Accessibility of Video and Audio

Benefits

Indexing and Searching:

Because captioning involves the synchronization of text content with the audio/video material, it allows the content to become easily searchable with traditional text searches.

This allows your viewers to have rapid access to the parts of the content they need. This is particularly important for educational materials and other presentations; for academics, this is invaluable. Imagine a series of lectures captured on video- you recall that in one of those lectures the speaker references a particular point that you wish to focus on. With searchable transcripts, finding that specific clip is easy; without it you must sit through all of the lectures waiting for the specific point in time. Captioning saves researchers' time!

Improving Comprehension:

Captioning improves comprehension for all viewers, especially for those with English as a second language.

Noise or distractions in the listening environment, underdeveloped English skills on the part of the listener, or heavy accents on the part of the talker all work to deteriorate the message being communicated. Captioning can improve comprehension in all these cases. With an increased move towards online video, computer systems without speakers or soundcards (typical in libraries and other public access points), or mobile computing devices such as hand-held PDAs all benefit from captioning as well. Finally, with a text transcript created, translations can be produced and provided, creating not only captioned media but sub-titled media-a huge benefit to non- native speaker of English as well as an enhanced multi-modal learning tool!

Compliance Requirements:

Compliance with ADA and other Human Rights legislation indicates that all broadcast or distributed video content be captioned.

This applies to web cast (also known as PodCast) material as well as traditional video broadcasts, video tapes and DVDs. Equally important is the moral imperative to ensure equal access; providing captioning is The Right Thing to Do - already major corporations spend extra to underwrite (and take credit for) television captioning, as any single night of television viewing will confirm.

Universal Access:

Design your content from the ground up to be as usable as possible by as many people as possible.

Captioning is a key element of Universal Design for video material, especially for educational material. Captioning provides an alternative channel of information and allows a larger community of content consumers to have access.

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Requirements - Legal

Section 508:

"b) Equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation shall be synchronized with the presentation."
- http://section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Web

Section 504:

Suggests that **pedagogical materials** must be made available to all students regardless of any disability.
- http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html

WCAG 2:

1.2.1 Audio-only and Video-only (Prerecorded): For prerecorded audio-only and prerecorded video-only media, the following are true, except when the audio or video is a media alternative for text and is clearly labeled as such: (Level A)

- Prerecorded Audio-only: An alternative for time-based media is provided that presents equivalent information for prerecorded audio-only content.
- Prerecorded Video-only: Either an alternative for time-based media or an audio track is provided that presents equivalent information for prerecorded video-only content.

1.2.2 Captions (Prerecorded): Captions are provided for all prerecorded audio content in synchronized media, except when the media is a media alternative for text and is clearly labeled as such. (Level A)

1.2.3 Audio Description or Media Alternative (Prerecorded): An alternative for time-based media or audio description of the prerecorded video content is provided for synchronized media, except when the media is a media alternative for text and is clearly labeled as such. (Level A)
- http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/#media-equiv

Requirements – Users

- **Captioning**
  - Enhanced captions/subtitles
  - Sign translation
- **Transcripts**
- **Described video**
  - Text video description
  - Extended video descriptions

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How To

Manual Methods

MAGpie

MAGpie is a free captioning tool that allows content authors to manually create captioned files for video presentations. Developed and managed by NCAM/WGBH, MAGpie provides a simple interface for captioning Web-based presentations.
http://ncam.wgbh.org/webaccess/magpie/

World Caption

World Caption is a free captioning tool for QuickTime compatible media files. By importing a transcript, World Caption attempts to automatically parse the text file into manageable sections that can then by synchronized to the media playback. Depending on the type of presentation, the captioner may not have to manually synchronize each caption.
http://lss.wisc.edu/node/276

MovCaptioner

MovCaptioner is a shareware application for the Apple OS X platform. MovCaptioner is a hands-on, manual captioning application that allows the captioner to synchronize the media presentation with a text transcript. MovCaptioner will also allow the import of a previous time-stamped file (SRT, SCC, etc.) and in order to convert to other captioning formats or to perform a timing off-set.
http://www.synchrimedia.com/

Subtitle Workshop

Subtitle Workshop is a complete, efficient and convenient Windows based freeware subtitle and caption editing tool. It supports a large variety of time-stamp formats and has all the features you would want from an editing program.
http://www.urusoft.net/products.php?cat=sw&lang=1

Express Scribe

Express Scribe is free software that is available on both Windows and Macintosh. Express Scribe allows you to have a lot of control over audio playback if you wish to generate your own text transcript. With it, you can use simple keystrokes to pause, play, and rewind a few seconds, in case you miss something. Express Scribe requires you have audio in either WAV or MP3 format.
http://www.nch.com.au/scribe/

Outsourcing

There are a large number of Captioning Service providers around the country. Often pricing can be negotiated based on volume and other delivery requirements. Two services that have focused on the EDU sector are:

- 3PlayMedia - http://www.3playmedia.com/
- Automatic Synch - http://www.automaticsync.com/captionsync/

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Delivery methods

Local Hosting / DVD

Integration with LMS

YouTube / iTunes U