

Online video guidelines

Version:	1.0
Date created:	19/05/2010
Policy official:	Colin Burgess
Date last updated:	03/06/2010
Date issued:	June 2010
Lead official:	David Pullinger
Guidance number:	TG129

Purpose

The aim of this guidance is to share best practice for publishing video on Government websites. Practical tips on how to plan, shoot and publish your videos are included, along with usability guidelines, information on licensing, technical standards and case studies.

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Background

Introduction

Increasing bandwidth and computer speeds makes it possible to publish longer video content (sometimes in excess of an hour) on networking sites. With the current vogue for user-generated content (UGC) and comment, anyone with a camera or phone can make their content available to a global audience. This guide advises on the way to do this well.

Some video content is better done to professional standards, for example those showing public how to use public services. Corporate videos that represent your department and will have your logo on should be produced professionally. The guide covers the essential aspects.

Finally, video on the internet is unregulated and is often published without proper thought to its legality of the content. This guide covers your responsibilities as a publisher of material, the re-purposing of assets that you have either already produced or acquired from a third party and what to keep in mind if you are planning to produce new video content for the Web.

Aim

The aim of this guidance is to share best practice for publishing video on Government websites. Practical tips on how to plan, shoot and publish your videos are included, along with usability guidelines, information on licensing, technical standards and case studies.

Audience

This guidance is aimed at:

- Heads of e-Communications in central government, including departments, executive agencies and non-departmental public bodies
- People involved in creating and publishing videos on government websites

Guide to video blogging

1. Videos are increasingly used to engage audiences online. Inexpensive equipment and the ease of posting multimedia content online (e.g. using video sharing websites or within a blog) means that it is now easier and cheaper than ever to use the power of video to engage audiences both by broadcasting messages out and taking comments and feedback in.
2. There has been a recent rise in the popularity of video diaries or blogs (also known as vlogs). The following guidance sets out the general principles for consideration when setting up a video blog including tips for improving the quality of video content, alerts to common pitfalls and instructions for embedding video into blog posts.

Where to post

3. Posting videos on your corporate website or blog is an effective way of communicating key messages to your online audience. To extend reach beyond your traditional website or blog customer base, consider using popular video-sharing services.
4. There are several online channels for sharing video online including Youtube, Facebook, blip.tv and Vimeo. The most appropriate channel will depend on the content of the video.
5. Like any blogging, the author should be proactive in responding to comments which may come in text or video.

Tips for embedding videos into blog posts

6. Common blogging platforms provide the facility to add video content to posts in a similar way to adding images or other non-text content. For example, using Wordpress you can add video content to a post by clicking the “Add Video” icon.
7. For videos posted onto Youtube, you can use the “Embed” code. Just copy and paste the code into your blog post. It’s better to add the code into the non-visual edit screen (i.e. the HTML edit screen) to ensure that the embedded video displays correctly.

Video content

8. The following guidelines cover three primary areas of focus:
- Planning your video
 - Shooting your video
 - Publishing your video

Planning your video

Delivery to the public

9. When producing content it is important to use the most appropriate delivery mechanism to reach your audience. If the intended audience is the public, then this should be done through one of the government's public-facing sites: Directgov, businesslink.gov.uk or NHS Choices. When publishing to specific public sector workforce groups, you might need to consider a dedicated service available through your site. In this case the government's experts on video in the Central Office of Information can help on best practice and options.
10. If you have content that you would like to put on Directgov, contact their Publishing department.

Should it be a video?

11. Video is not the only communications medium – PowerPoint and audio are sometimes more appropriate. Always consider whether an alternative medium may be a more cost-effective solution.

Should it be self-made or professionally produced?

12. Not every video will need to be produced by a professional video company. Some 'how to' videos can be easily achieved using screen-capture software with a voice-over. Video needs to be planned properly to work well. This will involve conducting some audience research and establishing the core messages to be conveyed. If the result of this indicates that you have a high-value message which needs longevity then you should engage with a TV professional. If in doubt consult COI.

Tell your Department

13. It is always best to alert those you work with to your video plans – it will avoid conflicting projects and there might be people who can help you.

Have a goal for your video

14. What is your key message? Who is your target audience? What mechanism / site will you have to use to reach your target audience? It is increasingly expected that we can justify the cost of any communications activity and due regard should be taken to how the effectiveness will be evaluated.

Permission to film and release forms

15. Before doing anything, make sure you have permissions to film and the consent of anyone you are hoping to include in the programme.
16. You will need specific permission if you are creating an obstruction in public.
17. To avoid issues with privacy while filming in public it is also a good idea to display clear signs to say that filming is in progress.
18. Make sure you take a release form, detailing how you are going to use the material, for any people appearing in your film and make sure they sign it before you leave. For examples of release forms, either search online or contact COI.
19. For permissions or licences to film children you will need to contact your Local Authority (this can take up to six weeks).

See also [Licensing and permissions](#).

Reconnaissance

20. If possible, go to the place you are planning to film prior to filming to see if you need to take any special equipment.

Shot list

21. Make a shot-list of the items / people / activities you need for your purpose and make sure you film them all.

Sequences

22. Good filmmaking is about sequences. Think how you can tell a story in a sequence of shots, and not just one. If in doubt, just remember: wide shot, close up, and reverse shot.

Optimising your video for Web or mobile

23. If you know you are delivering to Web or mobile there are considerations for filming that will improve your chances of success (see 36 Optimising your Video) before you start filming.

Shooting your video

Keep the shot static

24. Keep your shots still, using a tripod where possible, unless you really have to pan with the action. Once set up on your shot don't forget to press record.

Monitor/ playback

25. Before committing, make sure that the equipment is recording properly and that the shot looks good. Try to do a sample video/sound test and watch it/ listen to it. If possible try to use a viewing monitor while you film.

Close ups & cutaways

26. In case you have any editorial changes you want to make later, try to include some close-ups and cutaways of relevant people, places and objects. It will allow for more flexibility in the edit.

Ambient noise

27. Air conditioning can ruin the sound on a recording as can wind noise or mobile phones. Before you start filming, stop and listen to the noises around you. Are there any constantly, low sounds? If so, move. One-off noises like aircraft can be dealt with, but constant 'hums' may make your recording useless. Small video cameras may have poor microphones, move in close or use pin-microphones.

Handles

28. Always record at least 5 seconds of footage before and after the shot that you want, it allows you space to edit.

Lighting

29. It is important that what you are filming is well lit, or close to the brightest thing in the frame. Shoot with the sun and/or window behind you. This is important for two reasons:
- i. Most modern video cameras have auto exposure, and if your subject is against a brighter background, they will appear in silhouette.
 - ii. Cameras also tend to focus on the brightest thing in the frame, so if the background is brighter, your subject will appear out of focus.

Be bold (but not too bold)

30. One of the tell-tale signs of amateur shooting is the subject being too small in frame. Don't be afraid of filling the frame with your subject, but not too close.

Log files and tapes, locations & people

31. After a few days of filming you might forget which file or tape relates to which location or contributor, so make sure you mark them, list the locations and people you have filmed.

Safe storage of tape & equipment

32. There's no point in taking the time and effort to film if you have not got a tape at the end of it. Make sure all tapes are stored securely in a cool, dry place.

Publishing your video

Choose your site carefully

33. Make sure the content you are uploading is suitable for the site you are uploading to. For example, if you are publishing conference material don't target youth sites.

Editing

34. If you are able use a professional video editor, it is advisable to cut any unnecessary bits of your video out as this will help to keep the content short and interesting. Make sure any captions are clear to read.

Duration

35. Less is more. Keep your video brief as this will not only be more likely to keep peoples' attention but it will not strain slower computers. The average video length on Youtube is 5 minutes. If your message is long, publish it as a number of small videos rather than one long video.
36. For download on mobile networks you should get the video shorter than 40 seconds.

Technical and file format

37. To ensure that the best possible quality material is published you should shoot your video at the highest quality available within your budget and then deliver your videos in the most efficient and accessible format available for your target site.
38. Flash video is widely regarded as being the most accessible, with 99% take-up from broadband users. This is the video format used by many popular sites such as BBC iPlayer and Youtube. Flash (.flv) video is fairly universally accepted - H264, Windows Media files (.wmv) and Quicktime files (.mov) are also commonplace. Be sure to check any guidance listed on the target site you are publishing on.

Alternative format for download

39. It is no longer essential to provide an alternative format (eg .wmv, .mov) available as a download, although this is sometimes a useful addition – particularly when the user does not have Flash installed. If you decide to make this available, try to make it clear how big the file is so the user can decide if they want to continue. You should also include a warning to users not to re-use any content you have provided without written permission. This can be included in your site Terms and Conditions.

Repurposing video

40. You might be asked to share a video you have with another organisation (such as a broadcaster) that requires a high quality copy of your video. If this happens remember to go to your source video as this should always be the best quality. You retain appropriate quality if you re-purpose **down** the quality scale which is (from highest to lowest):
- **Broadcast** (Film, Digibeta, HD, DV)
 - **DVD** (mpeg 2)
 - **Web** (mpeg1, mpeg4, Quicktime, Windows media, Flash)
 - **Mobile** (Quicktime, 3gp, Flash)
41. It is important to understand that trying to re-purpose material **up** the scale will lead to very poor quality.
42. See [Appendix A](#) for a guide on video formats.

Bitrates and file sizes

43. The key factor determining the quality of your video online is the bitrate. As a point of reference, the BBC iPlayer is streamed at 800kbps (although a 2meg HD option is also available). Anything less than 512kbps will look pixellated and anything over 2meg might take a while to stream for computers with a basic 512kbps broadband connection.

Video dimensions

44. An aspect ratio of 16:9 is standard and the one used by all of the main broadcasters and social networking sites. As long as you maintain the aspect ratio, the screen size can be set to a medium size of around 512 x 288 pixels. Video codecs such as On2 VP6 and Sorenson Spark perform best when the frame width and height use multiples of 16. While you can use any width and height in your encoding settings, non-optimal dimensions can result in poor image quality and reduced frame rate. For the best image quality and playback, you should always use width and height dimensions that use a multiple of 16 (best), 8 (better) or 4 (good). To summarise the quality of video dimensions:

Best (dimensions divisible by 16)	Better (dimensions divisible by 8)	Good (dimensions divisible by 4)
1280 x 720	1152 x 648	1216 x 684
1024 x 576	896 x 504	1088 x 612
768 x 432	640 x 360	960 x 540
512 x 288	384 x 216	832 x 468
256 x 144	128 x 72	704 x 396
		576 x 324
		448 x 252

Optimising your video

45. When producing content for Web or mobile there are considerations that should be made to allow for watching on a smaller screen and potentially over a slow network.
46. Avoid fast camera movements that will make computer refresh-rate struggle.
47. Try to avoid wide camera shots or filming people from a distance.
48. Make sure the scene is well lit as smaller screens translate dark images less well.
49. Make sure that any captions or titles (e.g. graphics and name slates) are readable on the target device you are making the video for. This might require some testing.
50. Avoid lengthy videos as the longer the programme, the more computer memory will be required. For web streaming, any video over an hour can start to freeze many computers. If possible split videos into chapters of no more than 30 minutes to be safe. For mobile use a maximum video length of 40 seconds, the optimum is around 30 seconds
51. Producers should allow a 5 per cent margin around the edge of the video screen to allow for cutting-off (standard 16:9 safe caption area) that often occurs on Web or mobile
52. The default aspect ratio for all video should be 16:9 (widescreen) Full Height Anamorphic (FHA), appropriate to most Government media players.

53. A minimum of a 6-frame pause should be inserted on the video before audio and visual starts to allow for clipping on certain devices. Avoid using fade-ups from black at the start of programmes as this can also result in clipping.
54. To ensure that the best possible quality material is published you should shoot your video at the highest quality available within your budget and then deliver your videos in the most efficient and accessible format available for your target site.

Metrics

55. If you are delivering video online then it is worth including some tracking mechanism to find out how many people watch it. If your content is shown on Directgov then this will automatically be done. Some analytics tools may have limited functionality and only tell you how many 'page visits' you have had rather than how many times the video has been watched.

Back-up

56. If you are delivering online and only through a third party site with no contractual agreement then you cannot guarantee that a back-up copy of your video exists. You should always endeavour to keep an original high-quality 'master' copy of all your videos in case you need to make changes to content or re-purpose the video for another service.

Making your video easy to find (metatags)

57. When you upload your video, most sites require you to choose at least one metatag category and enter at least one tag to describe the content in your video. Adding this information helps other members find your video, so if you want an audience, help them out! The more accurate the tags are, the easier it is for everyone to find videos.
58. Make your tags as descriptive as you can—if you took a video of your team at a Health conference, you might want to tag it like this: **conference health London June swine flu**. Each tag is separated from the others by a space.
59. See also [TG123 Search Engine Optimisation](http://coi.gov.uk/guidance.php?page=335#section4f)¹ for more information making videos easy to find.

Music

60. If you want to use music, make sure you have the written permission of the owner.

¹ <http://coi.gov.uk/guidance.php?page=335#section4f>

Re-purposing video

61. If you are taking a video and putting it on a different device – i.e. web, phone, podcast etc – test the video on the target device before going Public to make sure it looks right and is appropriate for the device, for example don't include large panoramic views on content sent to mobile phones.

Comments

62. Having comments on network sites is helpful but is open to abuse. If you have comments enabled they will need to be properly moderated.

Marketing

63. When you publish your video, make sure you tell people it is there, either through the site mechanism or through your Marketing department.

Thumbnail

64. Make sure you choose a bold and representative image as the thumbnail for your video.

Viral videos

65. Creating videos that are intended to spread virally must be planned carefully as they require research and knowledge of your target audience. These projects usually involve a professional agency or producer. If you are planning a viral video it is best to seek professional advice. A [good example of an effective viral video](#)² is the one by a COI supplier about Swine Flu.

Adding captions

66. It's important to ensure that all videos posted online have the facility to display captions so that deaf and hard of hearing people can understand the content. More on this in the [accessibility and usability](#) section.

Help and advice

67. If in doubt, seek professional advice
68. Technical video standards are measurable and therefore easy to publish and maintain. However creative standards are more subjective and harder to enforce. While Ofcom does not regulate content on the Internet at present, there are plans to implement rules in the future.
69. A trusted source of guidance is Clearcast (Formerly the BACC) who publish [guidelines on commercials](#).³ This includes the following areas such as:
- **Harm:** Health and Safety, Safety and Children, Harm to Animals, Harm to the Environment, Photosensitive Epilepsy, Sound Levels

² <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npvUyxITfYs>

³ www.clearcast.co.uk/clearcast/notes_of_guidance/6.+Harm+and+Offence.htm

- **Offence:** Death, Violence, Discrimination, Harmful Stereotypes, Religion and Spiritual Belief, Sex and Nudity, Language, Personal Distress, Privacy, Unjustified Appeals to Fear, Bullying

Licensing and permissions

70. Unless you specifically requested the producer of the original material to clear all the contributors for this additional usage, do not presume that you have the property rights to re-use it any other media.
71. Crown Copyright. If your video is made by Civil Servants then it belongs to the Crown and you can put © Crown Copyright at the end. If your video has been procured through a third party, you need to have a contractual agreement in place signing over the rights of the video to the Crown. Otherwise the copyright notice is without foundation.
72. It is important to note that Crown Copyright is not just wording that can be added to the end of any video. It relates to the ownership of the material negotiated through contract with your supplier (although this might also be subject to other contributor or music licenses).
73. If you use this material without ensuring you have the necessary agreements in place, you would be in breach of contract and liable to legal action.

Using other people's material

74. Be very wary of re-purposing material produced by other people and organisations that have been downloaded from the net, or distributed to you in any other way, in any format, without first getting their written approval.
75. If you fail to check, you could be in breach of third party agreements, and as you are the person publishing this un-approved material, you will be the person liable for any action under breach of contract.
76. If you do use third party produced material ensure that you have copies of all the contracts/ release forms/ agreements/ licences/ relevant to the material **before** you publish any material including it.
77. Avoid using any commercially produced video content from films, or music from any source, these materials are highly unlikely to be 'right free' and large studios and music publishers will ruthlessly protect their property and you may well be in danger of bringing your department and the Government itself in to disrepute.
78. If in doubt, seek professional advice.

Usability and accessibility

79. Government is committed to making its web content accessible to the widest possible range of people. Accessibility guidance [TG102 Delivering inclusive websites](#) sets the minimum requirements for all public sector websites. The following section highlights the important considerations for video content.

Captions and transcripts

80. Audio content may be inaccessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. You should provide captions for all pre-recorded audio content. This is now a [Level A requirement](#)⁴ for compliance with WCAG 2.0.
81. As a minimum, transcripts (a text file containing what was said in the video) of all audio content should be provided with a view to providing captions in due course.
82. If you are posting videos on YouTube, you can add captions easily using the [Easy Youtube caption creator](#).⁵
83. Youtube also provides “Auto Timing”, which can automatically convert transcripts into captions. A video [guide to automatic captions](#) in Youtube explains this.

Audio description

84. Audio description is now a Level AA requirement for compliance with WCAG 2.0. Whilst it may not be possible to add audio descriptions to all existing video content online, it should be considered for future content.

Provide accessible controls

85. When providing audio or video on a web site, it is important to provide keyboard-accessible controls to allow users (including screen reader users) to interact with the video playback controls.
86. Allow users to toggle between regular screen size and full-screen view.
87. Allow users control over the audio playback.
88. Expose the state of controls (i.e. to show if the video is in play or pause state).
89. Use bright, clear, contrasting colours.

⁴ <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/#media-equiv>

⁵ <http://accessify.com/tools-and-wizards/accessibility-tools/easy-youtube-caption-creator/>

90. A good example of best practice for accessibility is the [Office for Disability Issues media player](#).⁶

Photosensitive Epilepsy (PSE) compliance

91. Although it is not a legal obligation for non-broadcast media, it is good practice to comply with the [Ofcom guidelines](#)⁷ for the assessment of flashing images and patterns in TV advertisements and programmes. This is to avoid causing problems to viewers with photosensitive epilepsy.
92. The only way to be completely sure your video is safe is to run through a Harding Flash and Pattern Analyser (FPA) before publishing online. If your production company cannot help, consult COI.
93. To avoid potential cost issues and delivery delays this should be factored into your budgets and schedules. The easiest way to avoid hold-ups is to do what you can to avoid problems with the film in the first place. The factors that need to be taken into account are:
- Prominence and image position.
 - Flashing lights.
 - Flickering Images
 - Rapidly changing images
 - Static patterns
 - Moving patterns
 - Inter-line flicker
94. There should be no more than 3 flashes or intensity changes per second or 6 flashes in any 2 second period. Changing images should be present for at least 8 frames. Flashing colours should also be avoided.
95. Static patterns which resemble a dart board, circular sectors, whirling wheels or swirls should be completely avoided.
96. Interline flicker can be produced when a computerised graphic is displayed with fine lines that are alternately black and white or high contrast ratio. This can cause a flicker rate of 25 times per second even though the caption is static.
97. Computer screens that are part of a television shot can cause a flicker on the finished programme due to the different scanning rates of the 2 systems.

⁶ www.odi.gov.uk/player

⁷ <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv/ifi/guidance/bguidance/guidance2.pdf>

Case studies

Case Study 1 – Choose a Different Ending

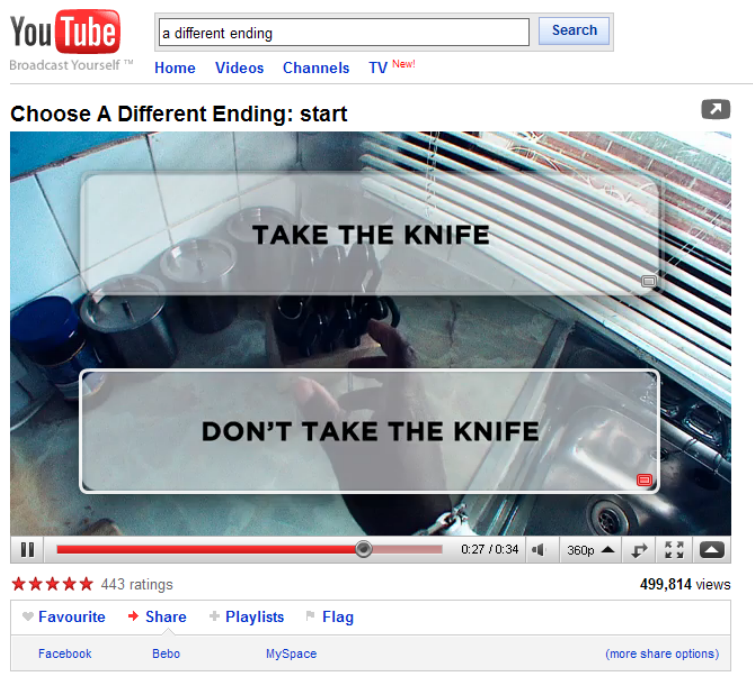
Target audience

The [Choose a Different Ending](#)⁸ viral video was one part of a campaign involving a thirty-second online trailer, a ten-second web trailer and a multiple ending TV advert. The campaign [Drop the Weapons](#)⁹ was aimed at adolescents who either carried weapons as a matter of habit or were contemplating doing so.

The overall aim of the campaign was to see a reduction in the number of young people carrying weapons around London.

Audience interaction

The 'Choose a Different Ending' components were designed to emphasise the concept of choice to the target audience. The ads and viral videos highlight the potential consequences of carrying a knife. However, they also show that going out with a weapon is not inevitable, the ultimate decision resting with the individual.



⁸ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFVvkzYDNJqo>

⁹ www.droptheweapons.org

Due to the interactive nature of the viral video, the user/target audience is forced to *think* about knife crime and the choices they are being asked to make. Each decision is then brought to life in the video, offering an insight into the consequences of carrying a knife. This is a good example of a campaign initiative that can only work online as it relies on audience interaction.

Audience engagement

The video engages the target audience in several ways:

- The video is shot from an individual perspective i.e. the player sees the world through the eyes of one person.
- Shot on a council estate and then in the surrounding areas (park, nearby roads), the location is a familiar one to the target audience.
- The cast is formed by the target audience, ensuring that the language and dress code would also be recognised by this audience.
- The video was created with the help of the target audience which would have helped with the realism of the scenarios as well as the aforementioned aspects.

Case Study 2 – Education Maintenance Allowance

Target audience

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is funded by the LSC and is therefore part of the overarching campaign to boost the number of young adults in education.

The target audience are 16,17 and 18 year-olds who have left compulsory education or are about to leave and have an annual household income of less than £30,810. In addition to the age and financial conditions, the individual must be enrolled in a full-time education course or selected courses funded by the LSC.

Campaign integration

The videos created for the promotion of EMA sit on a [site dedicated to EMA](http://ema.direct.gov.uk/)¹⁰ and hosted by Directgov. The site offers links to Directgov pages explaining what exactly the EMA is, who is eligible and how to apply.

There was no additional publicity of the EMA; therefore, the site is designed to act as a central point of both information and encouragement.

¹⁰ <http://ema.direct.gov.uk/>

Video objectives

In total, 14 videos were created and these have been divided into 4 main categories; My Way, My Choice, My Ideas and My Experience. Each video contributes to the overall objective; to raise awareness of the EMA and encourage the target audience to apply.

Video overview/production

Below is a summary of the ways in which the creative techniques and production of this video are examples of best practice:

- Each of the videos involves a combination of animation and real people talking to the camera. The animation is in the form of a town that two walking fingers then navigate around. The changing scenery allows for the 'talking heads' to be introduced in creative ways.
- The information in these videos comes directly from the target audience – a large number of people receiving the EMA have been interviewed and with the exception of the case study videos, their responses have been mixed in together. This instantly lends the video authority - no one message is being passed on and the production has the support of numerous teenagers.
- The varied view points allow the comments to range from the serious to the slightly more frivolous.
- The production of these videos is key to their watchable nature. The interviewees are creatively incorporated into the video e.g. they appear as a billboard and talk within it or as an ad on a bus shelter.



- Important options included in the voiceover are also emphasised using animation and post-production methods. For example, when explaining that the EMA can be used for many academic subjects, a list is shown in the form of an entry buzzer.



- Consideration of the branding has been shown in the production of this video. At the start, the EMA and LSC logos are creatively posted on a bus shelter whilst the use of the hands recalls the LSC's end line 'Our future. It's in our hands' and previous campaigns.

Accessibility and usability

A good online video will always take the user journey into account, making a video simple to operate within the page it sits and accessible to all.

The following examples of best practice are seen in this video:

- The video has not been created to run within a familiar template e.g. Youtube. It is therefore particularly important that all common commands are easy to identify. The full-screen tab is clearly visible in the top left-hand corner, for example.
- Subtitles: The option is made clear as it is one of three options before a video is played.
- Alt tags: These are always provided and offer a clear explanation of the links. For example, the alt tag for 'My Choice' on the main menu reads 'See how five people chose to carry on in learning'.
- Control Panel – once the user has navigated away from the main menu, option such as sound off, pause, restart and the volume control remain easy to see and use.
- Links – Within each video category there can be more than one video. These are always explained and labelled clearly and consistently. For example, 'My Experience: EMA has helped a lot of people carry on in learning – but what happens afterwards?' The user can then click on one of four names.

Case Study 3 – Safer Food, Better Business

Video objectives

The objective of the [Safer Food, Better Business](http://www.sfbtraining.co.uk/)¹¹ initiative is to promote good hygiene and best practice when working with food.

The videos form part of an e-manual, explaining via visual examples, how food can be stored and prepared in a safe and hygienic way. There are four different versions of the video guide; two catering guides (one for managers and one for staff) and two retail guides (again, one for management and one for staff).

Target audience

The videos are aimed at those working in the food industry at both managerial and general staff level. The target audience is made up of people of a number of nationalities hence it is important that the videos, as well as the site within which they sit, are clear and informative. The opportunity to watch the videos in up to sixteen languages is particularly helpful in this instance.

Video overview/production

The videos consist of simple shots demonstrating how to carry out a particular recommendation i.e. how to clean a fridge following the FSA's recommendations. The videos are easy to focus on as there are never too many items in the frame, and never more than one person. Any objects or individuals in the frame serve a purpose. For example in the video on thorough hand washing, the cameraman has zoomed in on the sink and the hands and this is all the viewer sees.

Duration

The duration varies as a video can either be played as one long video i.e. all the areas of concern and the corresponding tips played in one reel, or the viewer can select which videos they wish to play. In this way, a user only concerned with cross-contamination can watch only this section of video.

Accessibility and usability

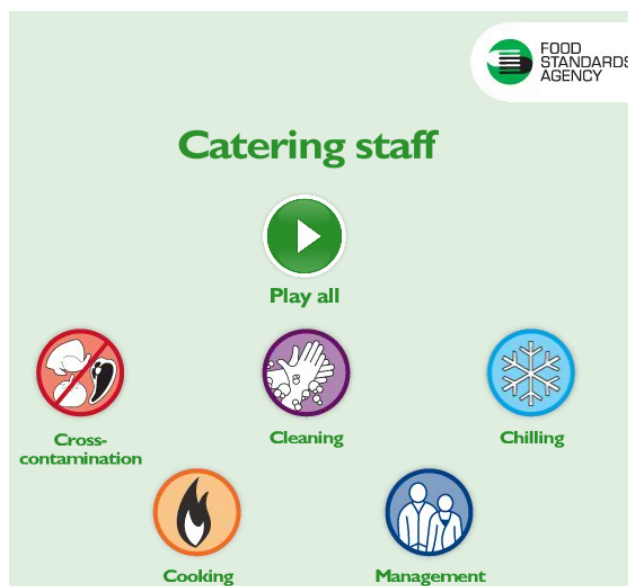
The following are examples of best practice as seen in this video;

- Page set up: The lay out is particularly simple with each action made obvious. The choices available to the user have been kept to the minimum and all click-throughs are easily identified by size and colour, visibly changing when the mouse hovers over them.

¹¹ <http://www.sfbtraining.co.uk/>



- Use of icons: icons at the options stage have been designed to provide clarity. Members of the target audience may not have a high level of English, making illustrations particularly important in this case.



- Captions: When in player mode, the subtitles option is clearly marked on the control panel. The subtitles are easy to read against the background as they have been typed in white against a blacked out background.
- Sound-Off: This is also clearly visible on the control panel for those who do not need/want sound playing.
- Text-only: The option to download a full transcript is made visible at all times.
- Voiceover: The pace of speech throughout is always reasonable and in time with the actions being carried out in the video.

- Play Options: The videos show consideration of the reader's time – there is a clear option to either play the videos through in a reel or select the relevant section.
- User Journey: The use of colour here is particularly helpful. Every time the user selects a specific video, the background changes colour to demonstrate that the user has clicked through to a new area.

Contact

The government's centre of excellence in audio-visual communication is the Central Office of Information (COI). Key contacts (March 2010) are the following:

Director Content - David Seers

david.seers@coi.gsi.gov.uk

0207 261 8528

Head of Moving Image - Simon Devine

simon.devine@coi.gsi.gov.uk

0207 261 8374

Deputy Head of Moving Image – Andrew LaneFox

andrew.lanefox@coi.gsi.gov.uk

0207 261 8778

Appendix A – Video formats guide

- a. MPEG1 – universal video accepted by all computers
- b. MPEG2 – DVD quality – not recommended for web use due to size
- c. MPEG4 – Better quality than MPEG1 but not accepted by older computers
- d. Flash – one of the most efficient and accessible video formats on the web – particularly good functionality as flash also has comprehensive animation and action script so clickable actions can be added to interact with the video – is included within internet explorer
- e. Quicktime – Efficient and good quality but limited interactivity as it is just a player
- f. Windows Media – much the same quality as Quicktime except predominantly aimed at PC's. Again it is simply a player with limited 'clickable' interactivity
- g. Real player - is a cross-platform media player by Real Networks that plays a number of multimedia formats including MP3 MPEG4, Quicktime and Windows Media
- h. 3gp – video format specially devised for 3G-enabled mobile phones

Appendix B – Technical standards

These standards are only suggested as they are the highest (broadcast) that can be required of you. You may elect to save your videos at a lower quality. However it is **good practice** to save source material at the highest possible standard for archiving and re-use purposes.

Production companies delivering video for insertion into the Central Office of Information (COI) archive need to adhere to the following technical standards.

The Central Office of Information works under the general principle that it should be possible to rebuild any programme from scratch from material either within COI, or from within the archive. This means retaining all material that might be needed to make changes and reversion programmes down the line.

- Include a DigiBeta Master – whatever the format you are delivering on – that conforms to full broadcast specification.
- This master must have a COI clock on it, with its own COI clock number.
- The end frame of the programme must conform to COI's guidelines.
- This master must be Full Height Anamorphic. Even if the deliverable is 4:3 this should be derived from an ARCD 16:9 master or letterboxed 4:3. Nothing should be shot at 4:3.
- The FHA master must have unmixed sync sound on Chs 3 & 4. (We used to ask for M&E but unmixed sync has proved to be more useful)
- There must be a written VT report with each master.
- All captions must be 14:9 title safe.
- All individual shots with any text (e.g. titles, supers etc.) should be laid as cleans individually to the tape after the programme. This is easier for us than having a textless master.
- If there has been a v/o record or sound dub we should have the OMFI disc.
- A copy of the project on disc/cd should also be included.
- All graphic elements, even if laid straight to the programme, should be run off onto separate tape or disk.

- All other material including rushes, discs of stills, rostrum material, dubs of archive, DAT's and minidisks should be returned to COI.
- If you are producing on DVD, DLTs supplied with Layer 0 & Layer 1 DDP images, are fine for replication backups. However, for our archives we also need an Open Asset DLT containing authoring scripts, highlights, encoded files and subtitles. Please can you label the DLT with a full file-list and cite the systems that were used for authoring/encoding. For future reference, please can you also supply updated flowcharts & asset lists where necessary.
- All films must be ([Photo Sensitive Epilepsy](#)) PSE – compliant (ie should be Hardings tested to make sure that there is not a danger of flash-induced epileptic episodes)