. Digital videotape is still a viable way to master your final product, and HDCAM-SR mastering is a commonly required delivery format for television networks, VOD distributors, and some film festivals.

If you need to make an HDCAM-SR master, you need to decide whether you want to do it yourself using your editing system and a rented video deck or go to a postproduction facility.

If you shot on a digital format, you can save a lot of money by creating a master yourself. The quality of your master is entirely dependent on how well your footage was shot and how much care you took with your finishing and color grading.

You'll also need to add some hardware to your system. First, you'll need a video card or breakout box that adds HD-SDI outputs to your system. Second, you'll need to rent an HDCAM-SR deck (Figure 19.7). To really do things properly and to ensure the best quality, you should also have a mixing board for audio and a hardware waveform monitor and vectorscope. In Chapter 16, "Color Grading," we talked about how to read waveforms and vectorscopes. In addition, there is a more detailed discussion on the Chapter 13 page of the website at [www.thedigitalfilmmakinghandbook.com](http://www.thedigitalfilmmakinghandbook.com).

One thing to keep in mind—if you need a QC report for your digital videotape master, it might make more sense to have the same facility create the videotape and provide the QC report. That way, if there are technical problems in the QC report that are the responsibility of the facility, they'll be able to fix it on the spot and hopefully at no charge to you.



**Figure 19.7**

You'll also need to buy or rent an HDCAM SR VTR.