

Video in Email

Engage with your patrons in a whole new way by adding videos to your emails. You can insert them into ANY image element in templates that you build in WordFly. ■

How does it work?

Desktop email clients, browsers, and webmail clients all deal with video differently and require different video formats. We've designed our tool to create the best video experience for all of your patrons regardless of which email client they are using. With our tool, you enter your video URL(s) and a fallback image, and WordFly will write code that dynamically displays video in email clients that support it and gracefully degrades to an image if video is not supported.

For maximum video support, we recommend saving out three formats of your video, plus two images. If you don't create all versions it's OK, you'll just get less support. Fortunately there are free tools on the web that you can use to easily convert your video to all of the necessary formats.

MP4 Format*

The most widely supported video format. Plays in iOS, Apple Mail, Safari, Chrome, IE9+, and others.

WebM Format

Videos in this format will play in Chrome, Firefox, and others.

OGG / OGV / Theora Format

Plays in Firefox and Thunderbird.

The screenshot shows the 'Insert a video' form in the WordFly Template Builder. The form is titled 'Insert a video' and has a subtitle 'Video size in layout: 600 x 285 pixels'. It is divided into two main sections: 'Video URLs - When videos are supported' and 'Fallback Image - When videos are not supported'. The first section contains three input fields for video URLs: '.mp4 URL', '.webm URL', and '.ogg or .ogv URL'. The second section contains three input fields: 'Poster Image URL', 'Image URL', and 'Link To'. There is also an 'Alt Text' field. Callouts from surrounding text boxes point to these fields, explaining their purpose and providing examples.

Poster Image*

Displays when video is supported, but before the subscriber clicks Play. The image should entice them to play the video.

Fallback Image*

Very important. Displays on all email clients which do not support video. Example: the best frame of your video. If you're adding a fallback link, add a big Play icon on the image.

Fallback Link

Recommended. Add a URL to play the video in a web browser. Example: a YouTube link.

Alt Text

Enter text that will display if the images aren't loaded.

* Required

Video Tips + Best Practices

DESIGN TIPS

- A video can be inserted into any Image area in a template that you build in WordFly.
- It's best if the Image element is the exact size and ratio of the embedded video. But if it isn't, the video will be centered and resized in the available space of the Image element.

POSTER IMAGE TIPS

- This image displays when video is supported.
- This image should show off the best frame of your video.
- iOS devices will automatically add a Play icon to this image.

FALLBACK IMAGE TIPS

- This image displays when video is not supported.
- This image should show off the best frame of your video.
- If you're adding a fallback link (recommended), consider adding a Play icon on the center of the image.
- For extra interest, you can even use an animated gif as your fallback image.

STRATEGY CONSIDERATIONS

- In your text content, entice people to click Play by telling them what they'll see when they click the video.
- Include a text link to view the video on YouTube or Vimeo, in case the person doesn't have images loaded.
- Consider adding a note for Hotmail users that they should "Right-click to play the video."
- Try using the word "Video" in the subject line for a bigger open rate.
- Try to use videos that are two minutes or less

VIDEO ENCODING TIPS

For maximum video support, we recommend saving out three formats of your video. If you don't create all versions it's OK, you'll just get less support. Make things easier for yourself by using an encoder, such as Miro's Video Converter (it's free and will easily convert to all necessary formats). Just drag and drop your video into Miro's tool, and save it in these three formats: MP4, WebM (vp8), and Theora.

→ <http://www.mirovideoconverter.com>

Video Support in Email Clients

NATIVE DESKTOP CLIENTS	Shows Video	Shows Image
Apple Mail	■	
Lotus Notes 6.5 / 7 / 8 / 8.5		■
Outlook 2000 / 02 / 03 / 07 / 10		■
Outlook Mac 2011	■	
Thunderbird	■ *	
WEBMAIL CLIENTS		
AOL Mail		■
Gmail		■
Outlook.com	■ **	■ ***
Yahoo Mail		■
MOBILE CLIENTS		
Android		■
Blackberry		■
iPhone, iPad, iTouch	■	

Video Format Support

BROWSER	MP4	OGG / OGV / THEORA	WEBM
Android	■		
Chrome	■	■	■
Firefox		■	
Internet Explorer 9 ****	■		
iOS	■		
Opera			■
Safari	■	■	■

* Requires right-click to play

** Requires right-click to play, unless using IE10+

*** Older browsers show the fallback image

**** Earlier versions of IE do not support embedded video

Frequently Asked Questions

WHY CAN WE USE EMBEDDED VIDEO NOW, WHEN IT WASN'T RECOMMENDED BEFORE?

Thanks to broader browser support for HTML5, WordFly can now implement code which can dynamically display video in email clients that support it and gracefully degrade to an image if video is not supported. Hooray!

DO I HAVE TO CREATE ALL VERSIONS?

If your goal is maximum support, yes, but it's OK to start small, too. At a minimum you'll only need to create an MP4 format of your video (covers all iOS devices and many browsers), a poster image, and a fallback image.

CAN I ADD MY YOUTUBE OR VIMEO VIDEO LINK?

At this time, YouTube and Vimeo only allow their videos to be embedded with JavaScript, which email clients unfortunately do not support. YouTube and Vimeo links will work perfectly as your Fallback Links, though.

I ONLY HAVE A YOUTUBE OR VIMEO VIDEO LINK.

HOW CAN I ADD IT TO MY EMAIL?

In an Image element, skip the Insert a Video tool and use one of the Insert an Image options instead. Follow the same recommendations for this image as you would for a Fallback Image. Then just add your YouTube or Vimeo URL in the Links To field.

WHERE DO I PUT MY VIDEOS?

Upload them to your organization's web server. Video files are not supported by the WordFly Media Library.

HOW IS A POSTER IMAGE DIFFERENT THAN A FALLBACK IMAGE?

The poster image displays when video is supported but before the user clicks Play. The fallback image displays when video isn't supported at all.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE SUBSCRIBER'S COMPUTER DOES NOT SUPPORT VIDEO?

The subscriber sees the fallback image (and link) you specified in WordFly.

WHY DO GMAIL, YAHOO AND OTHER WEBMAIL CLIENTS NOT DISPLAY THE VIDEO?

At this time, all webmail clients except Hotmail strip out the Video element before rendering the email within their user interface. By adding a fallback image and link, though, you'll still be able to reach this audience.

Quick Start // Here's a sample workflow for adding a video to your email template.

1. Locate the raw original version of your video.
2. Convert it into one or more formats with a free tool like Miro's Video Converter.
3. Upload the videos to your organization's web server. Paste the URLs into a text document.
4. Make your poster image and fallback image in image editing software.
5. In WordFly, upload the images to the Media Library. Copy and paste the URLs into a text document.
6. In your WordFly email template, rollover an image area and select **Insert a video**.
7. Copy the video and image URLs from your text document into WordFly.
8. Paste the URL to the YouTube or Vimeo video into the Fallback Link field.
9. Save your template and send some tests.