

Interactive Documents.

Everything you need to know

What is an Interactive Document?

Rather than viewing a print document online as a pdf, an interactive document offers a richer viewing experience, utilising many of the features you have on a website. This includes buttons, slideshows, menus, animation, downloads, pop-ups, hover states, audio, and video content.

What are the features that can be added to an interactive document?

The following are the key features available in an interactive document:

- *Menu* – add a menu at the top of the page (or a s a burger) allowing audiences to navigate to sections, and sub-sections, within the document.
- *Links* – link content within the document and across the internet.
- *Hover state* – offer additional information as content is hovered over.
- *Pop-up content* – additional in-page content when you click on items. Great for adding case studies and examples.
- *Animations* – ability to add animated images and graphics.
- *Phased content* – content can appear on a page in stages, either automatically or by the reader.
- *In-page carousel and timelines*
- *Video and audio content* plays in a page or can be made full screen.
- *Clickable maps and diagrams* for additional information
- *Viewable on any device*, by anyone with an internet link. The reader doesn't need to have, or download, any specific software.
- *Sharable as a link*, via email and social media and can be embedded in websites and blogs.
- *Ability to gather analytics* on what readers are interacting with.

What are the benefits of creating an interactive document over a static pdf?

The most important benefit is that you can create richer storytelling documents that are more likely to connect with your audience and have them engaging with your story.

They also allow you to better pace your story and to connect the different parts of it together. And by bringing in your audio and video content, you can efficiently utilise high-value content you may already have.

How does Insight create interactive documents?

We use Adobe's Publish Online functionality which aligns with the InDesign platform we do all our design and layout work in.

Will we need to review and sign-off multiple documents?

We create the 'base document' in InDesign and the interactive functionality is just an additional 'layer' to that content. This means you only need to review the base layer content once. Changes are applied automatically to the interactive version. Of course, you'll also need to review any additional content that exists only on the interactive layer.

How do we ensure that all our audiences get the same information, especially when it's required by law that we give everyone the same information?

We create one 'base document' that is consistent for all formats. That includes all the core elements that meet your legal obligations and communication objectives. This base layer is used for creating a printed document and a pdf of the printed document. The interactive document has additional content, over and above the base layer, or has that content presented in a different or more engaging way.

We encourage clients to promote the interactive experience in the print document with language like "for additional content and an enhanced reading experience, see the interactive version of this document here."

Within the interactive document, we also recommend offering a download version, which is a pdf of the printed document. This approach ensures that all audiences have access to all the same information.

How do audiences read an interactive document?

You can view an interactive documents in any web browser, on any desktop or mobile device. The reading layout of the document automatically adjusts for the device to provide the best viewing experience.

Is it easy for audiences to use?

Yes, very easy. Left and right arrows allow readers to work through a document sequentially like they would a printed version. All other features, like a menu, hover state, links, and animation, are typical to most website so audiences will be familiar on how to use them.

How do you share an interactive document?

You can share them in multiple ways: share the URL with anyone via a hyperlink in email, post it to social media, or embed the document in a website or blog using the embed code.

Can an interactive document be downloaded?

Many clients choose to create a separate downloadable version which has all the content, without the interactive elements. This is easy to do, given that everything has been created in InDesign.

Is a login required to view it?

No login is needed. Anyone with a link to the published document can view the document in any web browser. However, we are also able to password protect your document.

Can a previously published document be edited?

Yes. The current document is unpublished, amended, and then republished to the same URL.

Can a published document be "unpublished" or deleted?

Yes. A document can be unpublished (so the outside world can't see it) or permanently deleted.

Where are Adobe's Publish Online documents hosted?

The documents are hosted on Adobe servers. Each published document is assigned its own unique URL.

How secure are they?

They are as secure as any other document you download from the website of a reputable company on the web. Adobe are renowned for their high security standards. And because they are not hosted in your environment, the security threat to your servers is negligible.

How much does it cost?

It's different for every case, depending on the number and type of interactivity required, and where you have existing content or it needs to be created. As a starting point, we recommend allowing 10% extra on the normal cost of developing a 'static' document. This doesn't include the cost of creating the content we are adding to the document, like videos or audio files.

Will it require more of my team's time?

Largely the content is the same so there should be little difference in time involved. You will need to check/test interactive elements as part of your review and sign-off so that may add a little extra time. And of course, if we require a significant amount of new content for the interactive layer then this will have additional effort.

How will we proof content and mark-up changes during the development process?

Marking up changes is the same process as it is now, including using hardcopies, pdf and proofing tools like Page Proof.