

Remember that a website is dynamic, and content can be added at any time.

User-friendly video, audio and animations – A checklist

The following techniques can be used to minimise any negative impact the use of video, audio and animations may have on users' experience with your site:

- Ensure that the clips and animations are relevant and add value to the site – do not include animations, video or audio just to be “clever” or because they exist already in a promotional video.
- Provide users with the tools to stop, start, pause (and perhaps rewind) the video and sound.
- Do not use animations that self-activate and cannot be stopped. They can be self-defeating as they are often distracting for the wrong reasons, causing users to be irritated and leave the site.
- Provide users with the option of downloading a video or sound file and playing it later, rather than have it activate automatically.
- Always indicate to the user how large each video and audio file is and how long it is likely to take to download – with average connection speed, modem speed etc.
- Optimise the size of the video and sound files – strike a balance between speed and quality.
- Use video that has been shot with Internet use in mind – scenes that have the camera panning at any speed, distant shots and action sequences are less effective on the Internet than close-up, head and shoulder scenes.
- Consider having video shot specifically for the site – allow approximately \$800-\$1,000 per minute of video, which includes, filming, post-production and digitisation.

Prioritising content – A checklist

Inevitably, decisions need to be made as to what content to include in a website. You can use the following checklist to help you decide about each item of content. The more ticks, the more appropriate the content is for inclusion in the site.

- Is it relevant to the aims and objectives of the organisation?
- Does it add value to the site?
- Have you permission of the content owner to use it on the site?
- If permission to use it on the site has not been secured, is the time and cost to secure it reasonable?
- Does it already exist in electronic format (eg on the word processor)?
- If it does not exist in electronic format, is the time and cost to digitise it reasonable?
- Do you know the item to be accurate?
- Do you know the item to be up-to-date?
- Is it likely to be interesting to a majority of visitors to the site?
- Will making it available on the site save staff time or offer some other efficiency?
- Will it encourage people to re-visit the site?
- Is it culturally sensitive?
- Is the content within the law? (libel, fair dealing, privacy, security)

As a general rule, if still in doubt about some content, leave it out until you are happy with the answer to every question posed. Remember that a website is dynamic, and content can be added at any time.