

# Having a Classy Web Site: The Sins of Animation

Submitted by Andy Clausen, Written by Debbie Mayo-Smith

Why, oh why, oh why, do people run animation / animated ads on their web sites? Obviously... to attract attention.

While it may work sometimes, most of it could be driving valuable traffic away. Often it's too distracting.

If you search the Internet, you'll find the classiest web sites only allow animated ads that "revolve" once (a revolution is one cycle of animation). That's the rule on Yahoo!, which is one of the Web's standard-setters. The single-revolution ad is okay. You download a page, the ad/your animation appears, does its creative thing, and then it stops. You see it. You react, and then scan the rest of the page.

But the trend towards unending animated ads—ads that have some mindless, repetitive bit of animation that keeps going and going as long as the page remains open is a real turnoff to many viewers. What a distracting pain in the butt.

*Do you find it hard to read something on a web page when there's an ad in your peripheral vision jiggling away?*

People spend most of their time on the Web **reading**. So just as people reading a newspaper or magazine will look at photographs, illustrations, and advertisements, so will web readers.

The Poynter Institute released the initial results of an eye-tracking study of how people read and use web sites. Using special cameras, the researchers measured such things as the order in which users viewed various elements of a site, and the amount of time they focused on each element.

Because an earlier eye-tracking study of print newspaper usage had showed that readers first turn to photos on a page, then to headline and only then to text, everybody was surprised that the web page study found just the opposite.

This time, the attention of users was drawn first and foremost to text 92%, to a much lesser extent to photos relevant to the text, and less still to banners and graphics. Only 22% looked at the graphics. So my question is—how much are those animations working for you – or against you?

The mistake that fans of animation make is that they think the web reader, somehow, is a captive audience, the way a television viewer can be. But your online readers are anything but passive. They're active—sometimes hyperactive. They're looking for something, usually information, and the instant they feel they're not getting what they want they're gone. ♦

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## Out with the old, In with the new!

By Jane A. Svinicki, CAE, President, SAMI

### This is definitely the 2006 theme for Svinicki Association Management, Inc.

In with a new decade. It is hard to believe that 20 years have passed since SAMI began in a spare bedroom in my house. Looking back, if I was asked what was the most important thing that made SAMI a success my answer would be, "hard work." Other important factors are great clients, continual investment in technology and always marketing even when you are much too busy.

In with a partnership. Marty Tirado, CAE, becomes a partner in SAMI in 2006 in recognition of his dedication to our business and our clients. He has worked at SAMI for eight years and is executive director of five client association. He is hard working, smart, and fun to have around, and SAMI will benefit from his ownership.

In with a new place. After 17 years in downtown Milwaukee, SAMI has moved to Summit Place, a 400,000 re-development of the Allis Chalmers industrial complex. The development will house about 50 tenants and 3,000 people when completed. With the move into building four this summer of Blue Cross, Blue Shield, the development will be almost fully leased.

It was a great opportunity for SAMI. Our move to Summit Place provides our clients with a range of benefits we could not offer at our downtown location. The new office complex has four meeting rooms, including one for 200 people. Several of these meeting rooms come with powerpoint projectors. There is plenty of free parking in a surface lot and a parking structure for clients who hold meetings at our new office. There is even a deli to cater meetings in the building.

It was truly 'out with the old' as we packed up the old office. It was the perfect time to review, archive and store (off site) all the client materials. In the past two decades, we have moved to an electronic office and have less need to store paper versions of records. We used the SAMI record retention policy to evaluate stored materials. If you would like a copy, just e-mail us at info@svinicki.com.

It's been a great start to 2006. Every day when we come to work there are new things to learn and enjoy about our new offices. We hope you can join us on February 16th for a celebratory bit of food and drink. RSVPs are appreciated to info@svinicki.com. ♦



Thank you for being a part of SAMI!

Jane A. Svinicki, CAE

On February 16th from 3-7 pm, it's time to celebrate at Svinicki Association Management, Inc.!

**A New Decade:** In 2006 SAMI celebrates 20 years in business.

**A New Partner:** Marty Tirado, CAE is now a partner at SAMI.

**A New Place:** SAMI's office moved to: 6737 W. Washington St. • Ste 1420 Milwaukee, WI 53214

Please join us on February 16th from 3-7 pm  
Reservations are appreciated: info@svinicki.com or 414-276-8788  
Refreshments will be available.

## Association Operating Manuals

Submitted by Jen Hallett, Written by Robert C. Harris, CAE

Operating manuals guide the association. Manuals promote consistent member-quality-service and reduce the opportunity for “winging-it” along the way. They have significant value to volunteer leaders, staff, and especially new employees. An executive director without manuals should set a goal to leave a legacy of well-documented operations. Here are six common association manuals.

**The Personnel Manual details**, formalizes and communicates the organization’s policies regarding its employees. The manual covers items such as sick leave, vacation time, issuance of office keys, overtime, dress code, sexual harassment, credit cards, and filing handling complaints. Personnel manuals must reflect state and federal laws and should be prepared by a labor-law specialist and/or attorney. Do NOT incorporate the personnel manual with any other manual.

**The Operations Manual** is a way of insuring consistent delivery of services, quality control, and standardized procedures, while reducing risk. It reduces staff discretion and risk. Also known as a “best-practices manual,” it describes what the organization believes is the best way of conducting every aspect of its operations. It documents literally every activity through bulleted or enumerated lists. A successful manual reflects the rationale and character of the organization. A new executive director, and staff, quickly understands the purpose and value of the established processes. One way to create the operations manual is by creating a table of contents of all major responsibilities (guided by job descriptions and the annual calendar). Ask staff members to document their processes in a consistent format (template) for adding to the manual. Within months the operating manual will be assembled and serve as the most valued document in the organization.

**The Policy Manual** describes the purpose and objectives of specific operations, activities, services, governance and staff issues. For instance, a policy developed on e-mail usage or document record retention. Policies are transcribed from the motions adopted by the board and recorded in the minutes. Unlike a personnel manual, it focuses on the organization and less on employees. If no policy manual exists, take the last five years of minutes, highlight the motions that read as policies, create a table of contents, add the policies, and then present the manual to the board for adoption.

### Meeting Room Availability at the New SAMI Offices



SAMI’s new office building has 4 meeting rooms, including the one shown here which can hold up to 200 people with on-site catering. Two of the meeting rooms have built-in computer data projectors. SAMI’s office suite also has a conference room for up to 10 people.

All meeting rooms are provided at no charge for building tenants, and are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Looking for a place for your next meeting?**

**Call SAMI at 414-276-8788.**

(Try not to refer to a “Policy and Procedures” manual – procedures are the result of policy implementation and are more specific or detailed in describing processes.)

**The Leadership Orientation Manual** is used as a resource and training program for volunteers. It is distributed at the annual board orientation. Sections may include history, bylaws, strategic plan, committees, org-structure, responsibilities, staffing and calendars, for example. The manual is an excellent resource for new staff members. Many associations forego a printed leadership binder by placing the contents in a Virtual Board Manual in a protected web site location.)

**The Accounting Manual** deals specifically with fiscal activities, detailing topics such as check-signing authority, petty cash, reimbursements, and investment policy. It guides the business affairs staff. Also consider creating a shorter **Treasurer’s Guide** explaining fiscal policies and naming the accountant, banker, insurance agent, investor, attorney, etc.

**The Style Guide** brands and positions the organization by indicating the proper use of the association name, logo, colors, tag-lines, acronyms and key words indigenous to the association. Usually six to ten pages. Also good to share with printer, graphic artist and new staff. ♦

*Note: Bob Harris, CAE, conducts strategic planning, board orientation and staff training. Free association resources available at [nonprofitcenter.com](http://nonprofitcenter.com). Contact him at [bob@rchcae.com](mailto:bob@rchcae.com) or 850/750-6000. He is author of the Association Self-Auditing Manual to inventory operations, improve performance and reduce risk.*

## What Not to Wear to Work:

Article recreated by Nikki Luedtke

Some organizations have adopted a Friday (or Everyday) Casual policy. But what is appropriate and inappropriate for workplace casual. The September 2005 issue of Shape magazine has identified some guidelines on what is acceptable for casual and what’s a bad professional judgment call in the average office.

### Tame your mane

Big hair is in, but don’t let it distract from your face. The same for haircolor – keep up your highlights, but don’t go for unnatural-looking shades – like pink or blue.

### Invest in an iron or find a good dry cleaner

If your collar is rumpled, it doesn’t matter which designer your wearing, it tells your supervisor that you couldn’t be bothered.

### Show your good jeans

While corporate casual has become synonymous with jeans at most offices, shuffling into the office in sandals and torn faded denim conveys a sense of sloppiness and disregard. Pair up dark jeans with a cute crisp button down shirt or blazer and nice pumps. Nothing faded, ripped, torn or low-rise.

### Treat your soles right

Open-toed shoes have become more widely accepted in warm months. No matter how colorful or embellished your flip-flops are, they snap and slap against your heels while you walk, and that’s distracting to those working around you. Instead, find a decent pair of microfiber or leather mules. Same goes for strappy platform sandals and kitten heeled slides – they’re cute – but if we have to walk with mincing steps, we lose our sense of authority.

### Dress for tomorrow’s success

It takes just three seconds to form an opinion about someone. So ask yourself what you want your co-workers to know about you at a glance. The bottom line? In a “corporate casual” environment, “corporate” still comes first. If you look professionals and polished, people will treat you with respect. Even if you are not in an authoritative position now, you should show that you want to be. ♦

### Welcome New Client! Wisconsin Association of Behavioral Health Services

As of July 1, 2006, SAMI has been providing full association management services to the Wisconsin Association of Behavioral Health Services. WABHS acts as the voice for state clinics and is instrumental in the change with licensing laws and antiquated regulations effecting how outpatient mental health clinics service their clients. The purpose of WABHS is to provide educational and clinical programs, share and enhance delivery of mental health and addiction behavioral health services and communicate innovative state of the art clinical practices. WABHS, its Public Task

Force, Board of Directors and Membership effects legislative efforts on a local, state and national level, increases awareness to the public, and maintains liaisons and coordinates with other state organizations.

The transition included enhancement to the website, providing a web-based program (eReach) to promote events and association activities, updating the potential member database by adding over 730 certified mental outpatient clinics in the state, and re-creating the format of the WABHS newsletter.

## Photos from “The Move”



Marty Tirado and Jen Hallett packing and organizing the old SAMI storage room in preparation for moving.



Kelly Wagner and Marty Tirado moving a storage rack full of materials. (Note: this photo was staged as professional movers did most of the heavy lifting!)



Jane Svinicki, Jennifer Gelinsky, and Jen Hallett wake up to an early morning during the office move with one last coffee at the old offices.