



AST

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How Cultural Institutions Can Build Access

*Use cases & solutions to promote
inclusive experiences*

Introduction

Taking measures to offer inclusive environments and accessible experiences isn't just a legal imperative for cultural institutions. It's the right thing to do.

Improving access is an intelligent way to expand your organization's reach to new communities, locally and internationally. Collecting organizations are wise to incorporate accessibility with digitizing assets as they preserve, protect, and restore these important archives and collections.

Automatic Sync Technologies (AST) offers expertise in accessibility for the cultural sector, including galleries, museums, libraries, archives, performing arts facilities and other cultural institutions. With AST's specialized solution and support, cultural organizations can better serve their communities, including their own staff members.

Accessibility laws to be aware of:

The Americans with Disabilities Act sets accessibility requirements for employers and "places of public accommodation," which includes museums and libraries. Additionally, Section 508 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 may apply to federal government-operated organizations, such as The Library of Congress. That law requires specific online accessibility standards.

Section 504 of the same Act can impact institutions that receive federal funding, and state-specific laws may also extend accessibility standards. AST's accurate captioning, transcription and audio description solutions can help the cultural sector meet or exceed these legal requirements.

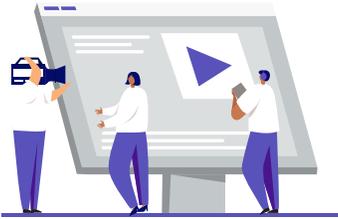
Explore methods & solutions to promote access and inclusion in the cultural sector, including:

How the Cultural Sector Partners With AST



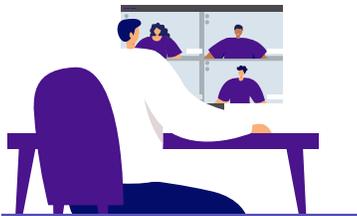
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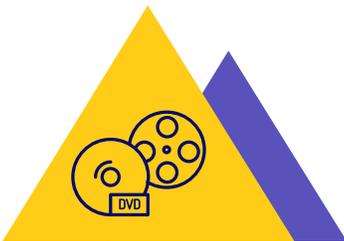
- A. Webinars and lectures
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Digitizing Analog Collections



Preserving “at-risk” collections

Chemical reactions cause older film assets to degrade over time, putting them at risk of loss.

Institutions convert them to digital formats, AST can add accessibility features, like captions, as part of the process.

AST supports these efforts for the world’s largest library, the [Library of Congress](#).



Offering access to oral histories

The Smithsonian Archives of American Art is one of many institutions that collect oral histories. Their collection allows artists to tell their stories in their own words and voices.

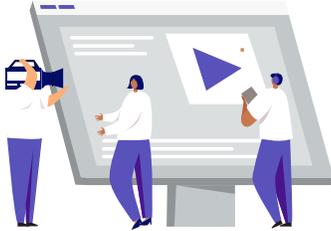
Add captions and audio descriptions to video and transcribe audio to make them accessible to patrons.



Simplifying research

AST’s searchable transcripts don’t just support accessibility efforts, they also make research easier for everyone.

With a searchable transcript, researchers can enter a search term, and find specific audio and video files. Additionally, they can locate particular sections within files.



Adding Accessibility to “Born-Digital” Assets



Video and audio collections

All institutions are continuously producing digital assets. As a part of best practices, these should include captions, transcriptions and audio descriptions to be accessible.

AST has scalable solutions that allow repositories to tackle major collections and backlogs with bulk uploading and quick turnaround time on multiple files. AST also guarantees 99% accuracy.



YouTube videos and online content

The British Museum’s “Curator’s Corner”¹ is a YouTube channel with more than 500K subscribers. The channel gives audiences behind-the-scenes glimpses of the museum.

As cultural organizations create channels to connect with audiences around the world, prioritizing captioning and audio descriptions in their videos embraces millions of new viewers and subscribers.



Training videos

The ADA requires that libraries and museums offer accessibility solutions for patrons and employees. 74% of professionals² who train employees use video as a teaching tool, so adding captions to this content is critical.

AST supports employee accessibility efforts and helps cultural institutions meet their legal obligations with their teams, not just their patrons.

1. [The British Museum](#), 2. [Video Training Statistics](#)



Creating Inclusive Live Events



Webinars and lectures

Cultural organizations are hosting virtual and hybrid events more than ever.

AST's real-time captioning ensures that people who are navigating disabilities can attend cultural webinars and online lectures.

AST can cover multiple simultaneous live events so professionals at cultural venues don't struggle to find an available captioner.

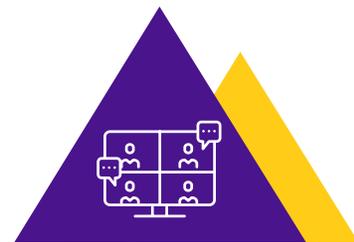


Live virtual tours

The [National Constitution Center](#) hosts in person and virtual tours that dive into early US history.

Many other institutions are taking advantage of virtual tours as a way to grow their online communities and serve more members of the public.

Offering solutions for inclusivity ensures that everyone has an opportunity to enjoy these online tours equitably.



Conference calls and meetings

According to the American Alliance of Museums³, one way to improve overall museum accessibility is to hire and include people with disabilities on staff, committees, and boards. They are more likely to identify accessibility issues and offer solutions to better accommodate visitors.

Providing captions for meetings will improve all employees' engagement while helping to meet the needs of employees' disabilities, known or unknown.

3. [Mind the Accessibility Gap](#)

Defining AST's Solutions

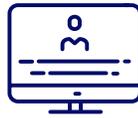


Captioning

Captioning is the process of converting audio content into text and displaying it on screen or on a nearby monitor.

AST provides captioning for recorded videos, live broadcasts, virtual event live streams, films, podcasts and more. With a 99.5% accuracy rate, AST's captions provide an equitable experience to those who rely on them.

Supports individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, have diverse learning styles, are non-native speakers and those viewing with the sound off



Transcription

Transcription is the process of listening to audio, video or live speech and converting it to text in the same language. Word-for-word transcription captures speakers' every word. Producing transcripts of videos, interviews, testimonials, events and guest lectures can be helpful for referencing, research and note taking. Transcripts are also essential for legal purposes as they can provide an admissible, verbatim record. Transcripts can accompany audio or video files to make them searchable and improve SEO as well.

Supports individuals who are Deaf, hard of hearing and all others, including researchers who can benefit from more interactive ways to search content & videos



Audio Description

Audio description is when a speaker adds verbal descriptions to provide context for all of the visual images in a video. AST offers two versions of audio description:

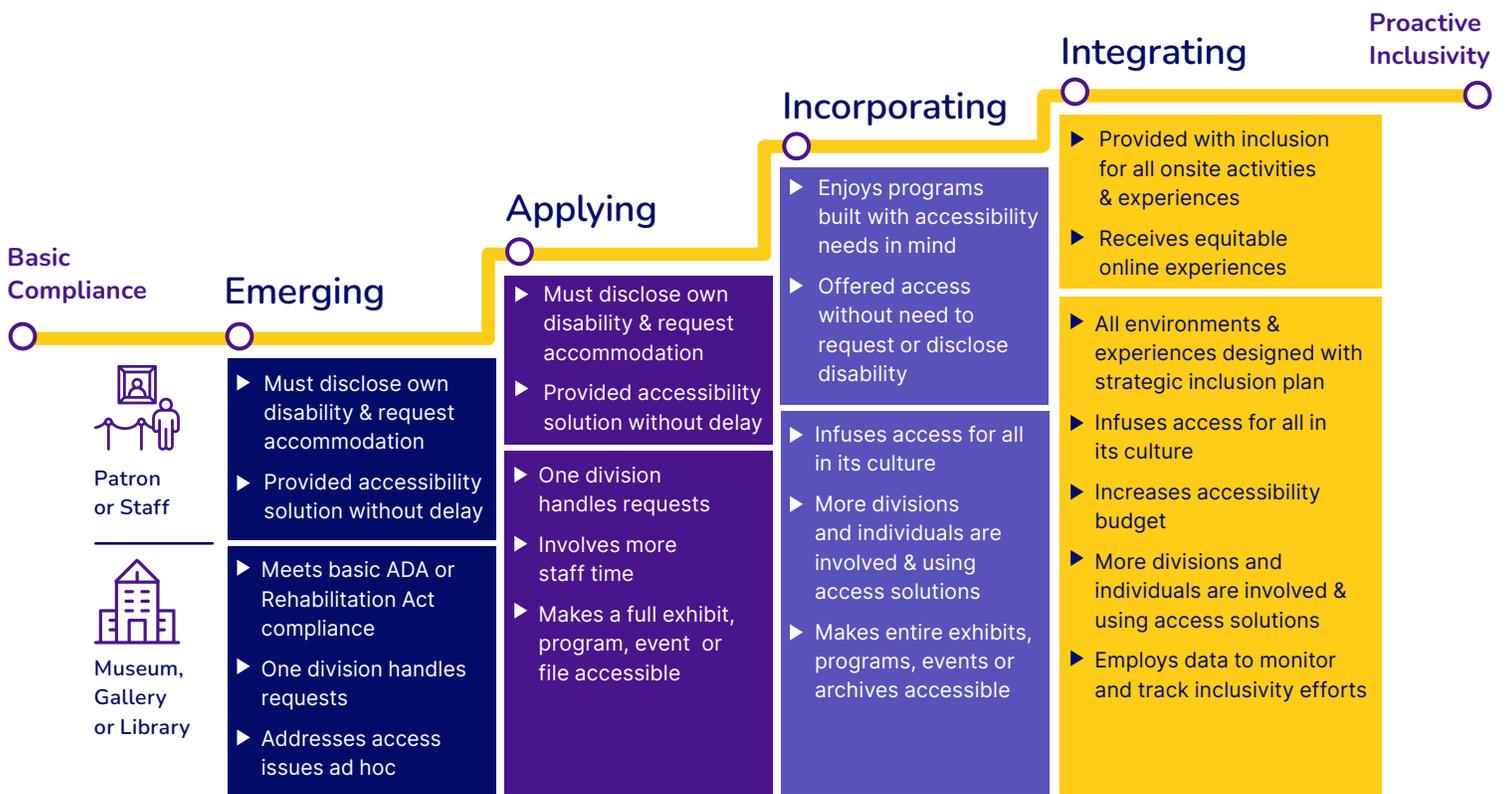
Standard: The speaker adds description during breaks in the video's original audio

Extended: Offers audiences more context and the original video pauses to allow more in-depth descriptions

Supports individuals who are blind or have low vision for all videos, as well as materials like home movies and oral histories

The Maturity Model for Cultural Sector

Explore how your museum, library, archive or gallery can move from basic compliance to proactively create inclusive experiences for everyone



AST’s solutions help cultural institutions on their inclusivity journeys. By proactively offering these tools to patrons and staff members, a museum or library can realize its accessibility and inclusivity objectives.

Cultural institutions need to place high value and importance on supporting inclusivity among their employees and with their communities. AST is an essential partner to institutions working to accelerate their accessibility efforts and meet the needs of today’s audiences. [Contact AST](#) to find out how our solutions can support your library or museum.