

Guidelines for Submitting Information to the Media Department

Editing your submissions^{HC}

We want to start with first things first. Before submitting your information to the Media Department you need to have the information presentable. The content of the information is more important than how it visually appears. After your documents have been created you must edit the information so it is acceptable for public viewing. Part of the submission process is editing your submissions. Spelling, punctuation, grammar, terminology, jargon, and semantics is the job of the submitting ministry or person(s). In short, one should embrace the “five Cs” of a copy editor’s job: Clear, Correct, Concise, Comprehensible, and Consistent.

Choosing a proper file format (type)

Choosing the right file format is VERY important when submitting material to the Media Department. The information in this document will guide you in choosing the right file format to make your job, and ours, more efficient. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the information below.

A file is made up of a name and extension. The extension is a group of letters followed by the period at the end of your file name indicating the format of the file. ALL file names have extensions! For example, a file submitted as “john_doe-112213.docx” would indicate that it is a MS Word document. You might also assume it is information concerning John Doe and perhaps saved on November 22, 2013. If this file was submitted as “john_doe-112213.mp3”, it would definitely be an audio file. If the file had an “.xls” at the end it would represent a spreadsheet. How you save a file is important.

While more current versions of many software applications support long file names with spaces, I would strongly urge you to use short continuous filenames

I would highly suggest purchasing a copy of *Microsoft Office* for producing documents, spreadsheets, pdf’s, publisher, and presentation files. *Open Office* is a powerful, full-featured office suite that can freely be downloaded.

Naming a file

When naming a file you must assume you will forget the filename, because you will if you have more than ten files on your computer. You also need to assume a perfect stranger will one day need to access one of your files. For the two previous reasons you need to use a systematic approach to naming all your files. A file name should stand on its own. In the future a poorly named file will mean one thing—wasted time!

Naming files should employ some methodical standard. If you do not have a system you need to develop one. Once you have a system you should write it down on a sticky note and use it each time. There’s nothing embarrassing about using a standard and even having to look at your sticky note to get it right until you can do it in your sleep.

In naming files for internet purposes NEVER use spaces—never! URL’s have to add code between words or letters. This can result in pages or documents not found. It is also a sloppy practice, but there is much dissent on this opinion except for ALL files being used on the internet. I suggest using a standard across the board so you are ALWAYS covered. Also, you should use ALL lower case letters at all times. Certain

operating systems see upper and lower case letters differently. JavaScript and Linux are case sensitive. For example, “WM_2013_Qtr-meeting.doc” is not the same as “wm_2013_qtr-meeting.doc”. All websites use servers to store and manage their internet traffic. Linux has a huge market share of the servers and is always the choice for larger websites. Our Conference uses Linux as well.

File names should take an objective, meaningful, concise standard. As the old adage continues to debate whether the chicken or egg came first, file names have their own issues of what should come first. For me, I like a category or subject before a date. I also like an item after the date, but that’s just me. If you use a category first then a date you will always be able to organize in your file explorer in two to three clicks and shorten your browsing time to moments.

For example, you have been working on a remake of the yard sale pricing list for the March Women’s Ministry project. What is a good file name to use? Here’s a good standard: “wm_2013-03-10_yardsale_pricelist-02.” Do you see the information being conveyed in this filename? This is a file name consisting of “Category_Date_Subject_Item”. If you use this system you will always be able to locate your files quickly and keep them organized with a few clicks of the mouse. You also have no spaces so you can know that this file name will always be accepted and read correctly.

The anatomy of the pdf

Words appearing in a pdf (Portable Document Format) file may appear to the eye as text, but they are not. Similarly, visual images appearing in a pdf are not graphic files. Both text and image combine into what is referred to as a *Page Layout File*. Although both text and images are often used to create a typical pdf file, once it is saved the whole anatomy of the document becomes a different format. Though it looks the same you are no longer comparing apples to apples but rather apples to asparagus.

As a result of “saving as” a pdf, both images and text formatted into the pdf can often never be separated again without losing quality and/or formatting. The pdf is a perfect solution for a flyer because it is “locked” into position and cannot be altered due to the settings of an individual computer, program or application. The monitor size and version of a program can often distort many file types, but the pdf is always exactly as it was saved across all electronic devices; hence, making it a great Portable Document Format—the perfect file for downloading across the internet.

Therefore, since it is somewhere between inconvenient to impossible to extract information from a pdf, do NOT submit one to the Media Department for text or images when updating, or editing a webpage. Please use the file extensions and directions below for all website submissions:

Note: The asterisk, *, represents your file name in the illustrations and file extensions below.

Text

Rule of thumb, when you are submitting new, or changing the text on a webpage, choose a text file such as a *.doc, *.docx, or a *.rtf. (*represents the file name) Microsoft Word is a great program to use. *Open Office* is a free program and can use some of the file extensions discussed in this document.

Images

If you are submitting an image of any kind, use an acceptable image file such as *.jpg, *.gif or *.png. If you are using Photoshop, you can submit in a *.psd or *.tif; but these two file types must be converted to the former three to be used on a website.

Audio / Video

Audio and video files must meet certain guidelines and be compressed into an acceptable format. If you are sending an audio or video file by disk the media department can usually convert any industry standard file format into a web friendly file for downloading.

Edited Audio & Video

All edited video files should be saved in the following formats: *.mp4 (MPEG-4), *.avi, *.mov, *.wmv. All audio files are to be edited and saved to an *.mp3 (MPEG Layer-3) format.

Unedited Audio & Video files

If audio or video files require formatting and/or editing there will be a small fee involved payable by the file submitter. All audio and video files will be compressed to some measure. Files requiring editing are to be mailed using a CD or DVD. Please submit copies of the original material because the disk will NOT be archived or returned to sender after use.

Editable Files

Sometimes there is a need for people to download editable files from the website. In this case the documents should be edited and saved into the appropriate file. For example, if you have a spreadsheet the document should be saved using an Excel file such as *.xls. Text files should be submitted in a WORD Document file, etc...

Downloads

If you have prepared a document such as a flyer, calendar or other information that people will download from your webpage, please edit and save as a pdf. No other file formats are acceptable. Logos and pictures should be saved as a jpg.

Conclusion

If you need help or have questions, please contact the Media Department. I hope this document has been informative as well as an asset to you and your ministry.