LSU LIBRARIES T. HARRY WILLIAMS CENTER FOR ORAL HISTORY

REMOTE INTERVIEWING CONSIDERATIONS

Best practices: still apply (see OHA and Center guidelines)

Pre-Interview Process:

- See p. 2 for considerations
- Find out what is most convenient and comfortable for narrator
    - Use the worksheet, p.3, Q1) to help tease out details
- Practice with equipment/platform, if possible
- Send paperwork ahead of time

Logistics:

- Budget
    - Cost of programs, hardware, software/apps
    - Space, memory capacity—we can loan volunteers/partners flash-drives and hard-drives
- Narrator's preferences (see p. 3, Q1)
- Interviewer's resources: use best equipment possible for budget
- Connecting virtually: Audio or Video? Up to Narrator and Interviewer:
    - Video pros: visual cues, ability to share photos, material culture
    - Audio-only pros: fewer issues around rights and data security
- Decide on Program/App/Hardware
    - See p. 4 Q3
- Decide on Preservation Master
    - See p. 5 Q4
- Internet bandwidth and speed affect quality as well as mic, video, etc.
- Make copies-internal and external hard drive; cloud if you trust security
- Deliver to Center: file transfer or physical transfer; Center can loan device

Ethical & Legal considerations:

- See the Oral History Society. And Baylor. They've covered it.

Resources:

- Baylor Institute for Oral History Webinar
- Oral History Society
- Vermont Folklife Center
- Coming soon: OHA Guidelines

PRE-INTERVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to how you would typically conduct your pre-interview, you will want to ask the following questions:

Ask for patience as we try new techniques and ask if they have a little time today to go over some pre-interview equipment check-in.

Ask if the narrator is comfortable using video call platforms like FaceTime or Zoom.

- See worksheet p. 3 Q1
- In light of recent events, lots of people have been using Zoom to attend religious and cultural services/events, so they may have some familiarity with that already. If they seem amenable, ask them to consider the possibility of participating in a Zoom interview that will be recorded privately to a secure platform. You can remind them that all the typical power that they have over restrictions apply.

- If they prefer a FaceTime call or phone call, then your best bet is to call them via computer (see p4). You will want to see if you can do a test call now or arrange for a test call prior to the interview.

- It is your responsibility to ensure security, so get familiar with that!

If your narrator is tech-savvy, you may want to investigate creating a "double-ender recording," which would create uncompressed audio on both ends of the interview. See the OHS guidance 5.1 for more details. You can use Zencastr or Audacity (free).

Also ask if their computer is connected via Ethernet or wifi and if they have a pair of headphones they can use for the computer—often times phone headsets with mics will work okay. See worksheet p. 3 Q1

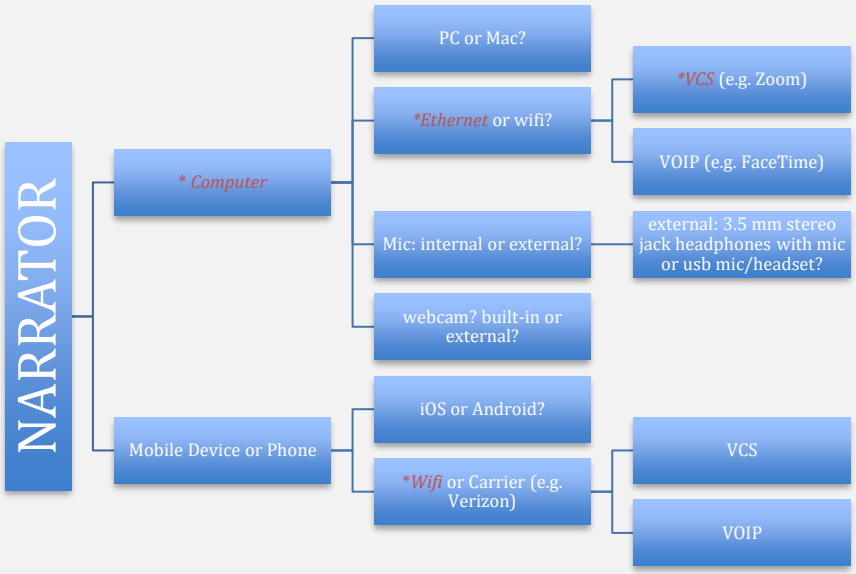
Take this time to talk about the copyright and/or consent forms that you will send ahead of time for them to sign and discuss delivery options.

- IRB, Interviewee Release form
- Snail mail; have narrator print, sign, & scan; or use Adobe signature

Consider the time of day you set up the interview. Some times are busier than other in regards to available internet and carrier bandwidth.

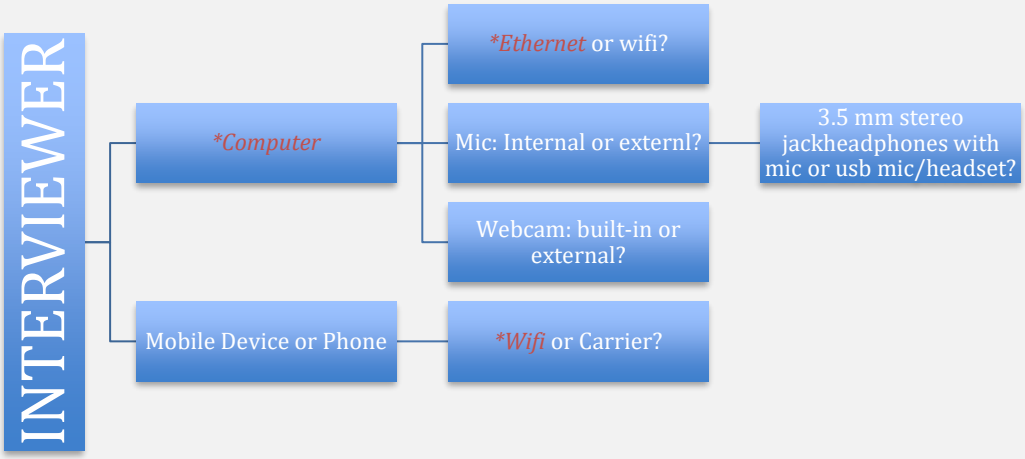
Build in time and have a back-up plan if tech fails!

STEP 1: SELECT REMOTE INTERVIEWING TOOLS (*Preferred)



Q1) Narrator Hardware & Preferred Mode to Connect? Mic? Webcam?

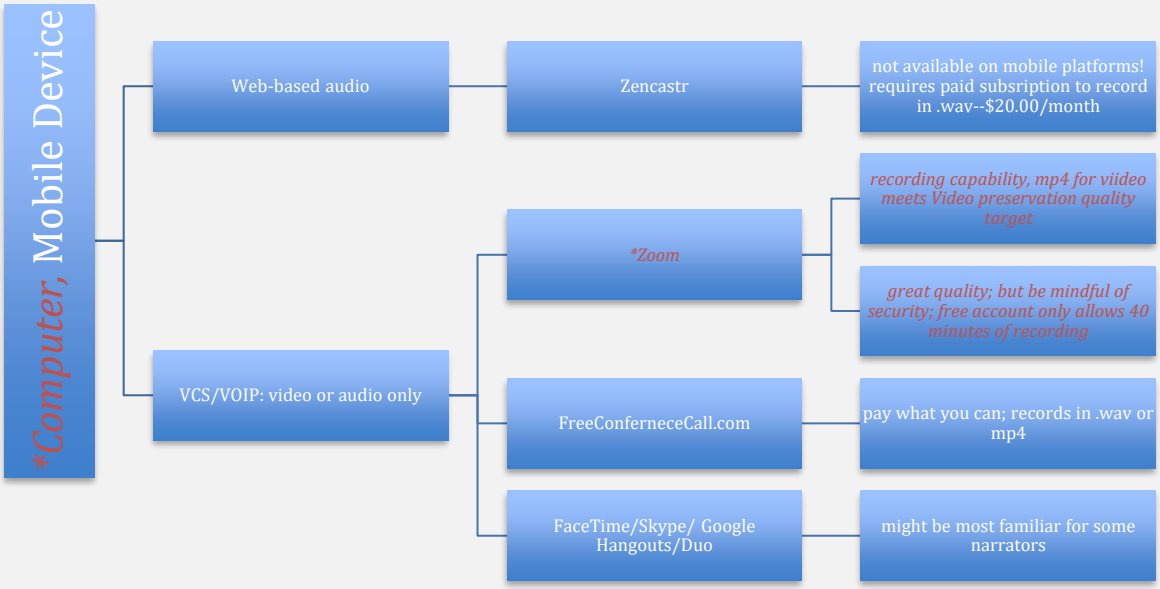
_____

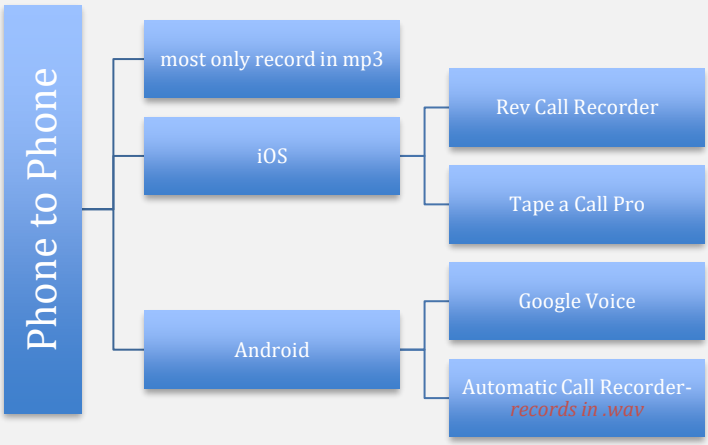


Q2) Interviewer Hardware? _____

STEP 2: CONNECT NARRATORS & INTERVIEWERS: Decision time!

*(*Preferred)*





Explore Options

ZenCastr

Zoom
Security tips

FreeConferenceCall.com

Skype

GoogleHangouts

Other

Record calls on Android

Q3) Interviewer: Based on available tech and narrator preference, choose how you will connect: VOIP, Zencastr, or app? Video or audio "call"?

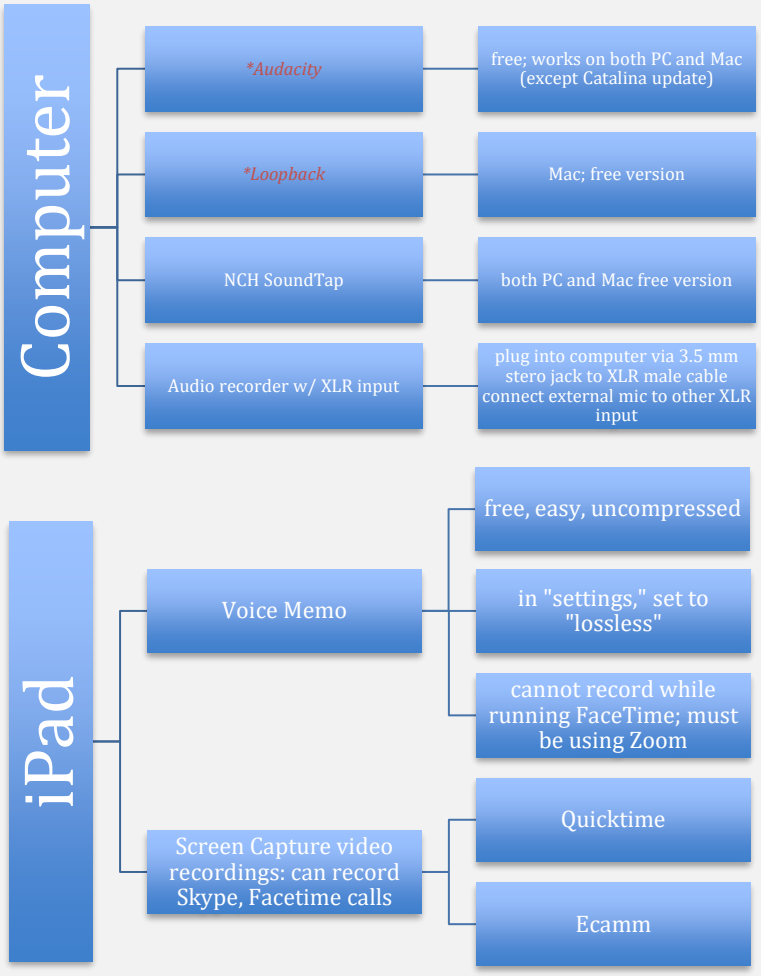
_____

STEP 3: PRESERVATION OF INTERVIEW: Another Decision!

(*Preferred)

Video: Are you okay with Mp4 video? Is your partnering repository? MP4 video meets current archival targets for some repositories. If this is you or you can't or don't want to hassle with audio engineering, **then stop here**. And use Zoom, which provides recording options, including MP4. There is a 40-minute limit on free accounts. Institutionally linked (e.g. LSU Zoom) accounts allow for longer recordings. Or Skype also saves as MP4 files. For Macs, you can use Quicktime to record the screen and save as a .MOV. Or Ecamm, which can record Facetime and Skype calls on a mac. Keep internal space in mind.

Audio: OR do you want to create a .wav (16/44.1 or better) or "lossless" **audio file** to meet current preservation formats? Most programs below will allow you to set Project Rate to 41,000 Hz and export or save as a .wav file. You can schedule a brief training with us, as well!



Q4) Interviewer: Choose Preservation master: Audio or video or both? Which program?

_____

STEP 4: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER! HERE'S YOUR PLAN:

Q1) Narrator Hardware & Preferred Mode to Connect? Mic? Webcam?

_____

Q2) Interviewer Hardware? _____

Q3) Interviewer: Based on available tech and narrator preference, choose how you will connect: VOIP, Zencastr, or app? Video or audio "call"?

_____

_____

Q4) _Interviewer: Choose Preservation master: Audio or video or both? Which program?

_____

Q5) Back up plan? _____

Q6) DON'T FORGET! Delivery and storage of audio/video: FTP or Mail?

_____

Q7) And paperwork (see p. 2) Scan/email or print/mail or print/scan/email

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