Evaluating Best Practices for Video Tutorials: A Case Study

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Background
At Reese Library

- High stats for questions related to GIL Express
- Wanted to branch out into more multimedia instructional methods
- No background
Identifying
Planning

Establish Learning Objectives

- Helps to avoid wasting time and effort (Slebodnik and Riehl, 2009)
- Organizes content (Dewald, 1999; Oud, 2009)
- Focuses content to specific goals (Blummer and Kritskaya, 2009)
Planning

Identify potential audience and their preexisting knowledge

- Increases likelihood of viewership (Oud, 2009)
- Help establish strategies of presentation (Oud, 2009)
- May need to do focus groups, needs assessments, etc. (Blummer and Kristkaya, 2009)
Planning

Research creation software

- Select program that meets tutorial needs (Blummer and Kritskaya, 2009; Evans, 2014)
- Usability, cost, accessibility, time should be considered (Blevins and Elton, 2009)
Examine tutorials created by others

- Helps generate ideas (Blummer and Kritskaya, 2009)
Creating

Write a script

- Adds professional quality (Kern, 2013)
- Provides structure and clarity (Balin and Peña, 2007; Hess, 2013; Evans, 2014)
- Helps create captions (Kern, 2013)
- Stating learning objectives help orient viewer (Dewald, 1999; Hess, 2013; Evans, 2014)
- Only main points should be emphasized to minimize cognitive load and keep viewers attention (Oud, 2009; Bowles-Terry, et al., 2010)
- Keep language simple (Slebodnik and Riehle, 2009; Wyant, 2013; Clossen, 2014)
- Read the script out loud to see if easily spoken (Kern, 2013)
Limit tutorials to 2 minutes

- Helps keep viewer engaged (Bowles-Terry, 2010; Wyant, 2013)
- More likely to be completely viewed (Betty, 2008)
- More manageable to update and maintain (Hess, 2013)
- Longer tutorials can be broken into smaller tutorials (Betty, 2008; Bowels-Terry et al., 2010; Mestre, 2012)
- Keeps tutorial focused on one learning objective at a time (Clossen, 2014)
- Chunking supports retention (Scales et al., 2013)
Use video and audio cues

- Directs viewer’s attention to important parts on the screen (Mestre, 2012; Kern, 2013; Scales et al., 2013)
- Cues should not be overused or become distracting (Oud, 2009; Scales et al., 2013; Evans, 2014)
- Busy screens should be avoided to help focus (Clossen, 2014)
- Graphics should be consistent in style and format (Reece, 2007; Oud, 2009; Plumb, 2010)
Create

*Provide contact information*

- Helps users ask for additional help (Dewald, 1999; Reece, 2007; Betty, 2008; Blummer and Kritskaya, 2009)
- Helps engage viewers (Blummer and Kritskaya, 2009)
Create

Provide content in multiple formats

• Make tutorial accessible to all users (Wyant, 2013)
• Closed captioned helps engage those with hearing loss and non-native speakers (Bowles-Terry, 2010; Mestre, 2012; Kern, 2013; Wyant, 2013)
• Closed captioning helps those who do not have equipment to listen to audio or prefer print (Scales, et al., 2013)
• Supports various learning styles (Blummer and Kritskaya, 2009; Bowles-Terry et al., 2010)
Publishing

*Link tutorial at point of need*

- Enhances findability (Bowles-Terry et al., 2010; Hess, 2013)
- Made available for embedding (Thornes, 2012; Wyant, 2013)
**Promoting**

*Promote awareness*

- Announce on website (Betty, 2008)
- Post on blogs and other social media (Evans, 2014)
- Simple flyers, signs, QR codes, etc., can be placed where students will need tutorial (Betty, 2008; Thornes, 2012; Evans, 2014)
- Encourage all librarians to use tutorials (Betty, 2008)
Assessing

Assess the tutorial

• Evaluate if tutorial meets needs (Thornes, 2012)
• Can use various techniques (Blummer and Kritskaya, 2009; Slebodnik and Riehle, 2009; Evans, 2014)
  – Usability tests
  – Pilot studies
  – Surveys
  – Usage stats
  – Qualitative data
• Continuously collect data throughout process (Plumb, 2010; Evans, 2014)
• Colleagues can provide good feedback (Hess, 2013)
Evaluating
Identify Audience and Establish Learning Objectives

- Identifying audience helps establish learning objective
- Objectives need to be clear and specific for them to matter
- Helpful for structuring the project
Write a script

• Time-consuming, but possibly most helpful aspect of creating the video
• Include both procedural information and “need-to-know” information in order to orient user
Limit tutorials to 2 minutes

- Sensible in theory, but not always practical.
- Many videos must go over the two minute mark in order to keep relevant information together.
Use video and audio cues

- Video and audio cues should be used sparingly as to not take focus off the content
- Graphics should not be the “star of the show”
Provide contact information

- Best to put it at the end, so students know there is someone there if they are still confused
Provide content in multiple formats

- Want to reach a wide audience
- Script, subtitles, etc. all help in allowing for more accessibility

Subtitle Example | used under CC license | https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Subtitle-Example.svg
Link tutorial at point of need

- Important for increasing findability
- Users won’t think to look at a buried tutorials page
Promote awareness

• Publishing at point of need take care of some of this
• Make sure your colleagues are aware of the video so they can refer students to it or embed in guides.

Cooperation | used under CC license | https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Co-promotion.jpeg
Assess the tutorial

- Feedback from colleagues and users is an important aspect and can be valuable in revising and future planning.
- Usage statistics can give an idea of how the video is being accessed.
- User studies can help identify if they are meeting the needs of users.
Questions? Comments? Concerns?


Thornes, Sara L. (2013). Creating an online tutorial to support information literacy and academic skills development. *Journal of Information Literacy, 6*(1), 81-95. http://dx.doi.org/10.11645/6.1.1654
