

Motion Graphics Requirements and Best Practices

Purpose

This document is designed to assist Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) programs in the development of motion graphics.

Background

Motion graphics are graphics that use video and/or animation technology to create motion, similar to a video. These motion graphics are usually combined with audio for use in multimedia projects.

Motion graphics can be a powerful mechanism to assist CDC programs in distributing current, up-to-date media messages. Motion graphics provide a more cost effective, efficient alternative to typical video projects. The Division of eHealth Marketing (DeHM) will work with programs to tailor messages, track download and use online, and analyze the distribution of the files on the Internet.

Process

A motion graphic file includes a combination of:

- Text
- Photos or Images
- Graphics
- Video*, and
- Audio (text or music)*

CDC employees and contractors can view a selection of stock photos or images that can be incorporated at: http://intra-apps.cdc.gov/createit/createit2/request_job_start.asp?departmentId=1. Select “stock photography” from the left navigation.

All music selected must be copyright free. Contact the Division of Creative Services for additional guidance and to review selections from their catalog.

*All video and audio must be captioned and meet all Section 508 compliance guidelines to make information accessible to persons with disabilities.

Clearance

All motion graphics must be cleared through DeHM and receive final approval from your Center or Office.

Planning Requirements

To use resources effectively, a collaborative planning meeting with DeHM should be arranged to discuss:

1. **Target Audience(s)**
As with any communications activity, it is important to define your intended target audience(s) in order to develop and communicate messages and graphics that appeal to your audience and prompt them to take action.
2. **Objectives**
It is also important to have clearly defined objectives before beginning development on your motion graphic. Do you want to highlight content, spark action, or encourage awareness of an issue? Clarify the objectives first, and in collaboration with DeHM, determine if a motion graphic project is the ideal channel for your message.
3. **Motion Graphics Decisions**
The essential elements of motion graphics are text, images and graphics. Music, audio narration, and video elements can be added if needed to enhance the message.

During the planning stage, the following questions should be addressed:

- a. Who is your target audience?
 - b. What pictures or images do you plan to include? Do new images or photos need to be produced?
 - c. Do you plan to use existing audio or video footage, or do you need new footage recorded?
 - d. What graphic elements are needed?
 - e. Is there programmatic information that can be included as a visual, such as linking people to a Web site for further information?
 - f. Do you need to develop messaging or content, and if so, how long will it take to clear, including HHS clearance, if necessary?
 - g. How will you promote the motion graphic?
4. **Content**
All motion graphics should not only contain cleared content, but they should be engaging, visually appealing, and presented at a level appropriate for the target audience. Use of jargon, technical information, or detailed charts and graphs should be avoided. Simple, easy-to-follow “stories” work best, with a single message or call to action. Additional resources, such as a Web site link, should be presented at the end to guide the user to more information.

5. Branding
All motion graphics should be branded with the CDC and HHS logos, and should include a link to CDC.gov. Additional logos may also be incorporated with prior approval from DeHM leadership.
6. File Type and Size Information
 1. All motion graphic files need to be less than 1 minute, and smaller than 3MB.
 2. Motion graphics video files should be in .WMV, .AVI, .MOV, .MPG, MP4 or .FLV file formats.
 3. Motion graphics should be created using uncompressed AVI or QuickTime codecs at a resolution of 720x540 at 24 frames per second for D1 material or 1280x720 at 24 frames per second for HD content.
7. Required Motion Graphic Video Information
 - a. **Title** is a descriptive heading used for the motion graphic.
 - b. **Description** is a brief explanation of the motion graphic. To best promote your motion graphic, the description should be both accurate and interesting, and highlight the content that will allow potential viewers to distinguish it from other files.
 - c. **Tags** are keywords used by viewers to easily find your motion graphic. To best promote your motion graphic, you will want tags that are both accurate and interesting.
 - d. **Category** is the group classification of files by common characteristics. All motion graphics posted on YouTube must be classified into a pre-defined category.
8. Resolution
 - a. To display on CDC-TV, the required resolution is 500 x 333.
 - b. To display on YouTube, the required resolution is 480 x 360.
 - c. To be used as a podcast, the required resolution is 322 x 40.
9. Section 508 Compliance and Captioning
All CDC motion graphics files must be Section 508-compliant to make information accessible to persons with disabilities. To meet this requirement, captions must be provided *by the program* for all audio content exactly as produced and cleared. This includes both graphics and audio words or music. For additional information about Section 508, please see: <http://intranet.cdc.gov/cdcweb/usability/508/> (not accessible outside the CDC network).

Best Practices

1. Shelf Life
While a motion graphics project can be developed for a specific event, it is recommended that a motion graphic project be incorporated as part of a larger campaign or to highlight content with a longer shelf life.

All motion graphics files created for holidays, health observances and seasonal events will be taken down from the Web site as soon as the event is over. Likewise, all evergreen files must be reviewed annually for content accuracy, per HHS content standards.

2. Images

The minimum resolution for images used in motion graphics projects is 800 x 600 at 72 dpi. All images must be properly described in the transcript.

3. Audio

- a. Any music selected should be purposeful, thoughtful and compliment the intended message.
- b. All audio with words must be captioned.

4. Section 508 Compliance and Captioning

- a. All files on the CDC.gov Web site must be captioned.
- b. All files displayed on outside Web sites (not CDC.gov) must be captioned.

5. Transcript

Although it is not a requirement of Section 508, creating and posting a complete transcript with your motion graphic files is recommended as a best practice.

6. Promotion

The following are recommended promotional activities to encourage viral spread of motion graphics:

- a. Include the motion graphic URL on your CDC homepage and secondary features.
- b. Include a thumbnail and link to the motion graphic on high-profile topic-specific pages.
- c. Include a thumbnail and link to the motion graphic in campaign materials.
- d. Send content-specific GovDelivery email updates.
- e. Send promotional emails with the URL link to partners and grantees.
- f. Promotion via CDC's social networking spaces, such as YouTube, MySpace, Facebook, and Twitter. Please contact NCHMinteractivemedia@cdc.gov if you are interested in promoting your motion graphic in any of these spaces.

For other ideas on how to incorporate motion graphics into eHealth promotions, please contact NCHMInteractiveMedia@cdc.gov.

7. Evaluation

All efforts should be evaluated to review the metrics, define the lessons learned, and determine whether the effort successfully met project goals. For motion graphic files placed on YouTube, viewing metrics can be obtained via YouTube Insight. For files on the CDC.gov Web site, viewing metrics can be obtained via Omniture SiteCatalyst.

Social Media Guidelines and Best Practices



Motion Graphic Example

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIqZDbk3M40>

The screenshot shows a YouTube video player interface. The video title is "Keeping Quiet Can Keep You Out of the Game". The video content features a woman with the text "difficulty paying attention" overlaid. The video player interface includes a progress bar, a play button, and a view count of 4,120 views. The video is from the channel "CDCStreamingHealth" and was uploaded on August 22, 2008. The video description states: "As a high school basketball player, Tracy sustained two concussions within a short period of time. Tracy tells her story and emphasizes that concussions are a serious injury. Athletes should know..."

