IRON HILL AV DIGITAL MEDIA SERVER GUIDE 2021

What Your Server Is Capable Of

For 2021 all of our servers are built using the Synology DS920+ platform as standard, if you have a older or alternate model the information included in this document may not apply.

Please refer to the synology documentation for your model for a complete list of supported features and options.

Generally, we build servers to support H.264/H.265 compression, .MP4 and .MKV file types as these are the most widely supported formats across all media players. These formats also are ideal for use with advanced real-time transcoding built in to the servers, used by systems like Plex for universal easy streaming to any device.

MPEG2 (DVD Rips) files can be stored and served, but are generally not supported well by players anymore. Support for these in Plex App must be elected in the Plex manager web page under settings.

Software Updates

Synology firmware will update automatically. You can check for updates manually in the admin webpage.

For Servers running Plex, the Plex app must be updated manually. Plex management webpage will indicate when an update is available and give you a link to download the file. You will need to navigate to your Synology Admin webpage, you can manually install this update file under the Package Center using the 'manual install' button.

*Plex updates typically happen monthly, you do not need to do every update, but we recommend not falling more than a few behind as it could negatively affect your experience with live feed information.

Media Files Backup

When you receive your server it does not include a backup service or accessory beyond the single hard-drive redundancy drive failure protection.

Some server models support an add-on device, which connects to your main server and keeps an exact copy of your server. Your server also has several common online services built-in that you can opt to subscribe to, fees may apply.

In the event of a catastrophic server failure, any media purchased from Iron Hill AV (based on your account history) may be restored, a loading fee will apply though. All other media will need to be reloaded or repurchased at your expense.

If you plan to store files that can not be replaced we strongly recommend keeping a backup on another server.

*The best backup option is to use a mechanical hard drive and leave it unplugged until needed, or a cloud service. No storage solution is 100% bullet-proof, it is your responsibility to always keep redundant backups.

View Content from Server on a Player

You can use any media player that is capable of playing back media from a network location. Most all streaming/smart media players are capable of this. If using Plex app on the server, then you will want to use Plex app on your player (We recommend Apple TV 4K or Roku Ultra 4K, with Dolby Atmos support). If you are using any other playback app or device, see that device or apps documentation on how to access a NAS.

Your server is equipped with many serving options, one is Plex, another is standard DLNA. Others are available from Synology package shop, which you can access from your servers Admin page.

Common PLEX App Questions

- **Can I disable Movie Trailers that play before a Movie? (PLEX)**
- Yes! Movie trailer option a per player option in Plex app settings, on each player.

- **Can I change the Movie Trailers that play before a Movie? (PLEX)**
- Yes! By default your server is set to find the latest movie trailers for films that are in or about to be in theaters. But there are other options, and even an option to disable it all together. These options can be found in your Plex management web page under settings.

- **Can I change the movie Pre-Rolls that play before a Movie? (PLEX)**
- Yes! These can be changed or disabled. By default your server comes pre-loaded with 10 different fun custom pre-rolls that play randomly. Ask your Concierge for more details on how this can be changed to your specifications. If you have and older server and don't have this function, let us know and we will get you updated!

- **Can I group Movies by Collections (PLEX)**
- Yes! Plex can even do it automatically. Our current server release does not come with this feature enabled though. But this can be enabled in the Plex management web page.

- **Can I keep similar movies together despite alphabetical sorting? (PLEX)**
- If you want to have all your 'Die Hard' movies for example show up together then you have two options - Edit each of your movies 'Sort Title' info under the edit option of each movie, so instead of using the movies original title as the 'Sort' title, we can use Die Hard 01, Die Hard 02, etc. Then they will show in order!

- *This is particularly handy when one of the movie titles in the series starts with a different word… ' A Good Day To Die Hard' can have its Sort Title labeled as 'Die Hard 05' instead, so it will show up in the correct order with the others.

- **Can I use custom Album or Cover Art? (PLEX)**
- Yes! In Plex media manager you can load any image you want as album or cover art for each piece of media. In fact there are some great places on the web where you can obtain pre-made custom album and collection art made for Plex - here is one we like

Converting Media

For Purchased Content

For Music like audio CD's, Vinyl, Cassette Tapes, 8 track...etc. it's time to move on, converting these can be done with lots of hardware and software available online, but it is typically a waste of time and money. If you like Hi-Res audio Subscribe to a music service like Tidal, it's built-in to Plex and available for whole home audio systems like Sonos too!

As for video it's simple, again options to 'rip' movies from disc exist, but It's illegal for most discs. And, if it's not a Blu-Ray or Blu-Ray 4K Disc, just scrap it! This includes beta, vhs, laserdisc, DVD etc. The quality is so bad it's not worth the effort. Just repurchase the titles digitally from us in the correct format and in HD/4K with better audio quality.

For Other Media

If you have original irreplaceable content, such as home movies, photos, music, and original film print, etc… that you just can't live without, then regardless of the media type, there are solutions. Some you can do at home with a computer and an adapter or software for a small investment. And in other cases it may be simpler to reach out to a local business that does conversion services everyday, and simply tell them the digital format you wish to have the media output to.

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Loading Media

Loading digital media to your server is easy:

    a. Drag and drop to your server using the Admin web browser to transfer via network
    b. Drag and drop to your server using window file explorer to transfer via network
    c. Use the servers Download Manager to download content from web locations
    d. Plug a drive into the USB connection on the server, and use the servers Admin web page to conduct the transfer.
    e. Use a built-in App in the server (package) to manage a file transfer via a select service, like google drive.

Finding and Accessing Your Server

Simply type the IP address of your server into any browser, and login in with your admin credentials.

Don't know the IP address? Download the Synology Assistant on to your windows pc / mac and run a scan. Your server(s) will be found and listed, click on the appropriate one to open its admin webpage.

Finding and Accessing Your Plex Management Page

You can either login to your plex account from any browser, and click Launch at the top.

Or, you can login to your server and then click the Plex app icon in the top menu to open the Plex manager page.

Accounts

What is the Synology Account I was subscribed to?

Your Synology account is free and is needed to manage your servers internal systems, it also allows us to remotely connect to your server for services. If you need your login information just contact the Concierge.

What is the PLEX account I was subscribed to?

PLEX (plexapp.tv) is the 3rd party service our system uses to allow you to easily view and manage your media. You must maintain a PLEX PASS premium membership with PLEX for your servers features to function properly. A lifetime subscription is included with your server purchase. If you need your login information just contact the Concierge.

Upgrades / Replacement Parts
Your server is equipped with the ability to add or replace harddrives, ram, solid state memory (cache), or even backup devices.

All of these authorized parts can be purchased from Iron Hill AV by request and will either be physically install (service rates apply), or may be shipped to you for self-install (our Concierge will remotely connect to your server to complete setup for you, for a fee).

You may also source your own equipment for self installation, that is beyond the scope of this document. Remote or onsite help for this may be available, service fees will apply.

Other Information
Please refer to the individual device, software, or application documentation directly for more support documentation, and detailed how-to info.

Warranty

All server assemblies including drives are protected against manufacturer defect and programming error for a period of 12 months from date of installation by Iron Hill AV. Warranty does not extend to nor cover the loss of any media stored on the device, third party apps.

Coverage from the individual component (Harddrive / Server) manufacturers may extend beyond 12 months and may be exercised directly between the end-user and the manufacturer.

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