U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Creating Section 508 Conformant Multimedia

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The items discussed below help create Section 508 conformant multimedia files. Content owners are expected to incorporate these basics into their documents. Keep in mind these tips do not address every way to make multimedia Section 508 conformant.

Auto-Playing and Auto-Updating Content

- Any audio content playing automatically for more than 3 seconds needs to have an accessible mechanism within the first three elements the user encounters enabling the user to pause or stop the audio or control the volume of the content.
- Any content automatically blinking, moving, or scrolling for more than 5 seconds and is not the only content on the page needs to have an accessible mechanism within the first three elements the user encounters enabling the user to pause, stop, or hide the content.
- Any content automatically updating and is not the only content on the page needs to have an accessible and easy-to-find mechanism enabling the user to pause, stop, hide, or control the frequency of updating content. This mechanism is to appear within the first three elements the user encounters at the top of the page or within three elements the user encounters before or after the auto-updating content.
- A notification needs to be provided for any automatic change in content.

Pre-Recorded Audio-Only, Video-Only, and Animation

- Prerecorded audio only needs to have a complete and accurate text-based equivalent.
- Prerecorded video only needs to have a complete and accurate text-based or audio equivalent.

Synchronized Media

- Accurate and synchronized captions need to be provided for prerecorded audio except when it is the media alternative for text and is clearly labelled as the alternative.
- Accurate and synchronized audio descriptions need to be provided for significant visual information in prerecorded audiovisual that is not adequately described by the captions.
- Equivalent captions need to be provided for real-time synchronized media.
- Captions must not obscure relevant content on the video.
- Media controls for captioning and audio descriptions need to be available in the media player.
- When a media player with volume adjustment control(s) is provided, the user controls for closed captions and audio descriptions within the media player need to be available at the same menu level as the volume or program selection controls.

Live Media

Captions need to be provided for all live audio content. The captions also need to identify who is speaking along with sound effects and significant audio content.

References and Resources

- https://www.section508.gov/create/video-social.
- https://section508coordinators.github.io/TrustedTester/media.html.