

Screen Capture Utilities

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Screen Casting Fundamentals

Things to think about before you start recording.

Plan first - specify learning objectives for the module you want to record.

Write a script (teach and inform). Your content should support your learning outcomes. Use your own voice as you write the script (just as if you were speaking - you will be).

Rehearse what you are going to discuss.

Record, then edit, then output to desired format (typically MP4). Anticipate you will need to do 3 - 4 drafts before you have one you like.

Record no more than 8 - 10 minutes per video. If you need longer, think in terms of segments. Keep in mind many of the free options limit you to 5 minutes or less.

I recommend creating your own content (otherwise, confirm you have permission to use external content - Keep a copy of the copyrights or letter to allow for use and confirm it can be used in the medium [web site] you plan to use).

Set your screen resolution to 1280 x 720 and then capture the full screen. Yes, 1280 x 720 is the gold standard for screen recording.

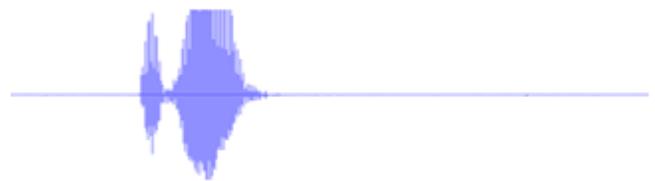
Before you record - clear your desktop (or have a neutral background such as Notepad running in full screen with nothing in it). Turn off notifications for email and the like.

If you are using a slide show, get rid of the fancy fonts, transitions and sound effects.

If you plan to capture computer audio, be certain to set it first to the proper level before you start recording.

As you start recording, count 5 seconds (1 Mississippi, 2 Mississippi) and then start speaking as if you were having a conversation.

While recording - assume there will be mistakes. I say "again" and give myself 3 seconds of silence and then start speaking. This makes it easy to find the problem children and edit them out. I included a screen capture of the waveform showing me saying "again." Note there is some clipping as I say it a bit louder than normal.



To maintain your own sanity, keep all materials for a given lesson in a folder (properly named).

Screen recording options

There are a number of screen recording options (some free, some freemium [initial use is free, but you may pay for editing options or enhancements], some cost). As a general rule, I find you get what you pay for. If you can afford it, I recommend using the "gold standards" - Adobe Captivate and TechSmith Camtasia. Both of these allow you to include a quiz. I recommend this type of interactivity. Otherwise, your screen recording is a passive activity (just like watching TV).

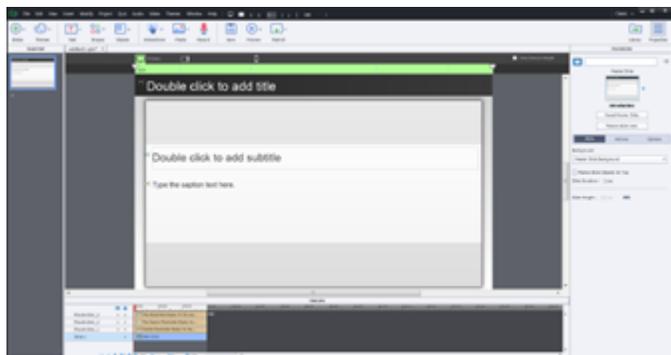
I provide links to a number of choices. These are a selection of many more. Choose wisely as you will spend time learning the tool. I have all of these installed on my computer and can provide you with a demonstration if needed.

Microphones

I know this is obvious, but get a reliable microphone. These can range from cheap (but effective) microphones such as Plantronics to much more expensive Roku and Yeti microphones. What ever you choose, make certain you can adjust the volume and can deal with "P popping" and other noises. Also, find a quiet spot to make your recordings. Background noises can be very distracting.

Including a quiz in your recording

It is easy to include a quiz in your recording (with the tools I recommend (such as Captivate and Camtasia). Yes, you should be able to link the results to your Learning Management System. I have done this routinely in Moodle and I believe the capability now exists in Blackboard. Look for inclusion of a SCORM compliant module. That being said, I have found it much more effective to not include these short quizzes as part of the calculated grade. Instead, I find them more effective as practice sessions for students.



Adobe Captivate 8 Interface

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These cost

Adobe Captivate

I use Adobe Captivate if I need to include advanced interactions (such as widgets). I can also include a quiz. I can even create question pools (and include random questions in the quiz). One can import PowerPoint slides and one can also create HTML5 output (for viewing on tablets or smartphones). I find this is one of my "go to" tools that I use frequently. Note there is a learning curve.

There is a 30 day trial. I also understand the TLC has a copy (although it may not be the most current).

Website - <http://www.adobe.com/products/captivate.html>

Resources I have created for fundamentals of using this product).

- [Overview of Captivate 8](#)

- [Captive widgets](#)
- [Quiz fundamentals](#)
- [Captive and flipped classes](#)

Techsmith Camtasia and Snagit

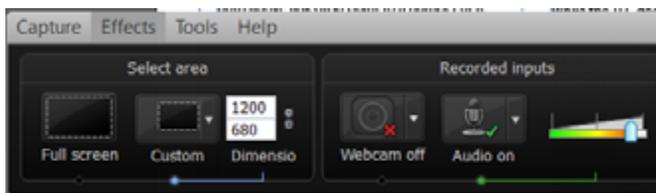
I use Camtasia when I want to record demonstrations of how to use software. I also use it when I want to demonstrate a quick concept. One can easily pan and zoom on the screen. There is another tool called Snagit which I also use (for screen clips). The latter tool allows for very precise snips of part of a screen. One can also include interactivity and a quiz if needed.

There is also a free trial of this tool. I believe the TLC also has a copy of this available for use (although it may not be the most recent version).

Website for Camtasia - <http://www.techsmith.com/camtasia.html>

Website for Snagit - <http://www.techsmith.com/snagit.html>

Both above links also point to a number of resources to get you started.



Camtasia Recorder interface

This one applies if you have MS-PowerPoint 2013 or newer

Office Mix

Assuming you have Office 2013 (or newer versions), Office Mix allows you to add narration and interactivity (such as a simple quiz or poll).

Website: <https://mix.office.com/>

Note that you can upload your work to the Microsoft cloud (it can be listed as either public or private). For simple recording and annotation of PowerPoint slides, I encourage you to try out this tool.

These are free (or freemium)

Keep in mind, you get what you pay for. Should you select one of these tools, make certain you have the ability to edit the results. You should also verify the output can be shared across devices (some students may not have Windows computers). I have found .mp4 files work well.

Screen-cast-o-matic

This tool is free (and you can use it online or you can download and install it on your computer). You are limited to 15 minutes per recording and have a limited amount of space online. I believe that is 5 GB, but the amount may change. It is a reliable tool and the TLC does provide help.

You can record your screen or webcam. You can output to MP4.

Website - <http://www.screencast-o-matic.com/>

TLC Blog post on this tool - <http://icctlc.blogspot.com/2015/01/screencast-o-matic.html>

Open Broadcast Project

You need to download and install this tool on your local computer. It does work on Windows, Mac, and Linux operating systems. The output is typically in .FLV format (which means you need to take the extra step of converting it to mp4 format).

While the TLC does not support this tool, it is used a fair amount at the University of Illinois (and is even recommended in the department where I work).

You will find you need to do a fair amount of initial configuration. Obviously, I can help with this. The big advantage is that it is free (think free puppy). You are also not limited to the length of recording.

Website - <https://obsproject.com/>

To convert the resulting output, you need to download and install a flv to .mp4 converter. I have found this tool quite helpful. [Flv Extract](#) (I recommend version 2.2.1.2)

Tiny Take

This is also relatively easy software to use. You download and install it on your Windows computer. You are limited to 5 minutes recording time. You do need to create an account and you have up to 1 GB of storage on their servers. You can also save your recordings to your local computer.

Website - <http://tinytake.com/>

CamStudio

This is an older tool. You download and install. The output is .avi (which means you may need to find a converter from .avi to .mp4 - they exist). You are not limited to the length of your recording. I mention this tool as peers have used it successfully in various projects.

Website - <http://camstudio.org/>

Other options

There are many other options. Simply open your favorite search engine and look for screen recording tools.

I encourage you to try out a few and see which ones you like. Again, I have all these installed on a computer and can demonstrate them. If you have the time and can work in the TLC, I recommend you become familiar with either Captivate or Camtasia as I think you will find those most helpful in the long run.