

Live Media Events

Working with signed-spoken language interpreters

Are you including signed language users in a live radio-television event? Chances are there will be interpreting services incorporated to ensure everyone has equal access to what is being discussed in both languages. Interpreters take the meaning of an utterance from one language and render it into the appropriate grammatical & lexical structure and cultural framework of another language, and vice versa, usually working simultaneously.

Live to air events can be fast paced and preparedness is key for a seamless show. To incorporate interpreting services to the best of their ability, here are some initial thoughts to consider for the live event.

Top Tips

- Be prepared to provide the interpreting team the following materials. These will be used to prepare for the linguistic features and content themes being discussed.
 - Script and monologue notes
 - Prepared questions and discussion topics
 - Any audio/video materials being used.
- Lighting is important to all signed languages. Natural no glare lighting is preferable, alternatively dimmable & colour altering options are suitable. Reducing shadows will reduce eye strain.
- On camera framing for a person using sign language is different than for spoken language. It is important to frame from just above the top of the signer's head to hip level and have a wide field of view to capture the full signing space. Using virtual background behind a signer is not preferred due to the blurred edges effect around the fingers.
- The signed-spoken language interpreter will be using the microphone intended for the person using sign language. A lavalier or over-ear microphone are preferred. For radio broadcasts, the interpreter will use the boom-microphone in the booth intended for guests.

- To acknowledge the interpreters a suggested statement is: “We are working with a team of American Sign Language-English interpreters to provide access in both languages for all of us.”
- Use terminology such as “Deaf” and “Hard of Hearing”. “Hearing impaired” is unacceptable.

Additional Notes about Interpreting

- In the presence of interpreters continue to speak to and interact with the person using sign language as you would with others. While it is impossible to *ignore* the interpreters, the focus should be kept on the participants and event. A goal of interpreted-mediated interactions is for people to share experiences equitably with each other.
- During the event an interpreter may occasionally interrupt the conversation to clarify certain comments & details for their own understanding and this is not a reflection of the participants comprehension.
- While the interpreters are actively working, they are not participants in the conversation and event. However, please feel free to approach the team with questions and ideas for improvement beforehand or afterwards.

Resources: [An online article about capturing sign language on camera.](#)

Unsure about something? Just ask!

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