## **Digital Tip in Action: Sharing Electronic Files**

**[00:00]** Large attachments to e-mails can slow the transmission speed of messages and clutter the inboxes of your recipients – not to mention, cause frustration if the message doesn't send at all. When you need to send large attachments or several attachments, consider an alternative – use one of the many free services designed for archiving and sharing files online. Let's start with how file sharing services work. After uploading your large file or files to one of these specialized Web sites,

**[00:30]** you will be given a URL that you can share via e-mail, allowing your recipients to download the file at their convenience. Some services offer advanced security features, while others allow your file to be downloaded by anyone who has access to the URL. For these reasons, you should carefully consider a few factors before selecting a file sharing service. First, consider file size. To determine whether to send a file via e-mail or via a file sharing service,

**[01:00]** check the file size. In Windows, you can determine the size of a file by right-clicking on it and selecting Properties. In a Mac, you can determine the size of a file by right-clicking or Control-clicking and selecting Get Info. Different e-mail services and applications have different file-size limits, but generally speaking, if a file is 10 megabytes or smaller, you can send the file as an e-mail attachment. If your file is larger than 10 megabytes, you may

**[01:30]** be able to reduce the file size by using your computer's built-in compression utility. In Windows, right-click on the file and choose Send to > Compressed (zipped) folder. On a Mac, right-click or Control-click on the file, and select Compress (file name).

**[02:00]** Second, consider convenience. Your use of a file sharing service shouldn't place an undue burden on those who are receiving your files, especially if the recipients are clients, customers, or potential employers. When you use a file sharing service, ensure that each recipient understands why you have chosen to share files this way (i.e., to avoid clogging the recipient's e-mail inbox), and provide brief instructions for retrieving the files. Additionally, you should test the URL given to you by the file sharing service before

**[02:30]** you share it with others to ensure that it works properly. Third, consider security. Some file sharing services allow users to password-protect files or require users to create accounts before being allowed to download files. However, most of these applications are designed for speed and convenience – not security. If you are sharing sensitive or proprietary information, it may be wise to contract with a company that

**[03:00]** offers enhanced security or to purchase a server that your organization controls. These solutions are more expensive, but if security is a priority, the financial investment may be worth it. In addition, you should always ensure that

your recipients understand your concerns about security. Just as e-mail attachments can be forwarded to others, private URLs can be shared with those who are not the original recipients. Sometimes a simple, short note at the end of your e-mail will be sufficient, such as "Please do not share this URL with others."

**[03:30]** For highly sensitive files, you may need to include a legal warning or encrypt the files. Here are some file-sharing services you can use online. When sharing electronic files, remember to consider file size, convenience, and security.