

00:00:00:02 - 00:00:27:00

Speaker 1

Welcome to our first PLAIN Webinar of 2023 on the eve that the Plain Language Act is introduced. This is an interactive webinar. It's a short webinar, but we want to have it as interactive as possible, and that means you can join our conversation. Please do that via the chat. Don't use your microphone during the presentations, please. We don't have much time today, so we do our best to deal with one or two questions.

00:00:27:17 - 00:00:46:18

Speaker 1

But we also make notes of all your questions and maybe they will be answered through our website or via email. This is a short webinar, so we don't have a break today. And now I would like to invite our PLAIN President to our digital stage. Welcome, Joanna Richardson.

00:00:48:11 - 00:01:20:07

Speaker 2

Thank you, Lodewijk, and welcome to all of you for this. The third webinar that PLAIN is organizing, and we've got more people signed up than ever. We have as Lodewijk mentioned, we have some 97 people signed up from 20 different countries and we think that this is really one of the things that PLAIN can do, which is really bring people together to inspire, to connect them and to share their love for plain language.

00:01:21:03 - 00:01:47:06

Speaker 2

I'd also like to encourage those of you who are maybe new to us to check out our membership. This webinar, as it is going to be recorded, will be up on our website afterwards and you'll be able to access it if you're a member and if you're in a larger organization, you might want to ask them to check out a group membership, which is very worthwhile and definitely worth doing.

00:01:48:15 - 00:02:12:12

Speaker 2

As you may have noticed, I'm based in Argentina, in Buenos Aires, which is actually surprise, surprise — I think probably most of you already know — where our conference is going to be held later on this year in late September. Some of you may have already submitted a proposal, and I hope that you have it's actually been extended a couple of weeks.

00:02:12:21 - 00:02:34:14

Speaker 2

So you've got until May. I think it's the fifth. May the fifth. Thank you. May the fifth to send in your proposal. But of course, you can come along anyway. And after so many years of virtual connections, we'd really like to see you on the ground in Buenos Aires. It's a great city. It's super cheap for all of you.

00:02:34:24 - 00:02:45:02

Speaker 2

And and it's a wonderful, fun city. And the conference is going to be fantastic. So I look forward to seeing you there in person. Meanwhile, let's enjoy this webinar.

00:02:45:17 - 00:03:10:01

Speaker 1

Thank you, Joanna, and thank you for telling that it's really cheap. I think a lot of Dutch people will apply for that, like I did. But now it's time for our first guest. Welcome. Lynda Harris, as I said, founder and Chief Executive of Write Limited. Under Lynda's visionary leadership, Write has become the largest plain language consultancy in the world.

00:03:10:14 - 00:03:42:10

Speaker 1

She founded Write in 1989. Lynda has over 30 years of experience in writing, editing and evaluating documents using plain language principles. Lynda, how nice that you are here with all your experience. Thank you so much. Before we start our conversation and your presentation, you have a question for our audience. So I'm going to ask you all to tell if you agree or disagree with the question Lynda has.

00:03:42:10 - 00:04:11:05

Speaker 1

And her question is, do you really think it's possible to create an effective plain language style across the public sector? So do you really think it's possible to create an effective plain language style across the public sector? If you agree, please raise your digital hand now. If you disagree, don't do anything. I'd like to see .... you can also use the chat, whatever you like.

00:04:12:09 - 00:04:29:06

Speaker 1

Oh, I see a lot of hands. I see a lot of hands, Lynda. But that's a good sign, I think, for you. Let's listen to your story. Thank you for voting. You can lower your hands now. Lynda, how did the act come to be?

00:04:30:10 - 00:04:59:18

Speaker 2

Well, I'm just busy sharing my screen. So while that's happening, I can tell you that the act came to be through, I guess, a lot of hard work and determination from a lot of people. So the idea of having a plain language act to New Zealand, that idea happened a long, long time ago. And I think it was prompted by different sectors.

00:04:59:18 - 00:05:28:15

Speaker 2

There were people involved in drafting legislation who'd been interested in plain language. As I

say, for quite a long time there were also a few lobby groups. So we were involved in a very early lobby group where and then there's also been people in parliament, but I guess everyone really has had that sort of idea of just imagine if we had a plain language act and I think personally I really never actually thought it would happen.

00:05:28:15 - 00:05:55:07

Speaker 2

So it was just so exciting that we actually have the bill. There's the image "imagine if"... I'm catching up with myself. We called this "plain language from a biscuit tin" because we have a little quirky thing in New Zealand where members of Parliament are able to propose a bill. The bill is given the number and then it's put into a ballot box.

00:05:55:07 - 00:06:22:09

Speaker 2

But we don't have a ballot box. We have basically a cookie jar. So that's just a little interesting fact about New Zealand. But the person who drew the.... so the ballot was drawn and plain language was the thing that was drawn out, which was fantastic. And the person who drew that out was a member of Parliament called Rachel Boyack.

00:06:22:20 - 00:06:53:10

Speaker 2

And Rachel has a real heart for plain language, which really helped as she pushed this bill through. So the act requires quite simply that all of the writing and New Zealand government websites, if its intended for the public, needs to be in plain language. And we have had huge interest in the act since actually right through when it was being debated.

00:06:53:23 - 00:07:17:01

Speaker 2

Just a lot of interest, so much so that we had we held a webinar and now my screen doesn't want to advance. Here we go. We had a webinar just recently and we had over 500 on the webinar and in fact we couldn't get it... that was our limit. So we had a lot of people wanting to know about the act.

00:07:17:12 - 00:07:17:19

Speaker 1

00:07:18:10 - 00:07:22:03

Speaker 2

So yeah. So that's really how it was, how we how it came to be.

00:07:22:12 - 00:07:28:19

Speaker 1

Wow. And speaking about the act, what is the purpose of the act and what does it require?

00:07:28:19 - 00:07:48:22

Speaker 2

So the purpose of the act, I think can be summed up in three words and they really tell the story of “why have the act in first place?”. So the act is all about effectiveness of the public service, accountability and also accessibility.

00:07:48:22 - 00:07:56:07

Speaker 1

[I heard somebody... please mute yourself and you can go on Lynda.]

00:07:57:02 - 00:08:30:00

Speaker 2

Anyway, so and so to accomplish these things effectiveness, accountability and accessibility, the act requires that documents that are public facing use language that's appropriate to the intended audience and clear, concise and well organized. So that's kind of the, I guess what you might see as the compliance side of the why it's the act, but we really feel that there's something much bigger than just this aspect of compliance.

00:08:30:09 - 00:09:13:22

Speaker 2

The thing that that we feel is so important about the act is that it offers the opportunity for organizations to embrace what we would call the spirit of the act, what this is really all about. And there's a beautiful, I guess, the thing within our public service when they talk about the spirit of service and it really is encouraging the public service to open their hearts and minds to the needs of others and to act in a way that shows that they are working towards something bigger than themselves.

00:09:14:12 - 00:09:39:24

Speaker 2

And I just I love this and I think it's beautiful. I know it's the perfect opportunity to go “We don't just have to stick to the letter of the law. Its the spirit of the law that really counts.” So looking at who has to comply, it covers all public service agencies and crown agents, and it calls these agencies reporting agencies because they do have to report on their activity.

00:09:40:09 - 00:10:10:10

Speaker 2

And there's some agencies or organizations that aren't included. And if we move on to the next slide, we can see the documents covered by the act are called relevant documents. And just so that it wasn't an entirely daunting task, it only applies to documents written after the 21st of April. So that's tomorrow. And also those that are substantially revised after tomorrow.

00:10:10:23 - 00:10:15:02

Speaker 1

So it's tomorrow for you for some of our members it's the day after tomorrow.

00:10:15:02 - 00:10:59:08

Speaker 2

Yeah, for us tomorrow, it's the and in just a little bit more in the next slide about the documents. So they are print or online documents, that are written for the public at large, not individuals. And in my ideal world, I wish it actually applied to documents written to individuals as well, but... and then it's really about documents that are providing information for all the different government services and requirements for public education initiatives and really anything that affects people's rights and interests and that was being broadcast or communicated on quite a wide scale.

00:10:59:08 - 00:11:33:17

Speaker 2

And then if we move on to the next slide, so one of the most important aspects of the act is that it requires government organizations to appoint a plain language officer. And this is the bit the act is. That's the part that will make the act work, I guess. So within these agencies, that plain language officer is responsible for telling everyone about the act, for making sure that every single person knows that they are required to write in plain language.

00:11:34:05 - 00:11:59:09

Speaker 2

And then another important point is dealing with feedback from the public. So this is really inviting engagement from everyone in New Zealand and really for also ensuring that the agency complies with the act. So at the moment organizations are busy appointing their plain language officers, which is also a wonderful thing to know that this is happening across the public sector.

00:12:00:11 - 00:12:32:23

Speaker 2

And if we go to the next slide, we don't have any compliance mechanism in the sense that there was no legal requirement for organizations to do all of these things, which seems a shame, but instead of that, there is a fairly robust reporting mechanism. So in the end, the reports from every organization will be collated into a master report that is presented to Parliament.

00:12:33:11 - 00:12:40:15

Speaker 2

So we do think that that is going to make... I think it will certainly make most organizations really want to do the best.

00:12:41:10 - 00:12:51:09

Speaker 1

Speaking about those plain language officers, if you were appointed to be one of those officers, where would you begin?

00:12:52:00 - 00:13:14:06

Speaker 2

Yes. Well, we had a lot of people ask us that already. And I think that the first thing that they absolutely must be doing is telling everyone about the Plain Language Act and referring to really that spirit of service and the spirit of the act, because there are some documents that are not public facing that aren't really covered by it yet.

00:13:14:16 - 00:13:36:24

Speaker 2

But if you can embrace the spirit of the act, then that really should create a desire for all public servants to be writing in plain language. So that's the first thing I would do. With the next slide. You can see that we also use a model. So we've already used this model with many New Zealand organizations already.

00:13:37:13 - 00:14:10:01

Speaker 2

Really encourage them to set a standard to start with. So this is a plain language standard obviously, and soon the ISO standard will help with this. We actually have put a standard out internationally just for free. That is called the Write plain language standard and we've got a screenshot of that in a moment. But and any organization can use the standard, it's just a set of ten statements that describe a plain language document, but much more than that.

00:14:10:01 - 00:14:11:10

Speaker 2

So that's the document you.

00:14:11:12 - 00:14:13:00

Speaker 1

00:14:14:04 - 00:14:43:01

Speaker 2

Previous slide...We really encourage organizations to embrace much more than just training, so that is a requirement of the act that everyone must be trained. But we also encourage organizations to benchmark, to see where they're at and also to build in a lot of expectation and support for all the initiatives across that organization. And we've got much more that we can share on that.

00:14:43:01 - 00:14:44:23

Speaker 2

If anyone would like to know this one.

00:14:44:23 - 00:14:49:10

Speaker 1

Yeah, this is a very interesting model. Thank you for sharing this with with us, good.

00:14:49:18 - 00:14:51:04

Speaker 2

.....

00:14:51:05 - 00:14:51:17

Speaker 1

.....

00:14:51:17 - 00:14:54:14

Speaker 2

I'm sorry.

00:14:54:14 - 00:14:57:00

Speaker 1

The next slide was the form that you could send in.

00:14:57:10 - 00:15:29:10

Speaker 2

The next slide is the Write plain language standard, so we devised this many years ago. We use it as a checklist to assess the document. Of course, it's all completely focused on the audience, the needs of the audience, the purpose of the document. But we find that people can use this checklist with almost anything that they're writing, either when they're composing the document or afterwards using it as an editing and reviewing tool,

00:15:29:22 - 00:15:59:18

Speaker 2

then they can be reasonably assured that they have done a good job in trying to create a plain language document that is fit for purpose. There's a lot more you can do with user testing and you know, many other things. But we find that this is a really, really good starting point. So that would be our suggestion. You can download it for free from our website and you can use it in any way that you like, you know, rewording, renaming.

00:16:01:05 - 00:16:02:16

Speaker 2

So it's just out there...

00:16:03:18 - 00:16:05:07

Speaker 1

What's the address of the website.

00:16:05:24 - 00:16:18:14

Speaker 2

The address of the website as www.write.co.nz ... or n zee many of you say.

00:16:20:04 - 00:16:45:15

Speaker 1

Thank you so much. Thank you for sharing this in just 10 minutes, there's so much more that probably we all want to know, but we know how to reach you and your website. Thank you so much. You stay here for questions afterwards because we're going to Kate Thompson. Kate, the head of communication at trans-Tasman sustainability firm Thinkstep-anz — or zee whatever you like to say, I just learned.

00:16:45:15 - 00:17:07:11

Speaker 1

She leads a team of plain english experts who translate the company's technical sustainability work into plain English executive summaries, case studies, blogs that clients can understand and act on. Very interesting work. How nice that you are here. Hey.

00:17:07:24 - 00:17:08:16

Speaker 3

Thank you so much.

00:17:08:16 - 00:17:46:21

Speaker 1

Welcome to our digital stage, and also before you start your presentation, you have a question for our audience. So please stand by with your digital hands because your question is: Is it realistic to expect people outside your communications and marketing teams to become plain language experts too or do these skills need to sit with your professional writers? If you think that it's also a possibility for your people outside communication or marketing team, please raise your hands. If you think it's something just for professional writers,

00:17:47:07 - 00:18:24:24

Speaker 1

don't raise your digital hands. So you see what's happening. ....some no's.... so it's interesting. I see in the chat that some people say "I have got my hands raised"... so very interesting. We're going to talk about the value of plain language in creating a more sustainable world. Why does sustainability have such a complex language of its own?

00:18:26:10 - 00:18:27:14

Speaker 3

Yeah, I wish I could tell you.

00:18:27:15 - 00:18:30:03

Speaker 1

Yeah, I think I start with that question first and then.

00:18:31:05 - 00:18:33:03

Speaker 3

Just to check that my slides have come up in a bit.

00:18:33:12 - 00:18:33:19

Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:18:34:15 - 00:18:56:14

Speaker 3

Right. I think it's a couple of reasons that she's kind of I just want to show you here, some of you may be familiar with this. It's the United Nations sustainable development goals and sustainability as we see it in the UN, is very much about systems thinking, about the social side, the environmental and the economic. The systems thinking is quite complex for a start — change

00:18:56:14 - 00:19:09:21

Speaker 3

one thing, something else changes — but if you look at the those three disciplines: the social, environmental and the economic, they all have pretty complex language of their own. I just want to show you here. I'll just put up a few.

00:19:10:05 - 00:19:10:17

Speaker 1

Oh, yeah.

00:19:11:04 - 00:19:26:01

Speaker 3

“Eutrophication potential” it's the potential of acidifying a waterway. But these are the sort of terms that are coming up all the time that our team's dealing with. So in answer: it's a complex discipline.

00:19:26:01 - 00:19:39:24

Speaker 1

It's very complex, you see those words and you think, “Oh my, this is this. What is it all about?” So let's do the same plain language techniques work for all your audiences or do you need to vary that by audience?

00:19:40:14 - 00:20:02:09

Speaker 3

It's an interesting one, I'll show you what we did at thinkstep-anz. When we were doing this work, we looked at who our audiences were for all our work and our technical experts, they produced amazing work, but it's full of data and graphs and things like that... complex words that our audience probably don't understand. And we identified four audiences.

00:20:02:09 - 00:20:25:22

Speaker 3

The first is Sarah a chief executive. She just wants to understand the main messages so that she can have an impact, get out there and be doing her thing. And Carlos, our second audience, he's used to build with sustainability experts so he might understand this really complex stuff, but he needs to influence people who don't like his executive board. And then we've got Sarina, who we see runs a mid-sized business.

00:20:26:13 - 00:20:44:01

Speaker 3

Now of course, I don't blame her, she doesn't really know where to start and I wouldn't either if I wasn't working in sustainability. And then a fourth audience is Ed, the marketing manager. So his firm is doing a lot of sustainability work and he needs to communicate it. But he's terrified about putting something out there, which is what we call greenwashing.

00:20:44:17 - 00:21:10:05

Speaker 3

So that's making claims that you really can't back up in data. So then when we looked at all these audiences, we thought they all need plain language. And the interesting bit was we decided they actually all need the same plain language. There's no need for something more advanced compared to chief executive or Serena. The sort of words we used and the sort of techniques it is simple words, concise language, helping somebody through a document.

00:21:10:05 - 00:21:21:05

Speaker 3

They work for all these audiences. So that was a relief, we can do it once and it reaches all these audiences.

00:21:21:05 - 00:21:24:00

Speaker 1

Great. Could you show some examples of your work? Yeah.

00:21:24:17 - 00:21:42:05

Speaker 3

So what it is, is about taking a really complex technical findings, first of all putting them into what

we call plain language, which we all know is simple, concise, personal language and really looking at the aim, which is to make sure that our audiences can read them, understand them, and most importantly, act on them.

00:21:42:08 - 00:21:42:16

Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:21:42:22 - 00:22:07:23

Speaker 3

Because if they can't act, we're not going to meet those 17 goals that I showed you on the first page. Documents are just going to sit on a shelf and we.... One thing we do at thinkstep-anz is we have an in-house team of designers, and we think that's really important because plain language is great, but actually I think we can show what most of us think and so being able to design in a way that supports our plain language which is really important.

00:22:08:05 - 00:22:32:21

Speaker 3

So the interesting thing about sitting down with our designers , is that it is sort of the same thing and they came up with this really nice quote, which they found somewhere which said "If you write [And going through the exercise, if using plain language] you'll be a much better designer." And that's because your design will bring out the things we try to bring out in a plain language, which is the main messages we're trying to be relevant, relevant in relation to audiences, and we're using a visual hierarchy.

00:22:32:24 - 00:22:59:23

Speaker 3

So in design it might be things colors and icons, but in our language it's things like your bigger headers and next layer headers, techniques that will guide the audience through your documents. And then, of course, lots of whitespace And I think at that whitespace in terms of plain languages, not too much stuff. You think techniques like bullets so that people can quickly get to stuff using things like headers that will draw your audience through your documents.

00:22:59:23 - 00:23:25:15

Speaker 3

And a bit like that... Little quotes... [next one please, Irene]. These are some examples of some of the work we've done. This one is our integrated report, "integrated report" is a bit technical, but that's what it's called, so we need to stick with it. So you'll see some design here and you'll see the language. So there's is an example where we take the advice, we give our clients focus on what matters to your business and where you can have

00:23:25:15 - 00:23:49:05

Speaker 3

greatest impact. That's plain language. There's nothing in there. It's not what we would call "dinner table" language, something you could say to friends and family around the dinner table and they wouldn't understand. These are what we call our nutshells. So they started life is really long technical reports. The one on the left was about 147 pages, two.

00:23:49:13 - 00:23:50:22

Speaker 1  
Hundred and 47.

00:23:52:20 - 00:23:53:17

Speaker 3  
Of great work.

00:23:54:02 - 00:23:54:21

Speaker 1  
Yeah, great.

00:23:56:04 - 00:24:19:20

Speaker 3  
Yeah. That's a table with graphs and so on. But it's not something that the CEO is going to read. It's not something the team is going to read, and it's not something they can share with people like clients or customers or suppliers to make this happen. So you see here with plain language, this we've built it into small sections which are easy to understand, we've added design on top.

00:24:20:11 - 00:24:42:14

Speaker 3  
And we're using things like headers to pull people through the documents. So these nutshells they're about three or four pages long, and that's the document that's actually having the greatest impact. One of the topics this one is about New Zealand mussels, oysters. The second one is about New Zealand avocados and the third one is about building products.

00:24:42:14 - 00:24:49:01

Speaker 3  
So our team has had to get to grips with the technical language for all of these different industries and build it into plain language.

00:24:50:07 - 00:24:55:08

Speaker 1  
I see a comment in the chat from Emma. She said, I've read those. They're super clear.

00:24:56:06 - 00:24:57:03

Speaker 3  
Thank you very much.

00:24:57:03 - 00:25:04:20

Speaker 1

Thank you for your response. Emma, what recent results are you achieving with your plain language?

00:25:05:08 - 00:25:35:04

Speaker 3

[next one please, Irene] nice to be back with people like Emma.. thank you. And we've got happy clients and we've got return clients and we're now starting to be known as the plain language technical team, sustainability experts and people are coming to us saying, "Hey, we know you could do great technical work, but we want to actually work with you because you will help our CEO understand this, you'll help our board understand this, it's something we can get to our suppliers."

00:25:36:10 - 00:26:00:20

Speaker 3

I think it's also been very engaging for our technical team. They do great work and they want it to have an impact. So why not be doing this work that gets it out there? We've done some work with them to build these skills and I think it's given them some confidence too and really nicely we now have them coming to us and say "just about to finish this report in a week's time, I'm going to need a plain English executive summary of it", so they know they'll understand it.

00:26:00:22 - 00:26:02:06

Speaker 1

Wow. Yeah.

00:26:02:19 - 00:26:23:08

Speaker 3

It's a behavior change, which has been good to see It's been lovely to win some awards. Thank you very much to you to Write. And also, it's good to know that we're actually having some impact on helping people meet those sustainable development goals. Obviously, there's a heap more we can do. We think the sort of work is in plain language, is actually part in helping people make that progress.

00:26:24:21 - 00:26:39:18

Speaker 1

Thank you so much, Kate. It's wonderful work you're doing and thanks for sharing it. We're going to our colleague from New Zealand, Tatiana Mes. She is principal marketing and communication manager at Mercer. Welcome Tatiana

00:26:41:00 - 00:26:45:06

Speaker 4

No, thank you for having me. Yeah, it's my first webinar.

00:26:45:06 - 00:26:52:10

Speaker 1

So your first webinar. So you you saw with the other two how easy it is to share your screen and things like that.

00:26:52:10 - 00:26:57:03

Speaker 4

So I will attempt to share my screen for you.

00:26:57:03 - 00:27:23:01

Speaker 1

Start with a question you have for our audience. So please raise your digital hand and have it ready. If you think that the private sector should have the same plain language requirements as the public sector. So Tatiana would like to know if you think that the private sector should have the same language requirements as the public sector. If you agree, if you think they have to have that, please raise your digital hand now.

00:27:23:01 - 00:27:25:14

Speaker 1

00:27:25:14 - 00:27:33:24

Speaker 4

And I'm super interested in this because working in the private sector, we still think it's important, but it doesn't apply.

00:27:33:24 - 00:27:37:11

Speaker 1

So look, I see a lot of hands.

00:27:38:07 - 00:27:39:07

Speaker 4

Yay, Support.

00:27:39:09 - 00:27:49:18

Speaker 1

Yeah. So I think you agree with those people. Yeah, absolutely. Tell us a little bit about your project and why you embarked on it.

00:27:49:23 - 00:27:53:14

Speaker 4

It's just checking. Everyone can see the screen.

00:27:53:15 - 00:27:55:07

Speaker 1

Yeah, we can see. Excellent. Yes.

00:27:56:01 - 00:28:23:01

Speaker 4

So the platform is designed for women to help them build their financial knowledge and be more financially secure. And the content very much relied on being all done in plain language, principles and mind. And thank you, Lynda, for sharing the checklist. It's actually built into our checklist when we sign off our content. The platform is just encouraging women to pull up a seat at the virtual table.

00:28:24:00 - 00:28:58:16

Speaker 4

And we really wanted to put women's financial wellness front and center. The platform is still super new, so we're celebrating our first birthday in a couple of weeks, but it's got already several thousand subscribers. And what's pleasing to see is we're getting really high engagement with the content. For the gentleman, before I move on to the next slide, rest assured, you're always welcome to join the table, is not just for women, but you can learn something new for yourself or I'm sure there's something relevant for the women in your life mums, sisters, colleagues.

00:28:58:16 - 00:28:59:16

Speaker 4

Even so.

00:29:00:11 - 00:29:03:16

Speaker 1

For the small woman inside herself.

00:29:03:16 - 00:29:23:18

Speaker 4

There we go. So why the table? We know that women on average have about 20% less saved for their retirement than men? That's the New Zealand. I'm not sure I'm global colleagues. I'm sure you have your own stats, but we really wanted to change that by empowering women to improve their financial confidence.

00:29:25:18 - 00:29:46:14

Speaker 4

We think all women should have access to easy to understand financial information because if they gain that financial knowledge and skills and build the right habits, they can actually change

the course of their own life, but also the life of their children. We know that women quite often make decisions for their children and the rest of their family.

00:29:47:21 - 00:30:17:05

Speaker 4

In fact, our research shows that good plain communications is what women value. It made up five in our research. Men rated it just inside our top ten, that's why I focus on women. And just the last slide on that question so it's not something new for Mercer. And we've been working globally in this space for over 15 years.

00:30:18:02 - 00:30:42:09

Speaker 4

And our data shows that when women thrive, businesses benefit. But we really wanted to take it out of the boardroom and out of the boardroom language and make that information and content accessible to all women. Our previous board chair, Kristen, our CEO and everyone else got really engaged and behind this initiative.

00:30:44:00 - 00:30:50:23

Speaker 1

Thank you so much. Do you have maybe a few tips about what worked but maybe also what didn't?

00:30:50:23 - 00:31:19:18

Speaker 4

Yeah. So obviously it's a digital platform, it's got lots of content, but we really wanted women to feel like they have they don't have to have everything figured out. We wanted really to engage with them in a very relatable, accessible way. We wanted to speak to women who were just starting to build their financial knowledge or wealth, but also more savvy women.

00:31:19:18 - 00:31:50:23

Speaker 4

So we really wanted to speak to women at all stages of life. It doesn't really matter about how much money or knowledge they had. We profiled lots of women and shared many stories, we really sort like and we know that really resonates with women. Women wanted to share their stories. It was quite interesting. You know, all you had to do is ask a question and the women were there to share their stories.

00:31:51:11 - 00:32:25:15

Speaker 4

So the articles we think really do work as long as they're short, sharp and written in plain language. We also used we found that a range of different content worked. So we also recorded some podcasts. So that really worked. We had them transcribed so people could read them, but also listen to them if they're working. So we found different mediums working really well.

00:32:25:15 - 00:32:48:18

Speaker 4

This worked and was probably the challenging part. So as we know social media is hard to come in and comply with all the regulatory requirements and still be communicating in plain language. So this was a little bit challenging, but between the imagery and really working with our legal team, you know that that really I think worked for us.

00:32:48:18 - 00:32:59:01

Speaker 4

So social media has been helping us be even more plain language in our other channels. So that's been really good.

00:33:00:12 - 00:33:05:24

Speaker 1

That's interesting. And how important was plain language for the success of The Table?

00:33:06:21 - 00:33:11:23

Speaker 4

My answer is going to be sorry. I'm going to skip the events part. But so you.

00:33:11:23 - 00:33:14:07

Speaker 1

Can you can tell us about the event if you want. Of course.

00:33:14:07 - 00:33:43:10

Speaker 4

Yeah, I could. I can. Just to supplement our digital communications and channels. We do run events across New Zealand, so we do again think that it works in combination with the content. Again, trying to minimize all the legal jargon and disclaimers when we do present to make sure it doesn't get into financial advice territory. That has been a challenge but it's yeah, it's been a good one.

00:33:44:00 - 00:33:45:15

Speaker 4

So you can ask the last question.

00:33:45:23 - 00:33:51:02

Speaker 1

How important that plain language was for the success of The Table.

00:33:51:14 - 00:34:16:12

Speaker 4

Yeah, well I've asked actually a few women to provide some feedback on that, because from my perspective and the team's perspective it's worked really well and we've seen great results. But I think, you know, women probably answer that question even better. So it's it's been really good. We've had lots of positive feedback. As you can see.

00:34:16:12 - 00:34:32:14

Speaker 1

Thank you so much. Thank you so much for sharing this. We have some questions in the chat. So I would like to ask you where what do you think where plain language is going into in the future? What's your opinion about that?

00:34:33:21 - 00:34:34:14

Speaker 4

Question for me?

00:34:34:17 - 00:34:37:08

Speaker 1

Yeah, for all the speakers, but I start with you.

00:34:37:13 - 00:35:13:12

Speaker 4

Yeah, I think it's going to become even more important. Again, working in the private sector, it's not necessarily required. But if you really want to be successful, you can't really get away with it. And also the countries, you know, with people speaking multiple languages, in English or, today in New Zealand, we just need to make sure that we are clear and concise and effective.

00:35:13:12 - 00:35:20:18

Speaker 1

Yeah. Thank you very much, Kate. What's your opinion about the future of plain language and maybe Tatiana you can stop sharing your screen....

00:35:20:21 - 00:35:21:15

Speaker 4

I'm just trying.

00:35:21:15 - 00:35:28:09

Speaker 1

Kate you're muted so if you could unmute yourself.

00:35:28:10 - 00:35:46:22

Speaker 3

Apologies. I think one thing that's probably going to happen in New Zealand now we've got the new act is that people in the government are going to say, "oh, this plain language stuff actually

works. I can understand this.” And they’re going to start demanding it from people like us, thinkstep-anz, who actually supply to the government and to other parties as well.

00:35:46:22 - 00:35:54:24

Speaker 3

Well, I think it's a great example that a big part of the economy is going to be the benefit of it, and really have an impact.

00:35:56:00 - 00:36:03:04

Speaker 1

Lynda, I think you agree.

00:36:03:04 - 00:36:19:08

Speaker 2

I completely agree with that. And I think that the evidence that plain language works is going to be so much more apparent. And that will just mean that it becomes more and more. Yeah. Just kind of the default. I hope that would be an amazing thing.

00:36:19:19 - 00:36:41:19

Speaker 1

Yeah. And Lynda, Tatiana asked the question to our audience, should the private sector have the same plain language requirements as the public sector? And a lot of our guests in this webinar responded that I agree, but that will have some extra costs within them. What do you think of that? Because it makes it more expensive, or do you think?

00:36:42:19 - 00:36:59:09

Speaker 2

I don't see why it should make anything more expensive, plain language is a way of working. Not, yes. I really can't see why that should cost any more. And in fact, we know that plain language saves money and creates efficiencies. So no.

00:36:59:18 - 00:37:25:03

Speaker 1

I totally disagree with that. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you all for all your questions. Thank you, Lynda, Kate and Tatiana for your interesting visions, ideas, inspiration and work. I would like to give the stage, digital stage to my colleague Irene, because she has something to say to you.

00:37:25:03 - 00:37:29:03

Speaker 3

And thanks so much for your generous support of this webinar.

00:37:29:16 - 00:37:40:08

Speaker 2

And thanks for all the drops of courage over many years that have resulted in oceans of change. And it's really been a privilege just to celebrate this momentous.

00:37:40:08 - 00:37:41:23

Speaker 3

Occasion with you.

00:37:42:12 - 00:37:48:03

Speaker 2

And Kate, your work is so inspiring. I often consult your ESG.

00:37:48:20 - 00:37:49:10

Speaker 3

Glossary.

00:37:49:10 - 00:37:55:16

Speaker 2

So I encourage everyone to go and have a look and just thanks for showing us that, you know, with.

00:37:56:03 - 00:37:58:00

Speaker 3

A humble, plain language summary.

00:37:58:00 - 00:37:58:21

Speaker 2

And design.

00:37:59:07 - 00:38:09:01

Speaker 3

And, you know, we can make it so much easier even if we work with complicated concepts. And Tatiana, thank you for your for conveying your passion for.

00:38:09:01 - 00:38:12:13

Speaker 2

Plain language and financial inclusion and.

00:38:12:14 - 00:38:18:12

Speaker 3

And reminding us that plain doesn't mean colorless. I really enjoyed your presentation.

00:38:18:24 - 00:38:23:24

Speaker 2

And to express our gratitude and also to support local business, we will be

00:38:23:24 - 00:38:33:24

Speaker 3

sending each of you e-Voucher from Good Books in Wellington after the webinar. So many, many thanks for a wonderful time with you.

00:38:33:24 - 00:38:34:11

Speaker 4

Thank you.

00:38:34:12 - 00:39:03:12

Speaker 1

Thank you and thank you to her. I think we can applaud all of your and for for our guests. Great great that you were here. We have some time left for questions in the next 15 minutes. But as we told you before, we stop this webinar at a quarter to, so if you have to leave, you can leave. But if you want to stay and have some more discussion about the subjects with our guests, just stay for 15 minutes.

00:39:04:16 - 00:39:27:09

Speaker 1

And I used this last minute to give you some practical information. This webinar will be made available to members plain members through our plain website, and you will see that website in a minute in the chat. And also, if you register for this webinar, you will get an email about this so you can share the recording with your colleagues, your friends or as you like.

00:39:29:04 - 00:39:54:00

Speaker 1

Also in the chat, you will now receive an evaluation form and we would love to hear what you thought of this webinar. Please fill it in now if you want and if you want to be or know a good guest for our next webinar, please tell us by using our contact form on our website. Our website is plain language network dot org plain language language network dot org.

00:39:54:15 - 00:40:12:21

Speaker 1

And there you will also find all the information about our in-person conference in Argentina next September. Hope to see you all there. I want to thank everyone, all our members, our nonmembers, our guests and the plain board members that were here for your participation.