



June 2016

No one wants to be misunderstood

In September 2015, we wrote to all Federal politicians and government agencies alerting them that all their online video content needs to be accurately captioned. At the same time, ACCAN collaborated with Google to improve the You Tube platform. This collaboration resulted in increased information about the importance of ensuring automated captions are accurate on the You Tube platform

A number of politicians thanked us for bringing this issue to their attention and committed to ensuring that all their online video has accurate captioning. However, our most recent ad-hoc survey of politicians' online video -both You Tube and Facebook - indicates that there is still a real need for greater awareness of the importance of captions, as well as a need for significant improvement of automated caption accuracy.

With the 2016 Election campaign now underway, we are writing to all Australian political parties to reiterate how vital accurate captions are for the millions of Australians who rely on them when viewing video; people who are Deaf or hearing-impaired, people with cognitive or intellectual disabilities, and people whose first language is not English.

Online video messaging and campaigning is a great way to reach voters, but when online video does not have captions or the captions are inaccurate the message is lost.

As a coalition of organisations representing Australians who benefit from captioned video, we urge you to commit to ensuring all your party's political online video has accurate and comprehensible captioning. Access to information is essential for all of us to be able to equally participate in our democratic process. In the lead up to a Federal election it is vital that all Australians have the information they need in order to make an informed choice.

Your Party and its politicians need to be understood to get the message across. At least 1 in 6 Australians suffer from hearing loss. This is projected to increase to 1 in 4 Australians by 2050¹. More

¹ 2007, Listen hear!: The economic impact and cost of hearing loss in Australia, Access Economics, viewed 19 May 2016, <<http://apo.org.au/node/2755>>.



than 30 per cent of Australians use captions some of the time². This means as many as 4 million Australians may be missing out on your online video messaging if it is uncaptioned, or the captions are inaccurate. There are a number of useful resources that can assist:

Amara <http://www.amara.org/en/>

Google You Tube <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2734705>

Media Access Australia <http://www.mediaaccess.org.au/web/how-to-caption-a-youtube-video>

No More Craptions <http://www.nomorecraptions.com/>

Facebook video <http://accan.org.au/election-2016/resources/1126-fixing-auto-captions-on-youtube?highlight=WyJjYXB0aW9uaW5nliwiZmFjZWJvb2siLCJ2aWRlbyIsInZpZGVvJyJd>

Australia has made a number of commitments to promote equal access to information. These include the work of the Digital Transformation Office, the National Disability Strategy, the Disability Discrimination Act and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Publishing online video without captions or with inaccurate captions undermines these commitments.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this important issue further. Please contact Luke Sutton, ACCAN Public Relations Office on luke.sutton@accan.org.au or 02 9288 4000.

Sincerely,

Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN)
www.accan.org.au

Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO)
<http://www.afdo.org.au/>

Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association
<http://www.ascca.org.au/>

Council of the Aging
<http://www.cota.org.au/australia/>

Deaf Australia
<http://deafaustalia.org.au/>

Deafness Forum of Australia
<http://www.deafnessforum.org.au/>

² See <https://accan.org.au/our-work/research/298-research-on-caption-awareness>



MEDIA
ACCESS
AUSTRALIA
INCLUSION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY



Deaf
Australia Inc.



Australian Seniors
Computer Clubs Association **ASCCA**



Australian Federation of Disability Organisations



Media Access Australia

<http://www.mediaaccess.org.au/>

National Ethnic Disability Alliance

<http://www.neda.org.au/>