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White Paper]

The versatility of the TIFF format has made it very attractive for memory institutions for long term archival of their digital images. However, since the TIFF format offers such a great flexibility, it is not guaranteed that in the future a standard TIFF reader will be able to read some TIFF images. The limitations of the baseline TIFF are too severe for many applications in digital archiving. In this sense, TIFF/A is not a new file format but a version of the TIFF format that is suitable for long term archival.

For further information: download here the [WHITE PAPER](#).

Why TIFF/A?

The versatility of the TIFF format has made it very attractive for memory institutions for long term archival of their digital images. However, since the TIFF format offers such a great flexibility, it is not guaranteed that in the future a standard TIFF reader will be able to read some TIFF images.

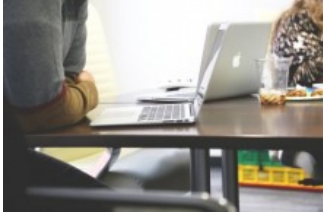
The limitations of the baseline TIFF are too severe for many applications in digital archiving. It is important that, besides crucial technical metadata such as ICC color profiles (in case of color images) also important descriptive metadata is stored within the image file. Having descriptive metadata available (such as content description, iconography, copyright and ownership information etc.) is crucial for every archive. Having this information in the same file as the image data guarantees that this information will always be associated with the image.

The TIFF/A standard defines a subset of standard TIFF tags which are either required, optional or forbidden for the purposes of long term archival. Within this context, the goal must be that:

- The image can be opened with standard software even in the far future. Since the TIFF/A documentation is open and simple, even in case there is no standard software around, a reader can be programmed easily in the future which will render the image correctly and extract the essential descriptive metadata.
- The image data does not contain features that are not documented and therefore cannot be understood and rendered correctly in the future.

Conforming to the TIFF/A standard will guarantee that the essential digital information of a image file always can be read and interpreted correctly. Since TIFF/A is a subset of the TIFF standard, all current TIFF readers are able to correctly and completely render TIFF/A just out-of-the-box.

[Image File Formats, Digital Archival and TIFF-A](#)



About Us]

The TIFF/A Standard initiative is promoted by the [Digital Humanities Lab](#) of the University of Basel, the [Agents Research Lab](#) of the University of Girona and [Easy Innova](#) with the support of many interested memory institutions. This standard will be created in parallel with [DPF Manager](#), an open source TIFF format validator that, in addition to the current TIFF ISO Standards, will be the first conformance checker for the TIFF/A new standard. This initiative has been boosted by [PREFORMA](#), a PCP project that aims to address the challenge of implementing good quality standardised file formats for preserving data content in the long term.