

# Best Practice When Creating a Transcript

## How to create the transcript

The main options for creating a transcript are as follows:

### 1. Using speech recognition software

Using speech recognition software, such as Dragon NaturallySpeaking, might be a viable option if you have a lot of media. *Usually this type of software requires "training" for a particular voice, so if your audio includes different people, this won't work as well.*

### 2. Type the transcript yourself

If you do it yourself, plan for it to take at least three times as long as the audio to type it up – e.g., half an hour for a 10-minute video.

Tools in YouTube help assist in the process.

### 3. Pay some to do it or use transcription services.

## Best practices for the audio

- Include visual information in the audio.
- Ensure all relevant audio information is included in the recording.
- For example, in presentations: Instead of pointing to a slide and saying, "as you can see on this slide, sales peaked here", say, "this sales chart for the last year shows that it peaked in August."
- If you do show-of-hands (e.g., "How many people follow WC3 Guidelines"), say the results for the audio recording (e.g., "about half").
- Repeat questions that are not picked up by the audio recording.
- Get good quality audio recording. Better quality means a better and cheaper transcript. *Most transcription services charge extra for low quality audio.*

## What to make sure you include in the transcript:

- Speakers names.
- All speech content. If there is speech that is not relevant, it is usually best to indicate that it has been excluded from the transcript, e.g.: "[participants discuss the weather while the presenter reboots his computer]".

- Relevant information about the tone of the speech, usually in brackets, e.g.: "John: I hate this computer! [shouted]"
- Relevant non-speech audio, e.g.: "[computer crashing into bits and parts sliding across the floor]". Non-relevant background noise can usually be left out of the transcript.

#### Make sure you identify the speaker(s), for example:

- For an informal podcast transcript with multiple speakers, it's probably best to use speakers' full names the first time, and then just their first names.
- When there are multiple speakers, use hanging indents to make it easy to skim for a particular speaker. *If you are skilled in CSS you can even use CSS and give each speaker a different colour or style. (Make sure you also include names so there is redundant colour coding.)*
- When the focus should be on the interviewee's answers and not the interviewer, you could format the interviewer's questions in smaller, lighter text so the interviewee's

#### Edit according to the situation:

- In some cases, such as legal information, the transcript must be verbatim, including ums, ahs, and indicating pauses.
- For most podcasts, presentations, and such, minor edits for readability are appropriate. For example, if the speaker made a minor mistake in what they were saying and corrected themselves it would be acceptable to just show the corrected version
- It is not appropriate to change the meaning from the audio. Likewise, it is usually not appropriate to significantly correct grammar or other mistakes.

#### Add navigation and clarifications:

- Add headings and links where it will make the transcript more usable, e.g., added links in short podcast transcript and added headings in long presentation transcript. This also helps with SEO.
- It is generally acceptable to add clarifying information, as long as it is clear that it is not part of the actual audio, e.g., words added to a paragraph put in [brackets], or separate sections with headings "Introduction", "Transcript", "Resources".

#### Make it easy for people to get the transcript online:

- Provide a link to the transcript wherever the audio or video is available.

- With the transcript, provide a link to the audio or video file.
- If you have the skills provide the transcript in HTML for maximum accessibility to people and to search engines, and for reuse.