

HOW TO CHOOSE INTERPRETIVE MEDIA FOR YOUR OUTDOOR SITE

Many people have the same questions about choosing interpretive media.

- Which media is best for my story?
- What resources do I need?
- How do I get started?



The biggest factors to consider with a media decision are your story, audience, and available resources.

Let's ask a few key questions, consider some details, and point you in the right direction to select media for your outdoor site.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
HARPERS FERRY CENTER WEBSITE
[HTTP://WWW.NPS.GOV/HFC/SERVICES/INTERP/IP-MEDIA-SELECT.CFM](http://www.nps.gov/hfc/services/interp/ip-media-select.cfm)

GETTING STARTED

QUESTIONS TO ASK		THINGS TO CONSIDER	KEYWORDS
What is the STORY ?	1	Is it a meaningful story? Does the story connect to the site's landscape or natural resources? Does it describe the site's heritage or cultural resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So What? • Landscape • Heritage
Who is the AUDIENCE ?	2	Are you targeting a school-age audience or the general public? Does the audience speak a language besides English?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age group • Learning style • Language
What RESOURCES are available?	3	What graphics or artifacts are available? What's my budget for development and maintenance? How much staff time is available to support interpretive media?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphics • Budget • Staff
Am I prepared to offer all visitors interpretive messaging through universal design principles?	4	Accessibility and universal design are important in allowing diverse visitors to experience your story— Learn it, Breathe it . Fundraising and community outreach can be great ways to move this forward.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible • Audio description • Tactile
What media should I use to tell my story?	5	Ok you've got your story, you know your audience and resources, and you know all about universal design. Let's look at different media that can be combined to create a robust visitor experience.	

OUTDOOR MEDIA TYPES

Media Types	GRAPHICS			AUDIO			VIDEO	INTERACTIVE		MOBILE		HAND-OUT
	HPL, Fiberglass, Aluminum Composite, Fused Polycarbonate	Porcelain Enamel	Direct to Dibond	Personal Listening Device	On-site (solar post, hand-crank)	Remote (cell tour, podcast)	Video	Physical	Digital	Website	App	Brochures, Guides, Maps
Cost \$ = Low \$\$ = Mid \$\$\$ = High	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$	\$\$	\$\$	\$	\$\$\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$	\$\$	\$
Staffing 1 = Low 2 = Mid 3 = High	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1
Maintenance 1 = Low 2 = Mid 3 = High	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	1
Useful Life ✓ = < 1 Year ✓✓ = 1-5 Years ✓✓✓ = > 5 Years	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Learning Styles Accomodated 1 = Few 2 = Mid-range 3 = Many	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	1
Landscape Affect 1 = Low 2 = Mid 3 = High	3	3	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	N/A	N/A	1
Ease of Group Participation 1 = Difficult 2 = Moderate 3 = Easy	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	1	1	1