

Screencasting for Quick Online Tutorials

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Online tutorials have traditionally been notoriously time consuming to create and often difficult to update. At many libraries, tutorial projects have never made it to fruition. At others, extensive time and hard work have created tutorials that then languish and are difficult to update. Try using screencasting to create quick tutorials when you record a video of screen motions including mouse movements and clicks and add an audio commentary to the video explaining the process.

Screencasting Examples

Screencasting Introduction

Jon Udell's Heavy Metal Umlaut Screencast

weblog.infoworld.com/udell/gems/umlaut.html

Database Aids

PubMed Help Pages (U Washington, Camtasia)

healthlinks.washington.edu/howto/pubmed

EbscoHost Tutorial (Trinity Western, using Wink)

www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/AcSePr.htm

Google Scholar vs. PsycInfo (Camtasia)

www2.library.ucla.edu/googlescholar

My Screencasting Development Sites

My Montana State University Tutorials (Camtasia)

www.lib.montana.edu/instruct/tutorials

A SearchEngineShowdown Tutorials (Camtasia)

searchengineshowdown.com/tutorials/bookmarklets

Various Academic Library Examples

University of Calgary Tutorials (Captivate)

library.ucalgary.ca/services/libraryconnection/tutorials.php

University of British Columbia (Camtasia)

www.library.ubc.ca/scieng/videos/library_research.html

Millersville University (Captivate)

library.millersville.edu/l2.cfm?Parent=2269

Babson College Quick Tutorials (Camtasia)

www3.babson.edu/Library/research/quicktutorials.cfm

UCLA Find It Articles (Camtasia)

snipurl.com/itjx

University of Hawaii (Camtasia)

www.sinclair.hawaii.edu/HTML/help/public_tutorials.html

Seattle Community Colleges (Camtasia)

seattlecentral.edu/library/passport

Colorado Mountain College Video Clips (Camtasia)

www.coloradomtn.edu/library/videos

TUSCWOG: Usability and Planning

Tutorial Using Screen Capture Working Group

www.library.wisc.edu/clips/home.html

Screencasting Planning Tips

Minimize Clutter:

- Avoid recording whole screen
- Avoid Browser bars and identification, when possible
- Close unnecessary toolbars or use smaller window
- Try solid color desktop or wallpaper
- Shut down other programs (avoid incoming email sound files)

Broadest Audience Usability:

- Use small screen dimensions
- Try to keep it under 800x600
- Smaller area = smaller

For full screen recording, such as software installation: Change screen resolution to 640x480 before recording

Error Handling:

- Add pauses with no speech and no desktop motion (Easier section identification, deletion, and editing)
- If phone rings, just pause recording
- Fumbled Speech? Stop talking for a few seconds, then say it again

In general, the pause and try again approach is quicker than stopping the whole process and trying to re-do it all over again

Planning Outline

Process:

1. Come up with topic
2. Sketch click path and examples to use
3. Verify example works for instructional point
4. Record
5. Publish

Keep each step to a minimal time at first

One Example I Used

1. Topic or Task: Using InfoTrac OneFile
2. Find an example: skiing
3. Sketch click path:
 - a. Start library home page
 - b. Indexes and Databases
 - c. InfoTrac OneFile
 - d. Search skiing
 - e. subdivisions to History
 - f. Show #2 HTML full text
 - g. #3 for PDF
 - h. #4 for no full text in database

Screencasting Software

Camtasia Studio	www.techsmith.com/products/studio	\$299 (\$224 Government, \$149 Education)
Windows 2000 or XP only		
Free trial		
Records mouse movements and audio commentary		
Edit options: cut or split; add images, titles, transitions, call outs		
Zoom and pan; Pause; Quizzes		
Raise and lower audio volume or replace with silence		
Output options include Flash, AVI, WMV, QuickTime, RealMedia, Animated GIFs		
Start, stop, and pause controls		
Macromedia Captivate	www.macromedia.com/software/captivate	\$499 (\$199 Education)
Windows 2000 or XP only		
Free trial		
Records mouse movements and audio commentary		
Edit options: add images, auto captions, titles, call outs		
Quizzes, buttons, rollovers		
Output options include Flash and more		
Start, stop, and pause controls		
ViewletCam	www.qarbon.com/presentation-software/vc	\$149
Windows 98/98SE/NT/2000/XP		
Free trial		
Records mouse movements and audio commentary		
Start, stop, and pause controls		
Output options include Flash, AVI, Animated GIFs		
TurboDemo	www.turbodemo.com	\$399 (Standard, \$629 Professional)
Windows 95 and higher		
Free trial		
Records mouse movements and audio commentary		
Start, stop, and pause controls		
Output options include Flash, AVI, Java, PDFs		
Wink	www.debugmode.com/wink	Free
Windows 95 and higher and Linux		
Record screen actions, but no sound, yet		
Output options include Flash		
Fewer features		