



Your Guide to "Going Digital"



Presented by HTH Engineering, Inc. For more information, please visit <http://www.startstop.com> or call us toll free at 866-254-0714

So, you're used to using cassette tapes and a cassette transcriber and have no clue on how to get setup digitally? Well, we at HTH Engineering are here to help!

The following information will provide you with a good idea on how to get started, where to find information and products, and how to make that move to "go digital." We have sales representatives available Mon.-Fri. from 8:30 am to 6:00 pm EST, so if you have questions, just give us a call!

First and foremost, let's get a brief idea of the entire picture. It consists of three parts:



Recording Equipment



Transferring Files



Transcription Equipment

Now that we have all the parts in line, let's discuss a little bit about each one.

Recording Equipment



On the recording end of things, the user can consist of a lawyer, doctor, radiologist, journalist, etc; someone who dictates during the day and is in need of having files transcribed. There are various options to choose from when looking for recording equipment. A few of those options may include:

Digital Recorder- a handheld device that the user can take on the road or use in the office; prices may range anywhere from \$70-\$400 depending on the item. Most digital recorders will come with a USB cable which will connect to a computer. From there, users can upload the files then send them off to be transcribed.

Examples include:

Olympus DS-4000 <http://www.startstop.com/ds4000.asp>

Olympus DS-3300 <http://www.startstop.com/ds3300.asp>

Philips 9450VC <http://www.startstop.com/philips9450.asp>

Philips 9360 <http://www.startstop.com/philips9360.asp>

Olympus DS-50 <http://www.startstop.com/ds50.asp>

You can find these and many other handheld recorders at <http://www.startstop.com>

Desktop Recording Unit- a device that includes a microphone, and is connected to a computer at all times. The user dictates into it using the microphone then automatically sends the files off to a network, email address or FTP site (FTP is explained in the next section). This system benefits those who do not record outside the office, or who need near-instant transfer to the transcriptionist without having to dock the recorder into its cable or cradle, or for those who are looking for something similar to an older style recording system. Prices can range from \$250-\$300.

Examples include:

HTH Voice Input Station <http://www.startstop.com/voicestation.asp>

Call-in System – users can pick up the phone, dial a certain number, and begin dictating, while using prompts to review and edit. The files are automatically sent to a specified path, whether it's a network, FTP site, or email address. Prices on this type of equipment can range from about \$800 into the thousands, depending on how many users/phone lines are needed. Once the user is done dictating, the files are sent to the transcriptionist.

Examples include:

Philips 9850 Call-In System <http://www.startstop.com/philips9850.asp> for only \$999.

In some situations, the people who dictate will purchase their own equipment; however, if you are persuading a certain office or client to go digital, it may be a good idea to purchase a device for them to try out. We sell each of these items and will offer a customized price if you give us a call at 866-254-0714 ☺

How the files transfer from point A to point B



Digital files can be sent to the transcriptionist in a number of ways:

Automatically

If both the person dictating and the transcriber are in the same office or on the same network, the files will be sent instantly to the transcriptionist (where you can both “see” the same shared or common folder on a network drive).

If you’re using a digital recorder, the transfer can be set up to occur automatically every time you connect the recorder to its cradle or PC. If you’re using a Desktop Recording Unit, transfer of your dictation to the transcriptionist will occur as soon as you click the EOL (End of Letter) button. The DS-50, DS-40, and DS-30 Stereo Digital Recorders, for example, download to and from your PC via their USB cables.

Other top-of-the-line Digital Recorders (DS-4000 and DS-3300) have the additional ability to automatically send your dictations as email attachments as well, or to any network destination, as soon as you plug the recorders into their cradles. These recorders can even send your dictation to multiple email addresses, or via FTP sites (encrypted secure, or regular), depending on how you set it up.

Manually

With any digital recorder that HTH Engineering, Inc. sells (inexpensive or more expensive), once the files are transferred to your PC, you always have the option to attach the dictation file(s) to an email manually (using Outlook or your other favorite email program) and send them to any person you want.

You may find that burning the files onto a CD, or extracting them from a memory card by using a memory card reader is useful as well.

Some busy users who own recorders with removable memory cards prefer to pop the card out of the recorder (like you do with an analog microcassette tape recorder) and hand the card to a transcriptionist, who uses a memory card reader such as the Olympus MA-USB reader (<http://www.startstop.com/olympusaccessories.asp#30774>) on the PC for transcribing the dictation.

You may also use something like our Start Stop Transport Software, which uses HIPAA-compliant 128-bit encryption to send files securely via email, FTP, or Port to Port. This system can be viewed at <http://www.startstop.com/transport.asp>

FTP

Another way is to utilize an FTP (File Transfer Protocol) site. An FTP site is a file storage site on the internet that is purchased (usually) by the person who is transcribing the files. This eliminates using email or any physical contact in order to send the files from one point to another. FTP is also better when sending lots of large files, because there is no file size limit like there is with email; with email you're normally limited to a maximum of 5-7 Megabytes (MB) per attachment or email. A 1-hour dictation with an Olympus Recorder will be 6.4 Megabytes.

The Olympus DS-3300 and DS-4000 recorders can automatically send files to FTP, as well as the HTH Voice Input Station (<http://www.startstop.com/voicestation.asp>)

If you're doing lots of patient medical dictation from different physicians offices and need to be HIPAA-compliant (that is, the files need to be encrypted for security protection), an FTP site can be a good way to go. This will allow you the most flexibility, both on the recording and transcribing end. So, for example, you transcribe files for 5 different clients and need to be HIPAA-compliant. You purchase space on an FTP site, and each client will upload dictation files to your FTP site. Clients login using a username and password and upload the files. You access that site and also login using a username and password, and download the files to your PC. You transcribe, and repeat the process to get the files back to your client/doctor. An FTP site is a third party, a separate entity that needs to be purchased in addition to the recording and transcription equipment. Some useful sites to visit on FTP are:

<http://www.instantftpsites.com>

<http://www.ultimateftp.net/>

<http://www.ftpmadesimple.com/>

(Please keep in mind that HTH Engineering, Inc. has no relation to the above sites which are mentioned as examples of FTP Providers).

Transcription Equipment



Transcription equipment will usually consist of a foot pedal and software. The software will allow you to playback the audio files under foot pedal control, while you transcribe into your favorite word processor. (The foot pedal controls will include Play, Pause, Backstep, Fast Forward, etc.) The software also allows you to speed up and slow down the dictations.

We recommend the [Start Stop Universal Transcription System](http://www.startstop.com/sst2.asp), (<http://www.startstop.com/sst2.asp>) which allows you the most flexibility when it comes to transcribing. It supports virtually all audio formats, both standard and proprietary. If you work for multiple clients or just 1, this system will fit your needs. Once the files are sent to you, simply open up the Start Stop software, load your jobs into the built-in Job Manager, and begin transcribing using your foot pedal. It's very easy to use, and we walk you through it step-by-step.

We also have a DVD and video transcriber, the [Start-Stop PowerPlay for Windows™ Media Transcription System](http://www.startstop.com/powerplay.asp). (<http://www.startstop.com/powerplay.asp>). This system allows you to control video and DVD formats under foot pedal control while you type into your favorite word processor. This system benefits those who need to transcribe recorded interviews for Law Enforcement agencies, those working in the movie or cinema industry, or those needing to transcribe recorded focus groups, city council meetings, courtroom hearings and much more.

There are several transcription systems available today however some of the main points to remember when purchasing a system are the following:

- Does it support all the file formats that I need?
- What types of features are built-in, and how do I benefit from them?
- Is support offered after I purchase it, and if so, how long will I receive it?
- Do I have a warranty on my foot pedal?

All of these questions are very important, as you want to receive the most support when making this change and investment.

Examples of transcription equipment:

Start Stop Universal Transcription System <http://www.startstop.com/sst2.asp>

Start Stop PowerPlay for Windows™ Media Transcription System (for video/dvd files)
<http://www.startstop.com/powerplay.asp>

These products include free software upgrades for the life of the product, and tech support for as long as you own the product.

We are happy to help answer any questions that you may have after reading this – that is what we are here for! We have also included the information below to help answer any questions that may have arisen while reading this article. Again, please feel free to call us if you have any questions, and for your custom quote at 866-254-0714!

Questions & Answers!

Q: There are so many digital recorders to choose from! What are the main differences between them?

A: Yes, there are a lot of recorders out there and it can be overwhelming! We'll try to break it down for you to make it as easy to understand as we can. First off, digital recorders are broken down into 2 main categories: **Dictation Recorders** and **Conference Recorders**.



Olympus DS-4000

Dictation Recorders are primarily used for those in an office environment, who dictate notes, patients' records, etc.: anything where persons will be holding the recorder close to the mouth, and using on a daily or semi-daily basis. These recorders, for the most part, will have a built-in mono microphone, editing features; including review, insert, append (attach/add) and delete. They will also have several file folders into which to record, so they can keep track of each day's dictations.

Some voice recorders will also have removable memory. This is handy when you are traveling and run out of space; you can simply insert a new memory card, and you're good to go. You can also purchase a larger memory card, and increase the recording time on the device (for instance, if the recorder comes with a 16 MB card – about 5.5 hours - you can replace it with a 256 MB card – and have about 90 hours).

There are many other features included when purchasing a dictation recorder; however, it depends on the brand, price range, etc. Some of these features may include rechargeable batteries, slide switch or push-button thumb operation, hands-free recording, indexing capability and so on. There are also many accessories, such as headsets, tie clip microphones and foot controls that can be used as well. Please call us if you have additional questions on a specific model or brand, and we will do our best to assist you.

Conference Recorders are designed to record meetings, interviews, court hearings, or lectures using a built-in stereo microphone. Most conference recorders will have a built-in stereo microphone, which will allow for strong clarity in noisier settings. They will have little or no editing features, as they are usually designed to just record, and then stop when the meeting/conference is over.

Conference recorders will sometimes come with various recording modes as well, such as STXQ, STHQ, SP, LP, and HQ. It is recommended that you use a higher quality recording in a noisier or larger setting; this will insure that you have a better, clearer recording than you would using a lower quality setting. Also, the higher the quality you record in, the more space it takes up on your memory card, which reduces the hours you can record in. For instance, if you have a recorder that has 256 MB of memory and you are in a room by yourself capturing quick notes, you can use a low quality recording, or LP mode, which will give you about 67 hours of total recording time. Now, if you step into a noisy environment where there are several people talking, perhaps a loud AC unit, etc., you'll want to



Olympus DS-50

be sure you record in high quality, or STXQ mode. By doing this, you will have about 4 hours of total recording time. See the difference? It's pretty significant!

This brings us to our next important feature of conference recorders, which is the memory. As you can see from the scenario above, removable memory is favorable to those who record in noisy environments for long periods of time. This enables you to either use a very large memory card, or add a new one when the first one runs out of space. Similar to voice recorders, if you do most of your recording in the office, or near your computer, you are always able to 'dump' the cards when they fill up, and start back from square one.



A conference recorder with built-in memory may be great for you. For example, the Olympus DS-50's internal 1 GB memory provides 275 hrs of recording time in its LP mode, and over 17 hours in STXQ mode; it all depends on your needs.

Conference recorders also have the ability to use accessories such as additional microphones, noise cancelling microphones, remote controls, and the like. Larger stereo microphones can also be used, such as two AKG mics on tripods; this will allow for good coverage in a room of up to about 40 people. Please call us for questions or recommendations on what would work best for you.

Q: So now that I understand the difference between Dictation Recorders and Conference Recorders, how exactly do I get the files in order to transcribe them?

A: Good question. All digital recorders will come with a USB cable, and/or docking station, as well as management software. The cable or docking station enables the recorder to connect to the computer, and then the files will be uploaded into the software. From there, they can usually be reviewed, renamed, edited, and saved. The user can then attach the file to an email, or upload to an FTP site, where the transcriptionist can retrieve it.

Q: I have dial-up; won't it take forever to receive those large files over email?

A: Dial-Up!! Oh no! Do you know you can get high speed for as little as \$14.99 per month? Not to sound like a commercial, but the prices these days for fast internet service are very affordable. Be sure to shop around, and you're bound to find a great deal. If you are serious about going digital, you'll find this to be an absolute lifesaver. Some of the recorders will record in a very compressed format, so the files are not very large; however, receiving anything over dialup is going to take more time, no matter what the size is. Trust me- high speed is well worth the investment, and worth the time you'll save from waiting for a file to download.

Q: I have to be HIPAA-compliant; do I need special software or hardware?

A: Yes and No. In order to be HIPAA-compliant, the files have to be sent "securely" over the internet – and regular email is not considered secure. You can utilize an FTP site, as we mentioned before. This will act as the "middle party" so-to-speak, and is considered secure by HIPAA standards.

Another option you have is to use recording software (which will come with a voice recorder) that has an *encryption* feature built in, and transcription software that will have

decryption software built in. This feature will “jumble” the files up and requires a password in order to listen to it. An example of this is the Olympus DS-4000 Digital Voice Recorder and the Olympus AS-4000 Transcription Kit. This combo is a great fit if you transcribe for doctors who *only* use an Olympus DS-4000 or DS-3300 (both have the encryption feature built-in). It is not convenient, however, if you work for multiple docs who are all using something different. The AS-4000 kit will only allow you to transcribe files coming from an Olympus recorder, and it will only allow you to decrypt files coming from a 4000 or 3300 model.

Again, the alternative to this is to use an FTP site in conjunction with Start Stop Transport, or use the HTH Voice Input Station that will automatically encrypt all dictation for you, whether sent via email or FTP. Then you can use any recorder you want, and a universal type transcription system, such as our Start Stop Universal Transcription System. By taking this route, you have more price flexibility and are not limited to what you’re able to use – on both ends.

Q: Where can I find more information on digital recorders and transcription equipment?

A: Our website of course! We are a Professional Olympus and Philips Dealer, and have our very own line of transcription equipment – for both audio and digital video files. We carry tons of accessories, memory cards and more. Please be sure to call us for your low custom quote at 866-254-0714. Anything that you purchase from us will include toll-free tech support for as long as you own the item. Most items include a 1-year warranty, free software upgrades, and a 30-day money-back guarantee as well.



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