



Tagging for Loop Library Developers and Power Users

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Introduction




If you develop collections of loops and samples, you want to make sure you tag your media in such a way that users can find your loops easily and that your tagging is consistent with existing collections. There are a few necessary steps to ensure this is done properly, but once you become familiar with the process, you will likely find that it's very straightforward.

The nature of the tagging system provides a lot of flexibility and freedom. To ensure that tag tree searches return accurate and straightforward results, the Sony Tag Tree for Library Development was created to provide a core structure that loop developers can choose to work entirely within. You can add subtags for more detailed categorization or create entirely new parent-level tags.

This document assumes the reader is familiar with how the Media Manager functions. If you require further information about how to use the Media Manager, please read the Media Manager section of the Help files in your Sony host application, or click the question mark button in the upper-right corner of the Media Manager window.

Tagging Your Material Using the Sony Tag Tree for Library Development

This section provides a basic description of the essentials required to tag your material for use with the Sony Media Manager.

1. Open the Media Manager window, and choose the Media Library Actions button , and select Open Media Library.... Then choose **Sony Tag Tree for Library Development.medialib**. This file is installed to your `My Documents\Sony Media Libraries` folder by default.
2. To ensure that you always have a pristine version of the Sony Tag Tree available to you, be sure to immediately back up this file by choosing the Back Up Media Library... menu option from the Media Library Actions button.
3. Click the **Add Files to Media Library** button  to add your loop collection to tag to the library.
4. Apply the appropriate tags from the tag tree to your media files.
 - Use existing tags whenever possible to ensure your collection is consistent with other collections in the Sony Sound Series Loops & Samples family.
 - When adding new tags, try to add them within the existing tag tree. For example, if you wanted to create a tag for a bowed upright bass, click the **New Tag** button , then consider adding it below the existing **Basses** tag:



- When adding new tags, consider how the user will search for media. In the previous example, adding the tag **Bowed** to a media file means that the user will find that file whether searching for **Basses** or **Bowed**. If a user's tag tree is rearranged so that **Bowed** is not a subtag of **Basses**, a search for the **Basses** tag will not find the file.

If you add both tags, a search for **Basses** or **Bowed** will find the file regardless of whether **Bowed** is a subtag of **Basses**. This could result in false positives, returning unexpected search results.

- Each tag contains an internal globally unique identifier (GUID) that preserves information about the tag and its location within the tag tree. For example, if you saved the **Bowed** tag to a media file, the file's **Bowed** tag would be added to a user's media library as a subtag to **Basses** when the file is added. If the **Basses** tag did not exist in the user's library, it would

also be created.

- Because tags have unique identifiers, tag information and location is preserved. In the previous example, the **Bowed** tag would be added to the most correct location in the user's media library even if the user had rearranged or removed tags, translated all the tag names to a different language or otherwise renamed the **Basses** tag. In this case, the new tag would be added, but higher-level tags that were renamed by the user would be unaffected.

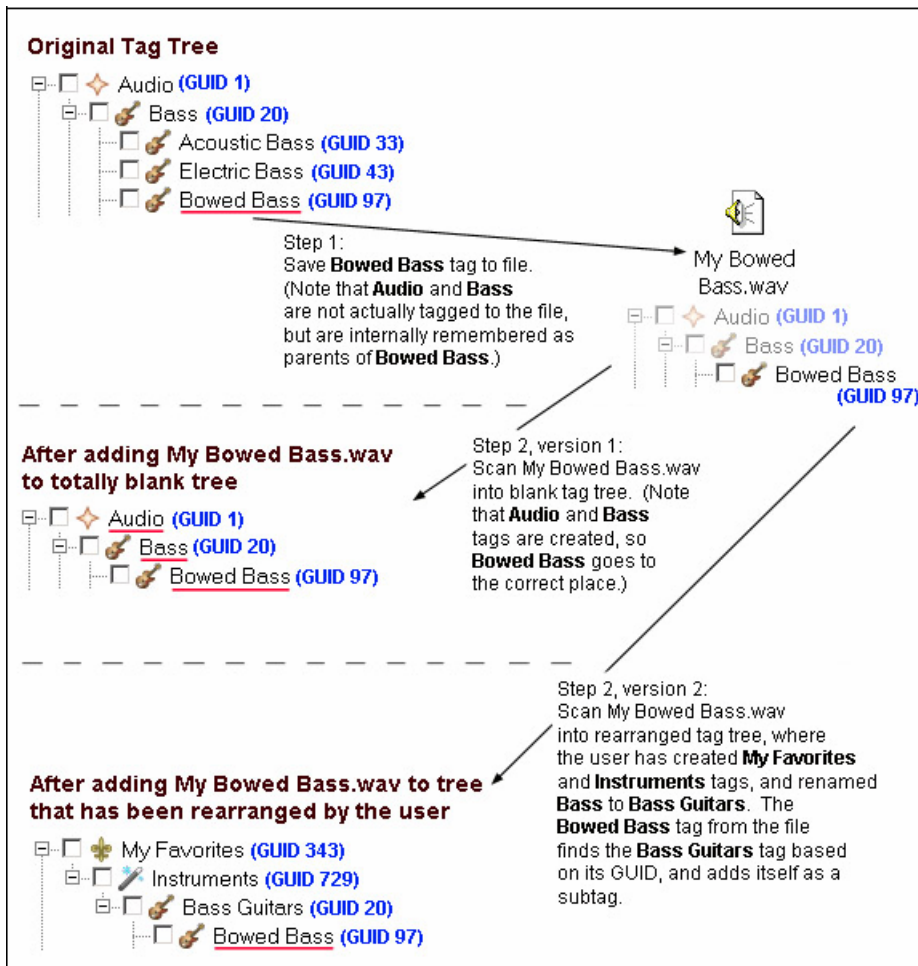



Fig. 1 – How tags saved to files are returned to the proper position when scanned in.

5. In addition to tags, you can use the Media Manager to easily add a large variety of metadata to your files, including comments, copyright, artist, etc. Additionally, you can add custom columns based on text or numbers to your libraries, which can in turn be saved to files.

If you're using Vegas 6.0 or ACID 5.0b or later, you can edit metadata for several records at once: select the media files you want to edit, and type the data you want to add in the Properties pane. The new properties will be added to every selected record.

6. Save the tags to your media files:
 - a. Delete the **Scan [date / time]** tags from the tag tree.
 - b. If you've searched the collection, click **Clear** to remove all search criteria and ensure all media files are displayed in the Search Results pane.
 - c. Select all files in the Search Results pane.

- d. Click the **Save Tags and Properties to Files** button  (or right-click a selected file and choose **Save Tags and Properties to Files** from the shortcut menu).
7. Distribute your media files. You may optionally include the .medialib file with your collection.

Using the Sony Tag Tree Layout

This section offers a description of why media developers and standard users would want to start with separate libraries, how using a common tag tree layout will benefit both users and loop developers, along with a detailed description of how the tags are organized, and the most appropriate ways to apply tags so users will be able to find your media quickly.

1. Using two separate tag trees benefits both users and media developers:
 - The tag tree in the Default library that users create is a subset of the Sony Tag Tree for Library Development, with much less detail. This is primarily to eliminate the complexity of having hundreds of tags to wade through to search for their media. The secondary purpose of having a pruned down tag tree is so that users can search on tags which match media that they really have, rather than having most of their tags turn up empty results until they have scanned in media associated with more detailed tags.
 - The Sony Tag Tree for Library Development is designed to be as comprehensive as necessary, in order to give media developers a good core to work from, and provide a useful common structure that we hope you'll find intuitive. In addition, as detailed in the "under the hood" section, having all of the tags available for loop developers can ensure that everyone is using the same tags with the same underlying GUIDs, so that a Snare tag for your material is the same Snare tag that every other developer is also using, and will help to minimize potential chaos that could ensue if every media developer were required to create their own tags and devise their own structure.
2. The general layout of the tag tree is a tiered structure with Media Type at the highest level. At present, this includes **Audio** tags, but eventually will also include **Video** tags, and perhaps other media types. The next level within Audio is divided into Instrument/Source Class, Theme, Genre, and Library Name. Next are individual instruments, specific libraries with themes, the main genres, and library names. Deeper levels provide for more specific details, such as subinstrument classes, instrument size, or playing style, or music subgenres.
 - When applying instrument tags to your records, you typically will only need to add one tag but in some cases you may want to apply more than one tag. **Synth Bass**, for example, could also fit under **Keyboard/Synth**.
 - Use your best judgment, but be careful not to overtag, because although it could help your media appear more frequently on searches, frequent false positives could turn some users off from your material.
 - When tagging your media, try to use existing tags where possible, or create subtags to existing tags, so that when a user selects the appropriate parent tag(s), your media will show up in the search results.
 - For example, if your media is a library with a lot of cymbals, you could either tag your media with the **Cymbal** tag at **Audio→Percussion→Cymbal**, or—if you want more detail—you could create **Ride**, **Splash**, and **Crash** tags as subtags of the **Cymbal** tag. If you wanted to identify cymbals by specific manufacturer or specific size, you could create **Cymbal Company A**, **Cymbal Company B**, **Crash**, **Splash**, **Ride**, **18**, etc tags as subtags of the **Cymbal** tag as well. If you do create subtags, it will be best if you apply the subtags, but not the parent tags so the user can have a little more flexibility in their searching (see the "User Experience" section below for details).
 - The **Mood** tags under **Production Music** are likely to be very subjective among users. For this reason, if you use them, we recommend using them sparingly and carefully. It's more likely that advanced users will do their own mood tagging.
 - You may also want to tag your material by genre. Frequently, one piece of media can be used in several genres, so more than one tag per file is likely much more appropriate.

- If your library has themes (or construction kits), you will want to create a tag **[Library Name] Themes** as a subtag of the existing **Themes** tag, with subtags that indicate your library's theme structure. Then tag the media within each theme accordingly. (See the Chicago Fire Drum n Bass Themes example for reference.)
 - If you're a Sony Loop Library developer, create a tag with the exact library name and place it as a subtag to the Sony Sound Series **Loops & Samples** tag. If your library is a multidisc set, create subtags of the library such as **[Library Name] – Disc 2** so that users can easily search on the whole library or on individual discs. Be sure to add the disc's tag to every piece of media in your library. Likewise, be sure to follow the subtagging examples for Get Media and ACIDplanet.com contest material. (See the examples near the bottom of the tree for reference.)
 - If your library is produced by Company X, you can create your own structure for tagging your loop libraries. If you want to follow our example, create a tag at the root of the tree with a name such as **Company X Libraries** and create a different **[Library Name]** tag for each library you create. Then be sure to tag all of the media in your library with the **[Library Name]** tag.
3. This tagging system gives you freedom.
- The tag tree was designed to give a solid foundation of tags, but the system is flexible. With that in mind, realize that you can add tags and subtags as needed if the Sony Tag Tree for Development doesn't completely meet your categorization needs. Creating your own separate creative classification system can greatly add to the value of your libraries by giving your users new ways of searching and picking out media.
 - Because of this freedom, we acknowledge that no two users' tag trees will be exactly the same and that tag trees can grow organically with each library users collect.
 - To send a submission you'd like to see in the Sony Tag Tree for Development library, save the tag(s) to a small .wav file with a description and [contact us](#). We may add it with future releases.
4. Some specific definitions of tags:

Tag Name	Description
Mixed Drumkits	Media consisting of several mixed drumkit elements
Acoustic Drumkits	Mixed trap kits, either recorded dry, or with standard compression and EQ applied
Electronic Drumkits	Mixed synthetic drums – either hardware like a TR-808 or virtual synth drums
Processed Drumkits	Mixed drum material run through distortion, flange, heavy reverb, or otherwise munged
World Ensemble	Mixed media consisting of mixed hand drums and shakers, etc
Trap Kit Elements	Subtags represent individual instruments you may find in a rock, blues, or jazz drummer's setup
Keyboard Percussion	Pitched Percussion, but does not include Timpani
Electronic Drum Elements	Individual samples from things such as groove boxes and samplers
Processed Percussion	Customized percussion samples, like what you could get after a few minutes of cut and paste in Sound Forge, for example
Other Drums	Any percussion instrument with a drum head that doesn't yet have a tag
Other Percussion	Any percussion instrument without a drum head that doesn't yet have a tag
Multitracked Kit Drums	Kits recorded with several mics at once, all in-phase, etc. Sony's "Drums from the Big Room" library is an example of this
Media Sample	Media similar to that found from the public domain, or from a piece of media (which you either own or have permission to use in your library)
Experimental Acoustic Instrument	Anything home designed (e.g. - a recording of clanging two hammers together or a rubber band plucked between two pencils)

Etc...	Catchall for any other unconventional audio source
Vocals and Wallas	Wallas are essentially crowd noises or indistinguishable background voices speaking. This material could be useful when doing audio for a crowded party scene, for example
Production Music	Fully mixed work, ready to drop into a project as a complete section, also known as "needle-drop"

You can tag directly using Other Keyboard, Other Guitar, Other Bass, if you choose, or if you have a want to create any specific subtags such as Calliope, Harpsichord, Balalaika, or Chapman Stick, etc, feel free to do that. As to whether to put Harpsichord under Keyboard or Other Keyboard, use your best discretion but don't agonize over it, since users will be able to move the tag, and it's not likely they'll need to be constantly correcting the structure as they scan in more and more Harpsichord media.

How the Tag Tree Affects the User Experience

This section provides a description of how users can add database records and build or change their tag tree.

- Users build their libraries by adding records to a library's database. Records have a one-to-one association with media files. As users add records, new tags that are associated with the media will be added to the tag tree.
 - The most typical way users do this is through the Add Files to Media Library dialog, where users can scan an entire folder or folder structure and have tags added from metadata saved to files. This process is described in the first section of this document.
 - Another way to add records to a media library (and possibly tags to their tree as well) is to add media to the timeline when the **Save media-usage relationships in active media library** check box is selected in the host application's General Preferences page. Alternately, records can be added by dragging from the Windows Explorer view into the Media Manager window.
 - In addition, if a user scans in untagged Loops for ACID or Sony Sound Series media while they have the Sony Sound Series Loops and Samples Reference Library installed and activated, it will match the untagged media on their drive to the tags in the Reference Library and add the appropriate tags. If you are a loop developer interested in creating your own reference libraries, feel free to [contact us](#), and we'll assist you.
 - If a user adds records that contain tags not yet in the tree and the **Add tags and custom properties from files** check box is selected, the new tags will be imported from the files most appropriate place finding the tag tree. If a parent tag already exists for this tag, it will be added at the bottom of the list among tags of the same level. If a tag is added to the tree and it cannot find its parent tag, it will seek out tags higher up in the hierarchy it had when it was created until it finds one. If it does not find any parentage, it will create the parentage it knows at the root of the tag tree, and place itself under those parents.
- Users will search for tags, text in metadata, and other properties to find the media they want to use.
 - Whenever a user selects a check box next to a tag that includes subtags, the search will include all of those tags. This allows users you to quickly find related subcategories. For example, to search on only drums, a user could temporarily move the Keyboard Percussion and Other Percussion tags (and their subtags) out from under the Percussion tag, and then search on Percussion.
 - Using either the **Quick text search** box, or through the Advanced search pane, users will also be able to search on any metadata you embed in your media, such as Copyright, Comments, Artist, Path, Filename, etc.
 - In addition, users can search on file properties, such as Size, ACID Type, Beat Count, Date Last Modified, or Tempo.

- Another way for users to search media is via any of the palettes in the Palette View. If you're creating your own .medialib file to ship with your library, you can add any custom palettes you'd like.
3. Users are able to edit the tree to suit their own needs.
 - They can rename tags, change icons, and rearrange tags. Note that this does not change the tag's underlying GUID. In the library, each tag is identified only by GUID, and not by the displayed name. Tag naming does not require unique names, except in the case multiple tags are displayed at the same level.
 - Users can create or delete tags. New tags always get a unique GUID. Deleting a tag removes all associations from every record in the media library, so even if a user tries to create a tag of the same name, it will have a new GUID; therefore, it cannot be searched on as a direct replacement for a deleted tag.
 - In addition, users can merge subtags into their parent tag.
 4. Users will apply tags to records, or remove tags from records, in much the same way loop developers will.

The main difference between end users and media developers is that a media developer produces material for use by other ACID users, and the Sony Tag Tree for Library development allows professional, consistent tagging across media collections from various producers.

If you're a user reading this you can also use the Sony Tag Tree for Library Development as your main library. Just make sure to create and use a backup copy.

How Tags and Media Library Databases Work

1. Each Media Library is a self-contained database that is stored as a .medialib file. A .medialib file is made up of tags, records, and metadata.
 - Each .medialib file will also remember its own settings: tag tree order, grid layouts on palettes, most recently used view (Tag Tree or any specific Palette, and Grid/List/Thumbnail), column order and size, and custom columns.
 - All of the settings contained in Media Manager options are owned by the Media Manager itself, and are not specific to any .medialib file.
2. A very important distinction to make is that the data that exists in a .medialib is entirely separate from any metadata that may or may not exist in the media files.
 - After you apply tags to your records, you **must** save them to their corresponding media files if you intend for your tagging to be preserved when users can scan your files into their libraries. (see Fig. 2)

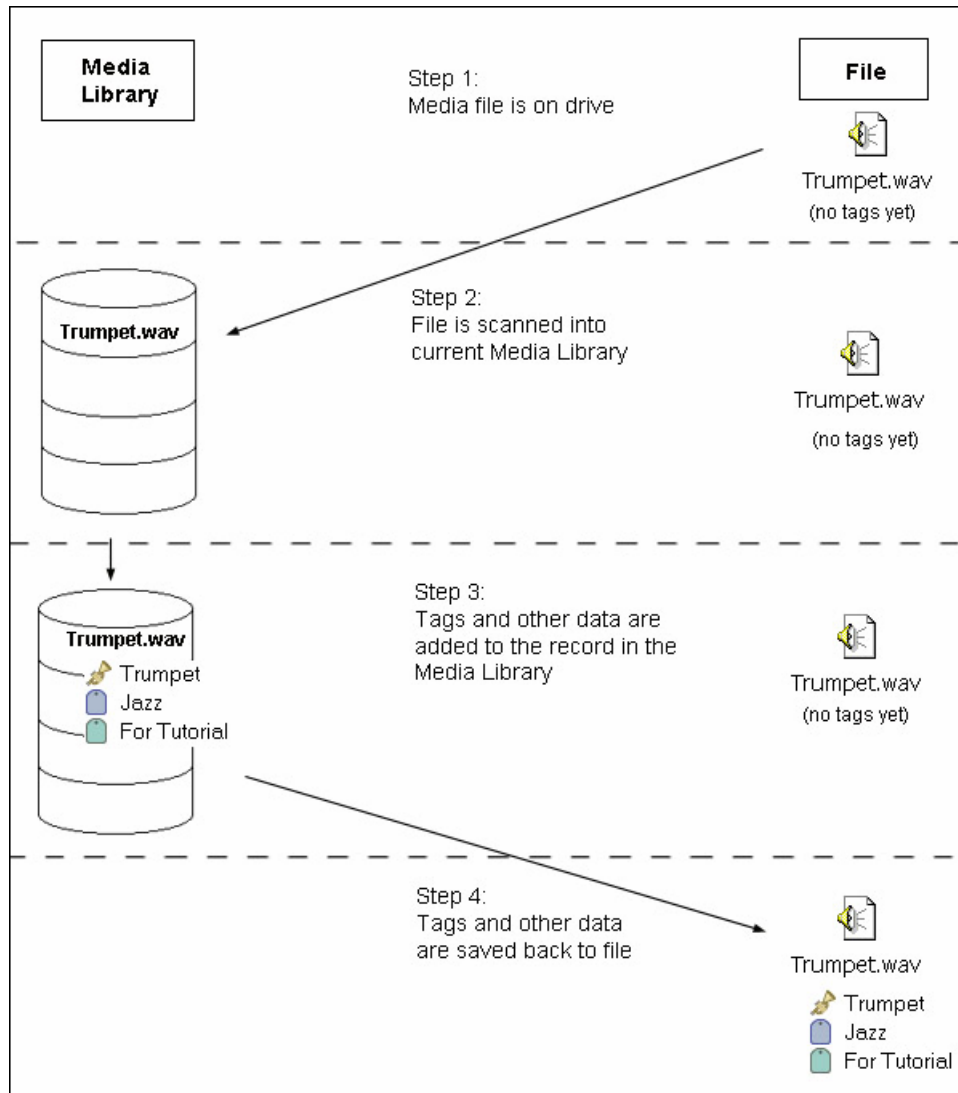


Fig. 2 – Differentiating between writing tags to the Media Library and the source material.

- The main reason that tags are accessed from the database and not the files is because performance would suffer greatly if the Media Manager needed to go out into the file system to access every media file. Additionally, different users can access the same files using different libraries, and it's possible to tag offline media.
 - It may help to think of the Media Library file as a large list of shortcuts, where each record in the Search Results view points to a specific media file on the system.
3. The use of GUIDs (Globally Unique IDs) as the core identifier for each tag allows for an extra level of abstraction.
- This allows for a person to rename a tag on their system or change its icon and then whenever they scan in new media with that tag's GUID, it will still associate with the revised tag.
 - This also allows for easy support of other languages. For example, if a user has a tag tree with all of the tag names translated from English to Japanese, when they scan in media that contains tags that were originally created in English, the tags in their tree will be in Japanese. The names and locations the user has in the tag tree will supersede whatever names and locations exist within the media file's metadata.

4. When installed and made active in the Media Manager Options page, the Sony Sound Series Loops and Samples Reference Library works as a virtual copy of the full tag tree.
 - When a user scans in media from Sony Sound Series or Loops for ACID libraries created prior to the Media Manager, the Media Manager will check the file being scanned against the Reference Library to obtain tagging information to retroactively apply to the new records as they're created. (see Fig. 3)

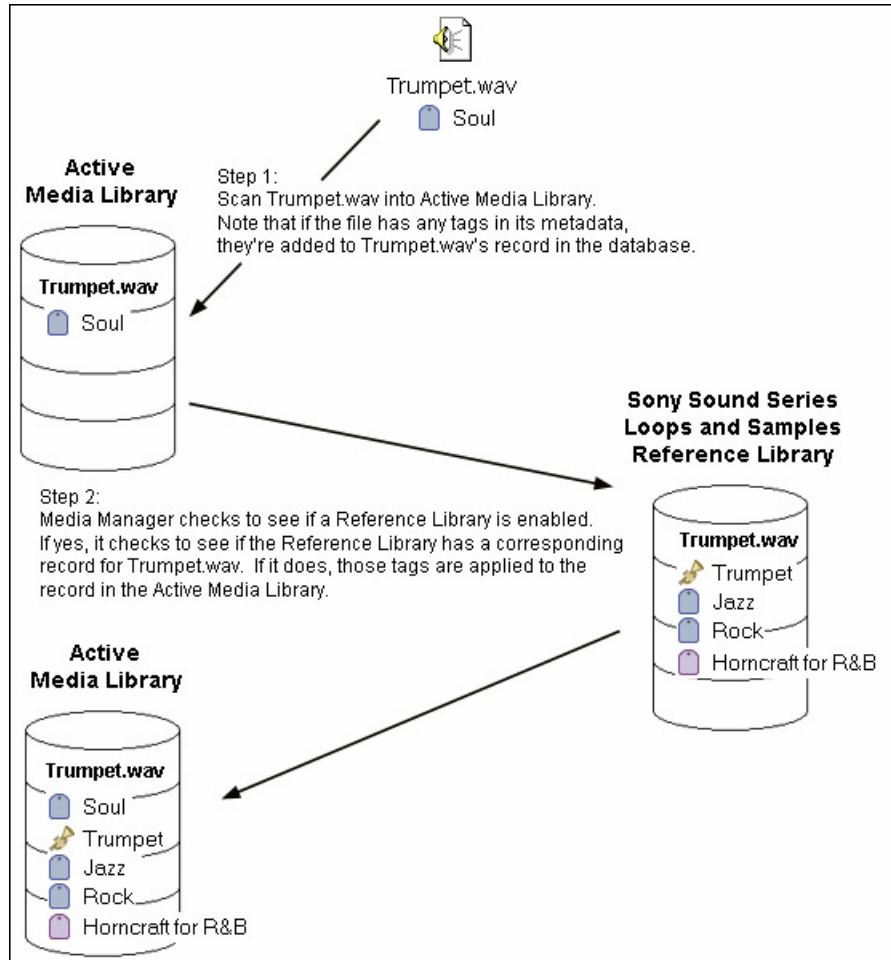


Fig. 3 – An example of how a Reference Library assists in retroactively tagging media.

- If a tag with the same GUID but a different name exists in the tag tree and the file being scanned, the tag tree's name will persist. If a tag with the same GUID but a different name exists in both the file being scanned and the reference library but not in the current tag tree, the tag name in the file will persist.
5. When a media library file becomes active, a temporary working database file is created. When the SQL server service closes down, the temporary file will be closed. For example, if you open **MyMediaLibrary.medialib**, a file called **MyMediaLibrary_log.LDF** will exist in the same directory for the duration of your session.