

World Vision Australia's online style guide

**How to create fresh, compelling digital content
that draws readers to our site and
encourages them to take meaningful action**

Queries:

[Jane Nethercote](#)

[Andrea Jordan](#)

Version 1.5, last updated 18 April 2013 by Andrea Jordan

Contents

1. Publishing content on the World Vision website.....	3
About this guide	3
2. Identifying what you're trying to achieve	4
Understand the website's purpose.....	4
Define your business objectives.....	4
Focus on the user	4
Voilà! Your online goals	5
3. Writing for the web	5
How people read online.....	5
Ten rules of successful online storytelling	6
Knowing when to break the rules.....	8
4. Creating the best content for our website	9
Know your brand.....	9
Know your audience	9
Use the best content.....	10
Choose the right format.....	10
Be an ambassador.....	11
Mind style, spelling and grammar.....	11
Have someone proofread your work.....	11
Keep content up to date	11
Questions to ask before you start writing	12
Dos and don'ts of World Vision content.....	12
5. Getting search engine traffic to your content.....	13
About search engine optimisation (SEO)	13
So how exactly do you help search engines to find your content?	13
Further resources.....	15
6. Making sure everyone can access your content	15
Writing for accessibility.....	15
Describing images with words	16
Further resources.....	16
7. Making sure your content is legally compliant	17
General guidance for writing and reviewing content	17
Content requiring review by the legal team	17
What you need to know about images.....	18
8. World Vision's brand voice	19
The World Vision brand	19
9. Submitting your content	19

I. Publishing content on the World Vision website

This booklet is a quick reference guide for content producers and editors of the World Vision Australia website.

About this guide

Through the World Vision website, we aim to **inspire, inform and empower** our supporters so that they can take action and help make a difference for children and communities.

This style guide provides World Vision's content producers and editors with a basic framework to prepare fresh, compelling digital content that will draw readers to the site and encourage them to take meaningful action.

What you create will be viewable by the world. With this in mind there are a few recommendations and best-practice principles you should consider and apply.

This guide will help you to:

- understand your content goals;
- understand and connect with your target audience;
- create great online content in World Vision's voice;
- consistently convey our brand and messages;
- ensure your content is legal and accessible to all;
- structure and display your content in the best way;
- attract and engage readers and inspire them to take action;
- plan for maintenance; and
- measure the success of your content.

For those interested in finding out more, further readings and references have been included throughout the document.

If you are unclear on any of the website-specific terms (eg "html" or "infographics") used in this style guide, we recommend the "[W3C Web glossary](#)" and [Wikipedia](#) for cogent descriptions.

Note that this guide complements the excellent work done in World Vision

Australia's [language guide](#) (pdf). Refer to it in the first instance for guidance on general writing issues such as grammar and punctuation, preferred spelling and so on.

By honing our content skills and embracing the digital tools available, we have the opportunity to empower our online audiences to take up sponsorships, spread the word and become part of a wonderful online community.

Enjoy the journey!

2. Identifying what you're trying to achieve

The World Vision website needs to achieve the overall goals of our organisation and ensure a seamless experience online for our supporters and potential supporters.

In thinking about the parts of the website in which you work, make sure you understand what you're trying to achieve in that part as well as for the website as a whole.

To identify what you're trying to achieve online, start by creating your online goals. Try this formula:

Website purpose + business objectives + user focus = online goals

Understand the website's purpose

The purpose of the website is to drive a supporter to take action!

World Vision wants to make as big a difference in the world as possible. This is only possible with supporter action. What do we mean by action? Actions include both financial and non-financial responses to the issues of poverty and injustice.

Each website visit should result in a greater commitment from the supporter than they'd entered it with. Every page should give supporters an action they can take to react to the content that's just inspired them to help others.

Define your business objectives

What are your high-level business objectives? Defining these first will help to ensure that the content and functionality we offer to our users online will drive actions that help to meet your objectives.

It might be easier to start with a clear low-level business objective (eg "publicise an event"). Analyse it to find your high-level objective (eg "increased engagement").

Your objective(s) might be:

- increase child sponsorships;
- retain child sponsors;
- increase donations;
- improve our ability to respond to current events, particularly emergencies;
- increase "active citizenship";
- increase audience size; or
- empower an audience to act.

Focus on the user

Focusing on our users will help us to meet their needs and ultimately drive online success.

What do our users need from our website?

- They need to **understand why** they should take action.
- They need to **see the difference** their actions make.
- They need us to give them the tools to **take action**.

Voilà! Your online goals

Marrying together the website's purpose, your business objectives and a user focus will help you to define your online goals. Make sure these goals are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound).

For example:

website purpose: drive users to take action

+ business objective: increase active citizenship

+ user focus: "I want to feel I can make a difference"

= goal: 10,000 pledges made over a 6-month period by users inspired by field stories

Clear and specific online goals will help to ensure that we provide our users with a great experience and compelling content. Our website will drive action that supports your business objectives.

Keeping your goal in mind as you write will help you to create content that inspires action towards that goal. For example, rather than write "Barriers to accessing hospital care must be reduced" you'll write "Together we can make sure hospital care is for everyone. Here's how..."

3. Writing for the web

There is a myth that "good writing is good writing", no matter what the medium. Good writing has to be appropriate to the medium as well as to the audience. That means understanding both your user – and how they read online.

How people read online

We know that people read content on a website – whether on a PC, tablet or smartphone – in a very specific way.

And when we say read, we also mean watch, look, listen, vote – given that videos, photos, infographics, podcasts, polls, etc are so crucial to an engaging online experience.

- People are often time-poor when they visit websites. They want the information now.
- They are in a "lean forward" mode of reading (scanning, actively looking for content, with a short attention span). They're often highly engaged, but want to get an outcome or take an action as quickly as possible.
- Readers want to quickly assess whether the content is of interest to them, and are liable to leave at any time. Put your most important content first, then the less important content, leaving the supporting details to the end. (This is called the "inverted pyramid" of content.)
- Readers [scan left to right and in an F-shaped pattern](#). Create your web pages accordingly, making sure the most important content is in the most prominent positions.

- People tend to use the web for information, not knowledge. They want the answers to their questions, not the introduction, background, research, options or justification.
- 80 percent of readers scan text. Big slabs of text are difficult for them to digest. Make full use of images, videos, headings, sub-headings, hyperlinks, bold text, indented text, and so on.
- Readers expect pages to be interactive and rich in different types of content.
- Readers absorb text more slowly on screen than on paper. So get rid of any content that will waste their time. Keep it simple and to the point.

Ten rules of successful online storytelling

1. Have a clear point to make

Be mistrustful of an article with multiple angles; chances are it doesn't know what it wants to be. You might need to focus more clearly on what you're trying to communicate to a supporter. What's the one point you want the reader to take away from your content?

Clue: if you're having trouble coming up with a headline for an article, it probably doesn't have a clear angle.

2. Kick things off with a great headline

It's hard to overstate the importance of a headline online. If you don't get it right, no-one will click on your story.

Write headings that are clear, compelling and, above all, make people want to read more. Would you click on it?

Keep it brief: no more than a single line in most cases.

Online headings are often displayed out of context: as part of a list of articles, in a search engine's results or in a list of bookmarks. So headings should make sense on their own – or at least enough sense that you'd want to read on.

Headings can be thought of as an "[an ultra-short abstract](#)" of the page content. Or, looked at another way, [they're a "hook"](#) to reel the reader into the story.

Avoid teasers and puns, because these won't make sense out of context.

Take [Upworthy's challenge to write 25 headlines](#) for every story.

3. Use active voice

Use active rather than passive language. It is far more engaging and inviting.

World Vision is trying to connect the supporter with the person in the field. Passive voice separates them; active voice brings them closer.

Don't say: "Unemployment is a problem that faces many young people".

Say: "Many young people are unemployed".

One tip is to search for "by" and "that". Both words frequently appear in passive phrasing. In the case of "that", there is rarely a circumstance where it can't be cut from the text.

4. Be informal – without being casual

The general reader doesn't want an academic dissertation on the causes of poverty. They want to know what's happening – and how they can help.

Speak with your reader as if from one individual to another. Make it feel personal, but not casual. (This of course, depends a little on the content – and where it’s appearing. A campaign message should be more formal and less personal than a blog post.) Contractions are appropriate online, eg “don’t” instead of “do not”.

5. Don’t try to be clever – be passionate and compelling instead

The stories that World Vision has to tell are strong enough without unnecessary ornamentation. Use plain English (which is not the same as boring English!). Why say “utilise” when you can say “use”?

Words in prose ought to express the intended meaning; if they attract attention to themselves, it is a fault; in the very best styles you read page after page without noticing the medium. Works of imagination should be written in very plain language; the more purely imaginative they are, the more necessary it is to be plain.

– Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Even the cleverest people don’t want to get distracted by cumbersome language.

Be on the lookout for jargon and acronyms – they are the enemy!

6. Delete unnecessary content

Every aspect of a story should add to its meaning: photos, titles, body copy, and so on.

Be ruthless. Get rid of unnecessary words and paragraphs. Repetition hurts a good story.

Don’t double up content. If a video tells the story, don’t reiterate it through words.

7. Keep to the point

Think, we only have one minute of this person’s time – how can we convince them to contact us? Is every sentence working to get them to this point?

Studies of content usability typically find that removing half of a website’s words will double the amount of information that users actually get. If users don’t need it, don’t write it. Excessive word count and worthless details are making it harder for people to extract useful information. The more you say, the more people tune out your message.

Saying less often communicates more.

– Jakob Nielsen

Remember: You don’t need to tell the reader everything about the story – you just need to tell them the most important things.

Your active choices about what stays in will improve the content.

8. Break up the text

Avoid long slabs of text. Serve information in easily digestible “chunks”, remembering that people can access the site at any level, and that several short sections are better than one long one.

Think in terms of billboards, where you have to convey a message to someone driving past quickly in limited space.

Use bullet points, headings, hyperlinks and separate pages to highlight key points and break up text.

Use multiple content types to communicate a story. Use videos and images wherever possible – they are often a far simpler, more evocative way to tell a story.

9. Use quotes sparingly

Don't use quotes to tell a story – use them sparingly, and give focus only to the best quotes. Slabs of quotes can make a story difficult to get into online.

Paraphrase where you can (without putting words in someone's mouth).

10. Show readers what's next

You've just inspired someone to make a difference with the story. Don't leave them hanging. Show them how to help.

This doesn't just have to be a financial call to action. Provide readers with a related article. Or tell them about an upcoming event that's related.

Make sure that no story has a dead end: online, every page should have a clear pathway to the next step a reader could take. This could be further reading material about the subject, a call to action for an emergency or a way to share the content with their friends.

Knowing when to break the rules

People often ask: How long should this article be?

All that we know about online content suggests that it is better to keep articles as short as possible, broken up by sub-headings, bullet points and so on.

This is often true. However, keep in mind, rules are also made to be broken. When it comes to online content, it's equally important not to be too prescriptive.

If an article is particularly fascinating – and has a story that is best told in a gradually unfolding way – there isn't a reason for it to be a certain word length. Or cut up into small chunks. Or punctuated by a video.

Just make sure you have good reasons for breaking the rules!

Further resources

[“10 ways to win the internet”](#), Upworthy

[“Lazy eyes. How we read online”](#), Michael Agger, Slate, 13 June 2008

[“Improving Your Content's Signal-to-Noise Ratio”](#) by Christine Ananeier, Brain Traffic, November 2010

Jakob Nielsen's Alertbox:

[“Inverted pyramids in cyberspace”](#), June 1996

[“How users read on the web”](#), October 1997

[“Eyetracking study of web readers”](#), May 2000

[“Microcontent: How to write headlines, page titles, and subject lines”](#), September 1998

[“Using link titles to help users predict where they are going”](#), January 1998

[“Be succinct! \(Writing for the web\)”](#), March 1997

4. Creating the best content for our website

Online content is easy. If you read nothing else know this:

If you know your reader – and what you’re trying to communicate – the rest will follow.

Know your brand

Ask: If someone who knew nothing about World Vision came upon this page, would they understand what it’s about? Would they understand our approach? What we stand for? How we act?

World Vision’s down-to-earth, friendly, compassionate tone of voice is perfectly suited to the website.

Digital content should, as a starting position, be straightforward, succinct and active. Through our website – and social media channels – we can have a conversation with our supporters.

Therefore, it’s important that we chat with our supporters one on one. It’s a community of like-minded people who want to make a difference.

To find out more, see our section on [World Vision’s brand voice](#).

Further resources

[“Finding your tone of voice”](#), Robert Mills, *Smashing Magazine*, August 2012

[“Voiceandtone.com”](#), Mailchimp’s brand voice style guide, The Rocket Science Group, 2012

Know your audience

Some World Vision supporters will be more swayed by facts (the pragmatists), some by a heart-wrenching story (the believers), some by a combination of both (the humanists). Many are parents. A majority are women. Some are tech savvy; some less so.

They’re a diverse bunch of people. Fittingly, diverse content – and a range of content types from infographics to video – will be needed to inform and inspire them to take action.

They are united by one thing: they want to make a difference and they want to see the difference they’re making.

What’s great about being online is that you can get to know your audience better and better by the way in which they respond.

Measure page views, level of engagement (number of comments, time on site), conversion, return visits, shares and more. Is the content working? What do your readers really respond to? What falls flat?

Further resources

World Vision has some great research for getting to know our readers better. See the below documents (and the many other great resources on on [The Hub](#)).

[WVA Attitudinal Segmentation](#)

[Marketing Measures 2012 \(Powerpoint\)](#)

[Sponsorship Communications Research 2012 \(Powerpoint\)](#)

Use the best content

World Vision is lucky. Most websites struggle to get enough content.

We have access to many compelling stories from the field, most commonly in the form of articles, videos and photos.

This means our challenge is less about sourcing content – and more about ensuring that the content we offer online is the **best of the best**. Choose content of the highest quality that speaks clearly to World Vision’s supporters.

Choose the right format

Often when we’re online, we replicate offline processes. Make full use of the fact that you’re online.

For example, offline, a magazine is a great way to read a 20-page report. Online, it might be better to present the content within a microsite.

A newspaper has to provide all of the explanatory text in its articles. Online, you can link to further information instead, so as to not clutter the story.

Online, you can present a story in multiple ways – through videos, infographics, photos and more. Make sure you get the most from what the medium offers!

Questions to ask:

Am I presenting this content in the best way for the medium?

Is web the best communication medium?

Should I put the material on the web at all?

When to use an attachment (aka Do you really need that PDF online?)

Users get lost inside PDF files, which are typically big, linear text blobs that are optimized for print and unpleasant to read and navigate online. PDF is good for printing, but that’s it. Don’t use it for online presentation.

– Jakob Nielsen

The same goes for Word documents.

Wherever possible, you should type your information directly into the page, rather than using attachments with the information in it. It’s better for readers. And it’s much better for [search engine optimisation](#).

If an attachment is essential, there are some rules. You should only use an attachment if:

- the document is particularly long or complex, such as an annual report or newsletter;
- it is important to preserve the formatting of the document for printing purposes, such as a brochure;
- the document contains some functionality that cannot be achieved in HTML; or
- users may need to access the document offline in future.

If you use an attachment, you should show file type and size.

PDFs and documents [require specific treatment](#) to ensure they work well on the website, and can be found easily by users.

Be an ambassador

Before you write, pause for a moment and imagine this:

You are standing on a stage in a room. In the room is your CEO, a journalist from *The Australian*, several child sponsors, several people who aren't Christian (some of whom are Muslim), several children from communities in which World Vision works, and several of your colleagues who are working on World Vision projects in some of the most dangerous countries in the world.

Would you say to them what you are about to say online? Would you share with them the video or picture that you are about to upload?

You are an ambassador for World Vision. Before you create content, remember that room full of people, and use your power for good.

Mind style, spelling and grammar

When people are deciding whether to support World Vision, a key factor is trust. On a website, we can reflect World Vision's trustworthiness by **ensuring that our content is up to date, consistent and correct.**

Make sure you're across World Vision Australia's [language guide](#) (pdf) and watch out for common errors: eg "its purpose in life" not "it's purpose in life", "separate" not "seperate". Sounds silly but you'd be surprised how often these mistakes show up.

Have someone proofread your work

The best way to ensure content is free from errors is to follow this simple rule: have someone else proofread your work. You might be the best editor in the world – but you still won't see all the mistakes you make.

Make sure the person is trained to proofread and has an excellent knowledge of this online style guide and also the [language guide](#) (pdf). Further, make sure they proofread your work in hard copy (errors are much easier to spot).

Keep content up to date

People expect content on a website to be fresh. Out-of-date or incorrect information is worse than no information at all.

A comprehensive website is great ... when you first develop it. If, however, you don't have the resources to maintain it, its value will quickly decline. If you're putting up content, make sure you have a plan in place to maintain it.

Questions to ask:

Who will update it in future?

When will it need to be updated?

If it is time-bound (such as an event promotion or campaign-specific content), when should it be archived?

Questions to ask before you start writing

Before writing or editing any piece of content you should ask a lot of questions:

- What are my [online goals](#)?
- What action would I like to see the user take after reading/watching/seeing this story?
- Who is the audience?
- What don't they know yet about this story?
- What am I trying to communicate to the reader?
- Why would someone read this?
- What will bring this story to life? (Video, copy, images?)
- How will I measure success? (Page views, revenue, number of comments, number of online petition signatures?)

If you can answer these questions, chances are your story will resonate with readers.

Dos and don'ts of World Vision content

The content that comes from the field is often in raw form. To make the story compelling online, it will often need quite a lot of editing.

The following guidelines will help with transforming content from the field into great content for our online audience. They will also help you make sure it complies with our obligations to communities.

Don't

Don't use identifying information about where a sponsored child or community is. For example, instead of saying someone lives in the X village of Zambia, say that they live in a small village in southwest Zambia.

Don't portray someone as a victim. When describing World Vision's field programs and projects, it is important to use language that gives people dignity and does not describe them as victims. You will find examples of the language to use in the general [World Vision language guide](#) (pdf).

Don't use acronyms. If you must use them, spell them in full for the first usage on each web page: "Information Services Branch (ISB)". Even then, readers unfamiliar with the acronym may have trouble recalling what it meant as they read through the document, particularly where a number of acronyms are used. "WVA" is not acceptable; always use "World Vision Australia", or just "World Vision" when you don't need to differentiate between World Vision offices.

Do

Do talk about World Vision projects as collaborative efforts with communities. The communities themselves own the outcomes. World Vision is a facilitator, a 'bridge' between them and our communities of supporters in Australia.

Do use empowering language to describe both the people and the work. Allow your writing to illustrate this. When discussing issues of mental health, it's important to avoid focusing on weaknesses and instead accurately reflect survivors' resilience.

Do use "program" and "project" appropriately, and avoid "product". A program of work in the field may encompass several projects. A product is a funding stream supporting World Vision's work in the field; we talk about "fundraising programs" (child sponsorship) or "fundraising events" (40 Hour Famine).

Do describe the outcomes of products accurately. Child sponsorship does not deliver direct benefits to sponsored children; it funds development work in the community in which the child lives. Child Rescue is not about “rescuing children” in an immediate sense; it refers to a collection of projects that focus on prevention and rehabilitation of children in difficult situations beyond the reach of child sponsorship.

Do use terms that are appropriate to the audience for your publication. It’s really important to understand your audience and what they know. Put yourself in their shoes when reading. Some development terms – such as multilaterals, interventions, sectoral strategies, integrated programming – are too technical for public communications, although they may be used in academic writing. Some terms are loaded with unwanted or unintended connotations. Avoid “development speak” with general audiences. ADP doesn’t mean anything to anyone outside World Vision.

5. Getting search engine traffic to your content

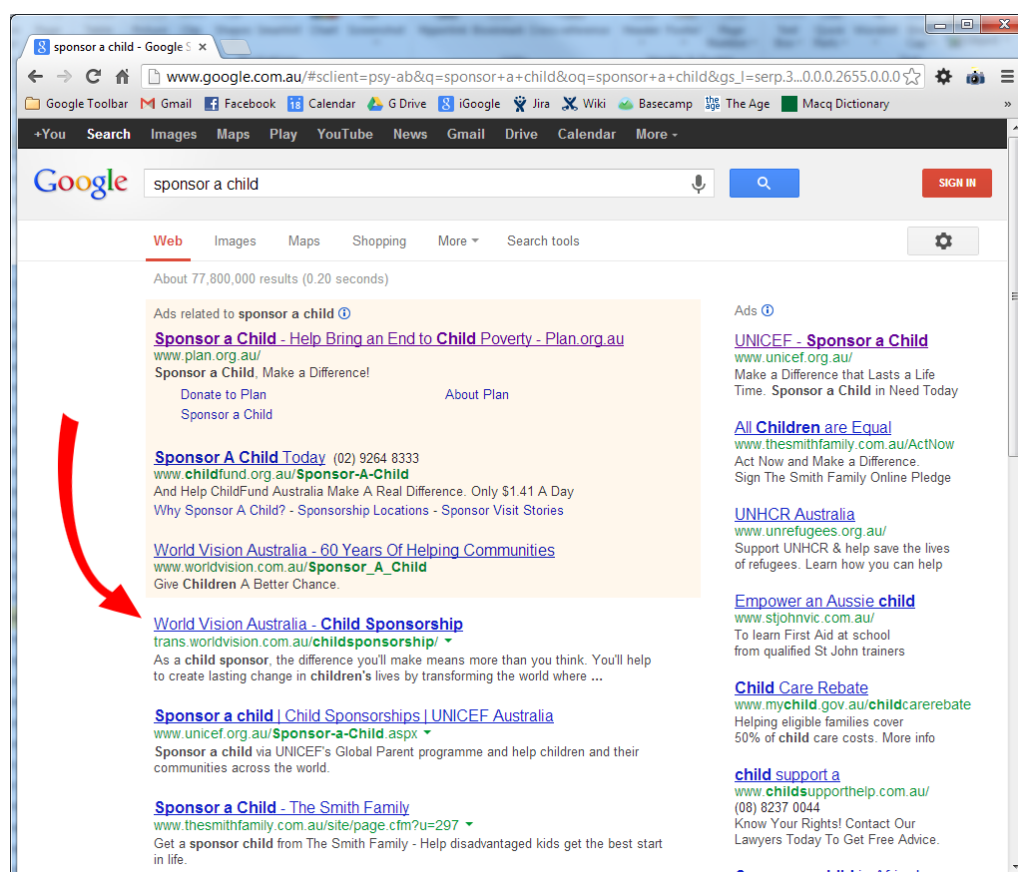
About search engine optimisation (SEO)

About half of the traffic to our website comes from search engines (like Google, Yahoo! and Bing).

That is, users search for terms, results from our site are listed along with a whole load of other sites, and they choose to click on our link to enter our site.

The higher our website’s result is on the list, the more likely it is that the user will click on it.

How important is this? Think – if someone has Googled “sponsor a child”, there are multiple not-for-profits whose names can appear. We want to be at the top.



So how exactly do you help search engines to find your content?

Websites with the best content that's most relevant to the reader, as judged by the search engine, will be listed higher than others.

In other words, if we create great content written and structured in a way that shows its relevance to the topic, we will get more traffic to our website.

Lee Odden puts it nicely:

Use the words that matter most to your customers in titles, links and body copy to inform and inspire them to take action. Text used in titles should make it easy for readers to understand the topic of the page quickly, in the first few words. Text used to link from one page to another should give the reader an idea of what they'll find on the destination page. A consistent approach to titling, labeling and copy in web page text, image annotations, video descriptions and links will create confidence for the reader in the subject matter and inspire sales.

– Lee Odden, 2012, [Optimize: How to attract and engage more customers by integrating SEO, social media, and content marketing](#), John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, New Jersey.

So write content that your readers want in a way they want to consume it:

- Use the words your reader would expect, and might search for. These are called “keywords” in SEO speak.
- Create a clear, accurate, engaging headline.
- Break up the text with sub-headings that clearly describe their section's content.
- Avoid writing about web actions ('click here', 'go to the ... page') or the structure of your writing ('the following list', 'the home page'). This makes your text shorter and allows the key messages to shine through. For example, rather than “To join Team World Vision, [click here](#)”, use “[Join Team World Vision](#)”.
- Create links from your page to other, quality web pages with related content, and vice versa.
- Give accurate, descriptive names to your images, videos and other content.
- Create titles and descriptions for your pages that work well as short, sweet search results.
- And, where you have this control, create a web address that makes sense to a human.

That's a pretty good start to SEO.

What words might users search for?

Using the words that readers might search for can help people find our site. But which words are searched for most often?

[Google Trends](#) can help you find out which terms are more popular. Just enter comparable words, separated by commas, and you'll see how popular each of those terms were over the recent past.

Once you have the initial results, you can easily limit them to those from Australia.

For example, a search for “sponsor a child” versus “child sponsorship” shows that Australian online users are twice as likely to search for the former.

So you might decide to use the headline “What happens when you sponsor a child” rather than “How child sponsorship works” – as long as it conveyed the right meaning.

Regarding PDF files and documents

PDF files and documents require specific treatment so that they work optimally on the website.

When naming the file:

- use descriptive words that your user might search for;
- use lower-case letters, digits and hyphens only – no spaces or symbols; and
- use hyphens (not underscores and certainly not spaces) to separate the words.

For example, not “ChocolateScorecard FINAL Aug 2012.pdf” but “fairtrade-chocolate-ratings-2012.pdf”.

Include basic metadata, such as description/subject, keywords, and especially title. These can be set during the document creation (eg in Word’s file properties) or can be included in PDFs through the use of Adobe Acrobat.

Inside the document, include a link back to World Vision Australia’s home page so that users coming from anywhere can get to the parent website.

Optimise the file for the web to reduce the time to download.

Further resources

[“The beginners guide to SEO”](#) by SEOmoz, 2012

[“Webmaster guidelines: Best practices to help Google find, crawl, and index your site”](#) by Google, 2012

[“Search engine optimisation starter guide”](#) (PDF) by Google, 2010

[Google Webmasters](#) YouTube channel

6. Making sure everyone can access your content

We have a responsibility to make our web information accessible to as many people as possible, regardless of their ability, means or technology. Our designers create templates with appropriate colours and text styles to aid with this.

You can help to maintain good accessibility for your online audience by following a few guidelines when creating your text and media content.

Writing for accessibility

These principles will maximise the accessibility of your text:

- Use clear and accurate headings and hyperlink descriptions.
- Use plain English, and short, simple words (eg “begin” rather than “commence”; “try” rather than “endeavour”).
- Be brief. Short sentences and paragraphs are absorbed more readily. Use bulleted lists and sub-headings to break up long chunks of text and help avoid long sentences.

- Use the active voice: it uses fewer words and is easier to read than the passive voice (eg “The community built the school” rather than “The school was built by the community”).
- Use the present tense where possible to convey the message clearly.
- Avoid slang, jargon and specialised meanings of familiar words (eg we use “transformation” to mean a certain set of changes in circumstance and experience, but a reader might not get it).
- Italicise any non-English words so that screen readers can read them properly.

The good news is that many of the principles that make content accessible also make it web-friendly.

Describing images with words

Some readers, whether visually impaired or on a slow internet connection, cannot access multimedia online. We need to use text to fill in the gaps.

Visually impaired visitors use digital readers to interpret web pages. Digital readers find the words used to describe an image to create the picture for the user.

When adding images to a page or story, make sure that any words used to describe them make sense to a reader:

- Create a descriptive, sensible filename for the image you’re uploading, separating the words with hyphens (eg not “pic000201” but “Philippines-flood-aid-kits”).
- Write a brief but descriptive caption.
- Create descriptive, sensible “alternative text” for the image. “Alt text” is included in the HTML code to provide a description of the image when it is unable to be viewed. It should describe the image and include any text shown as a part of the image.

Not sure what to write? Ask yourself, would a user be able to visualise the image you’ve uploaded if they had to rely on the text?

Describing PDFs

So that users understand when they’re about to download a file (rather than go to a new page), it’s important to make it clear that a link goes to a PDF. Please follow the link to the PDF with the text “(pdf)”. For example:

Find out more about punctuation in [World Vision’s language guide](#) (pdf).

Further resources

[“Introduction to web accessibility”](#), W3C, 2005

[“Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2 at a Glance”](#), W3C, 2011

[“What Is Web Accessibility?”](#) by Trenton Moss, 2004

7. Making sure your content is legally compliant

We need to ensure that the content of our website is the best quality it can be and complies with our legal obligations. Some of our content needs to be reviewed by the legal team, the privacy officer or the company secretary before being uploaded or updated.

If you have a question regarding anything in this section or your particular situation, please contact the legal team (email [AUSO Legal Assistance](#)).

General guidance for writing and reviewing content

Anyone writing or reviewing material to be published by World Vision (on the website or elsewhere) must familiarise themselves with this section. This information is also provided on The Hub (“Guide to writing/reviewing public-facing content” in the [Legal team room](#)).

In broad terms, you must ensure the following:

- **All content is in line with World Vision’s core values.** We are required by the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) under its [code of conduct](#) to ensure our publications are consistent with [our values](#). Just because we *can legally* say something doesn’t mean that we *should* in the context of our values.
- **All content is truthful** and not misleading or deceptive. For example, material implying that sponsorship funds go directly to sponsored children or their families is not truthful (although they may directly benefit from initiatives paid for through those funds). Note that **the overall context in which material appears is important**. To properly form a view about whether what is written is truthful and not misleading or deceptive, also look at what’s suggested by headings, pictures, captions and hyperlinks, how the page might read when accessed in different ways, what else is on the website, and so on.
- **No content exposes World Vision to unnecessary risk.** For example, material that is critical of certain individuals or of practices by a particular country or organisation could potentially expose World Vision to legal as well as reputational risk.

If you are in any doubt as to whether certain material is acceptable, please contact [AUSO Legal Assistance](#).

Content requiring review by the legal team

The following pages or types of content require review by the legal team before being updated or uploaded to the website:

- **Culturally, politically or religiously sensitive material.** For example, any material commenting on World Vision’s work in Israel or Gaza must be reviewed by the legal team to ensure it is fair and unbiased.
- **Where the funds go** – any new statements or representations of our income and expenses if different *in any respect* from existing approved statements and representations.
- **Fundraising** – pages dealing with any aspect of fundraising (eg Team World Vision, 40 Hour Famine). This area is governed by specific fundraising legislation, which varies by State.

- **Tax deductibility and annual tax receipts** – any statement on any page regarding tax deductibility of donations or World Vision’s Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status. The legal team must also review any changes to information about annual tax receipts.
- **Wills and bequests** – all sections of the website that refer to this area.
- **Donations and gifts in kind.** These areas involve a consideration of tax and fundraising laws.
- **Shopping online.** Selling goods (such as books or t-shirts) is governed by Australian Consumer Law, which is different from the laws that govern World Vision’s fundraising activities.
- **Child protection and connecting with your sponsored child.** Any content in relation to child protection matters should be reviewed by both the child protection officer and the legal team.
- **FAQs about World Vision Australia** must be crafted carefully to ensure legal compliance.
- **General footer information** – information World Vision is legally required to display.
- **Website terms of use** – these terms are owned by general counsel and must not be amended without consulting the legal team.

Content owned by the privacy officer (Tanya Fletcher)

- **Privacy policy** – cannot be amended without approval.
- **Privacy statements.** For example, any statements on the website regarding what World Vision does with supporters’ personal information.
- **All forms where personal information is collected and/or payments made.** For example, the “[update account and sponsor details](#)” page must comply with privacy law and policies as well as the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS).

Content owned by the company secretary (Seak-King Huang)

- **Our board and corporate governance** – cannot be modified without approval.
- **Our policies.** Any amendments to our statements regarding any of World Vision’s policies (including privacy, child protection, use of our logo, environmental policy) should be reviewed by both the individual policy owner and the company secretary.

What you need to know about images

Three principles guide our use of images:

1. The image should show regard for sensitivities and ensure the **respect and dignity** of the subject is maintained.
2. Use of the image should not endanger anyone’s **safety and wellbeing**.
3. The image should represent situations **truthfully**.

Detailed guidelines on the selection and treatment of images can be found with the [brand essence documents on The Hub](#). (Note that the image guidelines are currently being updated by the Resources team.)

8. World Vision's brand voice

The World Vision brand

Our brand proposition should be reflected in all content created for the website:

Helping communities build a better world for their children

Content on our website should always be a consistent expression of our brand values and personality.

Brand personality

World Vision's brand personality is **energetic, real, proactive and compassionate**.

A tone of voice that is down-to-earth, and communicates hope, compassion, professionalism and honesty, is at the heart of our brand personality.

Brand voice

To deliver a consistent brand experience to our audience we need to ensure that our messaging, tone of voice and visual language are a true expression of our brand and appropriate for the target audience.

World Vision Australia's brand language is **succinct, simple, active, positive, and neither formal nor informal**.

Our **tone of voice** is how we use language to express the organisation's personality. It's about using language to convey:

- human emotions – joy, excitement, optimism, empathy, compassion; and
- human attributes – confidence, friendliness, professionalism, courage, honesty, wisdom.

We need to write and talk in a way that considers how our audience feels and thinks and show empathy for this.

Australians prefer an understated, modest tone (not arrogant, dictator or "voice of God"). We should use the tone of a trusted friend talking to another.

Our tone of voice is also respectful of our target audience's attitudes and values, and never threatening, preaching or overbearing.

Using our language and tone of voice in different contexts

While the underlying personality of our communications needs to be consistent, our language and tone of voice will vary slightly on the basis of:

- the message and purpose of the communication – call to action, thank you, information sharing;
- the medium or channel – print, online, verbal; and
- the audience – youth, general public, churches, corporate.

9. Submitting your content

New content for the website, as well as changes to existing content, should be emailed to [AUSO Service Desk](#). Add "website" to the subject field to ensure the web team receives your request quickly.

Submit all of your content (text, images, captions etc) together. This gives the web editor a view of the whole story before she begins.

Text content, including image captions, should be submitted in a Word document.

Images should be in jpeg format at a minimum of 700 × 434 pixels.

Our public-facing videos are uploaded by the ICT Digital team to YouTube, and should be prepared in accordance with [their guidelines](#).

If you require more than just a standard article layout, you should include an example or mockup of what you have in mind.

For campaigns and emergencies, you'll be provided with a briefing template to ensure that you provide all of the required accompanying data (text for the call-to-action button, trigger codes, and so on).