



# Why screencasting?

## The benefits of interactive online tutorials

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### Problem:

The traditional information literacy format of in-person lectures and drop-in workshops is limited by practical and pedagogical factors. Many tools-based demonstrations done in-class are not available to students at their point of need. Furthermore, traditional academic courses now have a notable web presence (Kimok and Heller-Ross, 2008). Online programs are proliferating and even traditional in-person courses now often have a web-based component.

In addition, text-based library guides -- print or electronic -- are void of audio components or dynamic moving content that helps to relay information to those with different learning styles. This gap in library services puts unnecessary constraints on many students' ability to learn due to its format and time constraints.

#### Steps in Creating Screencasts

1. Choose your software
  - Think about what you need it to do
2. Make a Plan
  - Have a script/story board
3. Set up
  - Preload any websites, hide bookmarks, clear browsing data
4. Practice
  - Make sure everything works and that your examples make sense
5. Record!
6. Edit
  - Remove dead air, remove Ums, etc., remove extra screenshots/slides
7. Polish
  - Add a title page, end credits, table of contents, contact information
8. Distribute and Advertise
9. Share
  - Show off your hard work to other professional with tutorial sharing projects such as ANTS, PRIMO, LION, etc.

### Objectives:

We propose that screencasts can be used to fill this gap in our current information literacy instructional services. We will explore the benefits and limitations of screencasts as well as some best practices for creating and using screencasts as a part of your information literacy instruction.

### Major Findings:

The use of screencasts is growing significantly within academic libraries (Anderson 2008). The topics covered include instruction on specific databases, using bibliographic management software (such as Endnote and Refworks), other academic tools (Powerpoint), using library resources (finding full text, using the catalogue, etc.). Screencasts are also being used to support distance education (Betty 2009).

There are many tools available to create screencasts (see below). The software varies in usability and functionality. It was our experience that the commercial products (Camtasia and Captivate) allowed more flexibility and created more professional looking screencasts.

Studies in pedagogy and learning styles have long-concluded that oral or text-based teaching tools are not as effective for visual, spatial and tactile learners. Online screencasting videos allow students to learn in a combined audio-visual environment, where demonstrations replicate the experience of navigating databases and systems and allow students to follow along.

Additional research shows that screencasts are more effective when they are active and engage the user (i.e. require the user to interact with the tutorial) rather than passive (Anderson

#### Screencasting Software

- Camtasia
- Captivate
- Robodemoa
- Canriki
- Qarbon's
- Viewletbuilding Screenflow
- Jing (Free)
- Wink (Free)

Please see:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison\\_of\\_screencasting\\_software](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_screencasting_software) for more information.

2009) and that a learner-centered approach is more effective (Tempelman Kluit 2006). Screencasts can support embedded quiz questions to ensure dynamic interactivity between the screencasting video and the user. In addition, it has been shown that higher quality and richer media is more effective at gaining the users attention and increases user satisfaction with the tool (Liu, 2009).

There are several opportunities for information literacy instruction assessment via screencasting video technologies. Betty (2009) identifies the use of Google Analytics in screencasting videos as a key source of information about which aspects of their videos are being used the most, viewed at the longest intervals, and which are not. Furthermore, some systems (such as Adobe Captivate) allow for evaluation through quiz questions, which can be linked directly to an instructor's Moodle account. This integration with course management systems enhances the librarians' and the instructors' means of evaluating the effectiveness of the videos, and ensures engagement of students even in web-based course environments.

### Do's

- Include sub-titles and slide notes for increased accessibility
- Make it interactive!
- Have contact information for the library and for yourself/the creator
- Keep in mind the resolution
- Test the tutorial in multiple browsers
- Use resources like ANTS discussion groups to get help from other librarians

### Dont's

- Use hard to read colour schemes, fonts
- Edit in ways that make it seem as though the tool you are demoing behaves differently than it actually does
- Make tutorials that are too long! Split it up into multiple tutorials
- Ignore features that allow for dynamic content like quizzes

### Conclusions:

By utilizing screencasting technology to enhance information literacy instruction, librarians are able to create web-based teaching and learning tools that better meet the needs of students, instructors and librarians themselves. Specifically, these videos are asynchronous, meaning they are available any time, day or night, to students (many of whom undertake research outside of library hours of operation).

They are also available outside of the physical confines of the academic campus, which is helpful not only for traditional students who do not access the library in person, but is paramount to effective information literacy delivery for those students enrolled in distance education programs.

Studies in pedagogy and learning styles have shown that oral or text-based teaching tools are not useful for visual, spatial and tactile learners. Online screencasts allow students to learn in a combined audio-visual environment.

It is still unclear whether or not the time invested in creating screencasts is justified (Betty 2009). Further research is needed to evaluate the tools that are available to assess the use and effectiveness of screencasts.

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