



# signs of a story

Web Project Production Plan

[www.signsofstory.org](http://www.signsofstory.org)

## About This Document

This document has been prepared to discuss the details of the web project “Signs of a Story,” by describing the aims of the project, its stages and the details of each stage. This can be used as a plan for presenting the project to third parties prior to the actual web site development, and as a guideline to be used throughout the lifetime of the project.

The document contains the following parts:

- “About the Project,” where the details and the aims of the project are discussed.
- “Phases,” where the two-phase structure of the project is explained.
- “Phase 1” and “Phase 2,” where the details of each phase are described.

## About The Project

### a) Project Name

The name of the web project is “Signs of a Story” (SOAS).

### b) Project Owners

Geneviève Appleton (51%) – concept initiator, project developer and designer, interface modeler

Doruk Eker (49%) – web and RIA development and technical support

### c) How It Works

The core element of the project is the interactive web site, which will contain a set of images of traffic signs and other posted pictograms (signs with figures, shapes and lines only, no numbers, letters or words). The users will be given the chance to browse through this gallery and choose a number of the signs (to a limit) in any order they want. The chosen signs in the chosen order will form a video (a slide show of signs). The video creator then will be asked to write the story of the video, i.e. the narrative s/he had in mind while producing it, as subtitles.

Once the videos are submitted, they will be published for others to view on the web site. However the original story subtitles will be kept hidden to the other users until they have submitted their own written narrative interpretation or "interpreted version" of the same video's story as a new set of subtitles. Once submitted, the original narrative written by the video producer will be accessible to the user so that the original narrative and the interpreted narratives can be compared with each other.

We will set up a comments section related to each video/story thread so that people can comment on the videos and original or interpreted stories, and be notified when someone has responded to their video, story or comment. This "community environment" will encourage people to participate and communicate.

When they register as members, the users will be asked to submit some demographic information about themselves, which may be used by psychologists and/or sociologists to study the differences in interpretation between distinct groups of people. With the help of psychologists, sociologists and other scientists who would like to use the web site to gather and analyze data, we will decide precisely which demographic information and statistics to collect.

We also must decide on the ethics of the site and how censorship of any of the stories, if any (e.g. pornographic stories, naming of specific people, etc.) will be implemented. If censorship is implemented, we must have an evaluation period before the stories can be published, which will create a burden on the site administrators and discourage users from participating fully in all processes of the site, and most importantly, would diminish the value of the data collected to psychologists and sociologists.

Instead, we may implement a password-protected membership structure, meaning we would invite particular, trustworthy participants, such as university program directors or instructors, to become members and to administer their own groups of users, such as groups of psychology students or patients in a psychological study, within their own limitations, which might allow us to avoid censorship of the site and related legal issues. Further research is needed to learn if this solution will work.

## **d) The Aim of the Project**

### *i) Different Videos From the Same Amount of Source Files*

The users will create different videos from the same set of signs. This will give us the chance to examine the relations and differences between the videos produced, and to compare the various narrative styles used among the individuals and demographic groups.

### *ii) Different Stories For The Same Video*

The users who submit stories for the videos will submit different narrative interpretations of the same video. This will give us the chance to examine the relation between the story interpretations and their interpreters' demographics.

## **Phases**

The project will be conducted in three phases: The Setup phase including the construction of a prototype and feedback collection web site (I), the final web site Development phase (II) and the final web site Management phase (III).

## **Phase 1: Setup Period**

### **a) Purpose**

- This phase is the period where the initiation of the project will be completed. The details and aims of the project will be made clear.
- The signs that will be used for the project will be collected/selected.
- Needed technical infrastructure and basic project web site will be set up.
- Related parties will be contacted to gather the attention of potential users/visitors/contributors. We will contact relevant university departments to draw attention to the project, and if they are interested, their students will be encouraged to use the prototype editor and make videos.

## b) Steps and Details

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>
Infrastructure setup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· design logo for project</li> <li>· set up domain name</li> <li>· web hosting</li> </ul>	November 13, 2008
Decide on the project details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· select appropriate type and format of signs</li> <li>· select appropriate background</li> <li>· find copyright-free signs</li> <li>· classify them in folders for easy retrieval by the video makers</li> </ul>	April 07, 2009
Construct web site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· home page</li> <li>· upload signs page</li> <li>· feedback/contact page</li> </ul>	January 07, 2009
Build the movie editor/player prototype	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· sign drag and drop functions</li> <li>· video timeline/editor</li> <li>· video player</li> <li>· subtitling editor and reader</li> </ul>	May 26, 2009
Finalize the prototype and fine tune the prototype web site		June, 2009
Communicate the idea of the project with related parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· via telephone calls</li> <li>· emails</li> <li>· a "call for feedback and participation" on the web site</li> <li>· presenting the project via workshops and conferences</li> </ul>	July – November, 2009
Collect feedback and decide on final details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· criteria/restrictions for the stories and censorship issues</li> <li>· data to be collected from users</li> <li>· membership issues</li> <li>· groups (private or public within the site)</li> <li>· user rights</li> </ul>	July – November, 2009

## c) Prototype Web Site

### *i) Functional and Content Details*

The Phase I web site will be designed to inform people about the project, let them try the prototype editor and collect feedback.

The site is in English; translated versions may be commissioned if there is interest.

### *ii) Visual Details*

White background and large signs used as graphic representatives of each page, integrated into a simple design.

### *iii) Site Map*

**Home Page:** A very plain page with the Project logo and a brief text-based introduction to the purpose of the site, as well as links to:

- **About The Project:** A web page containing more details about the project, the current web site and the next steps of the project.
- **Feedback/Contact:** E-mail addresses (in the form of images to prevent spam) of the project owners will be placed in this page.
- **The Signs Catalogue, Video Editor:** The list of signs will be organized into folders of particular categories, such as people, animals, arrows, lines, shapes, vehicles, structures, weather conditions, hazards etc. The users will be able to browse through the signs, drag them onto their timeline, assign an on-screen duration to each, and add subtitles, creating their sequence of images which can then be played back as a video in the editor player, or downloaded as package including a standalone player. The timeline of the work can also be saved and the saved timeline data will then be loaded to the system at another time; enabling user to work on the same project at different times and on different computers.

This feature also enables a group of distant people to work on the same project by sharing the timeline documents via e-mail.

- **Terms Of Use:** Here we will clearly state the terms of use of the editor and the signs. As well as the ownership of the project material and ideas
- **Privacy Policy:** Here we will reassure the video makers that the timelines or downloaded movies will not be linked to any information that would identify them to outsiders. Nevertheless, in order to block spam, we will keep the IP address of all the computers which accessed the site so that we can later track any offending computers if needed.

## *ii) Technical Details*

Domain Name: [www.signsofastory.org](http://www.signsofastory.org)

Domain Registration: Provided by [turkicaret.net](http://turkicaret.net) and paid for by Geneviève Appleton.

Hosting Service: Provided by Doruk Eker.

E-mail Accounts:

[admin@signsofastory.org](mailto:admin@signsofastory.org)

[webmaster@signsofastory.org](mailto:webmaster@signsofastory.org)

# Phase 2: Final Web Site

## a) Purpose

In this phase, the final fully-implemented web site, containing all of the functions mentioned in the 'How It Works' section, will be developed, tested and launched.

## b) Steps and Timeline

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>
Finalize the conceptual design	Estimated October-November, 2009
Finalize the technical design	Estimated October-November, 2009
Finalize the interface design	Estimated November-December, 2009
Developing the web site	Estimated November-December, 2009
Launch web site	End of December, 2009

## c) Final Web Site

### *i) Site Map (Draft)*

#### **PUBLIC SECTION:**

- **About The Project/Login Page:** Some textual content describing the basics and purpose of the project.
- **Contact:** Standard contact form and contact information.
- **Registration Page:** Create a member account and enter demographic information
- **Terms of Use**
- **Privacy Policy**
- **Content Policy**

#### **MEMBER SECTION:**

- **Home Page:** The central page of the site. The links on this page will take the viewers to:
- **Video Player Page** where they can watch videos, and interpret the story of a video, as well as read and comment on other stories. Sections/boxes for: recently added video, recently commented videos.
- **Video Editor Page** where users can drag signs onto the timeline and write the narrative subtitles for it, then post it for viewing and interpretation on the Video Player Page.
- **Search:** The users will be able to search for videos by the member name who created the video, or by selecting a certain sign or a set of signs that have been used in the video.

## *ii) Functional Details*

Members will be able to:

- create videos
- watch the videos without subtitles
- write narrative interpretation subtitles for the videos
- watch the videos with other narrative subtitles by the original video creator and/or other members
- compare and comment on the videos / written narratives

## *iii) Content Details*

The signs will be provided by the site administrators

The largest proportion of the site content (the videos and stories) will be provided by the users.

# Phase 3: Managing The System

In this phase we will continue to manage and promote the web site, as well as perhaps organize exhibitions of it, determine the next steps and if and when the web site will eventually be retired...