



Digital Signage Content Guidelines

U of T Mississauga undertook a digital signage initiative to improve the sharing of timely UTM-specific messaging, making it:

- More effective
- Targeted
- Relevant to students and employees
- Compliant with the U of T style guidelines
- Compliant with U of T accessibility guidelines
- Multimedia-enabled
- Consistent with campus planning principles for digital signage in public spaces
- Interactive (at specific kiosks)

UTM reserves the right to refuse or remove any digital signage content that does not portray UTM, U of T, its departments, services, activities, personnel or students in a positive light. Other avenues exist for the communication and discussion of such content.

Digital messaging is generally appropriate for:

- Promoting departmental information, including on-campus program and services, and campus-related news (including important dates and deadlines)
- Encouraging membership and participation in UTM-recognized student organizations and those organizations' activities and events
- Supporting campus way-finding
- Promoting campus events, elections and referenda of UTM-recognized student organizations and UT-recognized bargaining units using the digital signage events calendar, and promoting campaigns (e.g. hand-washing during flu season, reporting graffiti, severe weather alerts) through the digital signage image pane
- Recruitment of research study volunteers
- Messaging for external/public events (by Advancement and Conference Services)

Digital messaging is not appropriate for:

- Material that may reasonably offend community member and campus guests (including youth) through provocative messages, text and/or images
- Material with audio content
- Material which advocates for particular political parties, candidates or campaigns
- Material that is protected by copyright
- Material that may violate individuals' privacy
- Messages advocating/encouraging the consumption of alcohol, tobacco or drugs, or participation in gambling or games of chance
- Promotion of for-profit businesses and services (e.g. tutoring, commercial test preparation, housing rentals)
- Messages in languages other than English without an accompanying English translation
- Fund-raising announcements for causes that are not directly supported and formally endorsed by UTM or U of T.

Best practices

In order to keep content fresh, users must adhere to the following naming convention: the file name must begin with the expiry date (when it should be removed from digital signage (e.g. ExpMay8__JohnSmithLecture.jpg). *Files that do not follow this convention will be removed.*

Content providers are encouraged to consider where and when their messages are likely to be most effective, and use the digital signage system's features to customize display locations, dates and times to target messages appropriately.

Given the few seconds that information resides on-screen each time it is displayed, messages should be very brief and easily readable. Avoid use of all-caps, excessive text and long sentences.

Messages that require or are likely to generate follow-up should include a campus-based department/group name, phone number or website (e.g. 'For more information, contact...'). For URL's consider a shortened web address (alias) available through uoft.me instead of a lengthy one.

Messages should be action-focused, inviting action rather than simple sharing news.

The maximum duration of a standard posting is one week.

Date-specific messages should note the actual day and date of the event—messages simply noting “today or “tomorrow”, for example, can be challenging to administer.

Content providers are responsible for adherence to the relevant copyright and privacy policies and procedures.

Any content in a foreign language must have an English translation printed on it for approval.

Posting information

Infrequent or occasional content providers, along with students representing UTM-recognized student organizations, should submit requests with proposed content through the on-line form at <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/digital-signage>.

Campus employees who will regularly post to campus digital signage should seek posting privileges through UTM's signage system administrators, available at ssa.utm@utoronto.ca.

Posting privileges are granted at the discretion of UTM's signage system administrators and can be rescinded if messages are posted that do not comply with these guidelines.

Other considerations

While digital messaging can be effective, don't rely on it alone. Other campus-supported promotional options include the on-line events calendar at <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/events>, UTM's social media feeds (including Facebook and Twitter, coordinated by UTM Marketing and Communications), postings on campus bulletin boards, in-course announcements arranged with permission of instructors, advertising and news coverage in the student-run campus newspaper, promotion through student clubs and academic societies meetings and their social media...

Design principles

A variety of templates are available to content providers with limited design experience.

Users designing their own graphics, rather than using a provided template, should abide by the following:

- Image files: JPEG or PNG (no PDFs), Campus Fullscreen, 1920x1080 pixels; UTM template main image: 860x482 pixels
- Video files: mp4, mov, or FLV; 25 MB or under in size, preferably no more than 10-15 seconds in duration. Files should be encoded as close to the 860x482 aspect ratio as possible, to avoid unnecessary processing on the computers supporting digital signage. H.264 video encoding standard is recommended for maximum compatibility.
- Audio is not allowed
- Use of UTM or U of T word marks and logos in submissions is prohibited and unnecessary, as this is already displayed on the outer frame image.
- Any external logo or combination of logos included in a design must take up less than 10 per cent of the total image size

- If images contain the faces of recognizable individuals, those individuals must have given the content provider signed permission for the use of their photo. [For further information on photo permissions and a copy of UTM's [multimedia permissions form](#), please contact UTM's Asst. Director, Communications (Digital) in the Office of Advancement at nicolle.wahl@utoronto.ca.]
- Content providers must have documented permission to use any image in the file that might be copyrighted. Otherwise, consider using [Creative Commons](#), free stock images or designing an image.
- Use fonts and font sizes that make the message easy to read. Viewers will not stop to read fine print. At 72 dpi, use at least 30pt text
- Consider viewer's vision and accessibility requirements when designing content. Text and backgrounds should be of reasonable contrast. Some contrast between text and background is helpful; too much is not. Consult on-line resources for examples.
- If you include a QR code, link to a mobile-friendly site
- Messages and images on campus digital signage are displayed within an outer frame that includes the UTM logo, events calendar, and social media feed. In exceptional circumstances, consideration may be given to the momentary display of unframed full-screen images (e.g. way-finding, weather-related closures, safety notices) at the discretion of the signage system administrators.
- Content providers are responsible for ensuring that the final product, in the dimension required, meets these minimum standards, and signage administrators reserve the right to delete content that does not meet these requirements.

Requests for exceptions and revisions to these guidelines should be directed to UTM's Assistant Director, Communications (Digital) in the Office of Advancement at utm.digitalsigns@utoronto.ca.