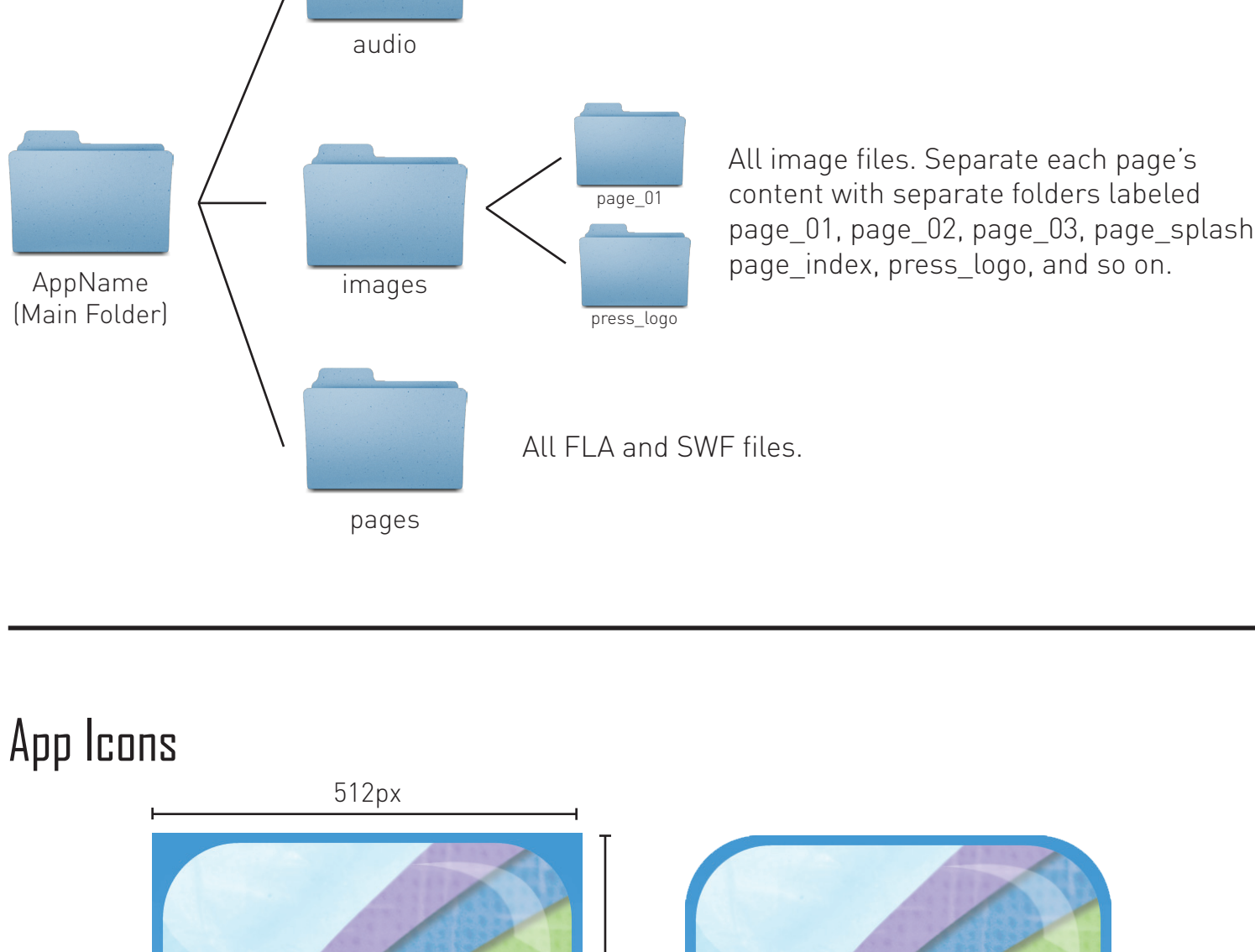
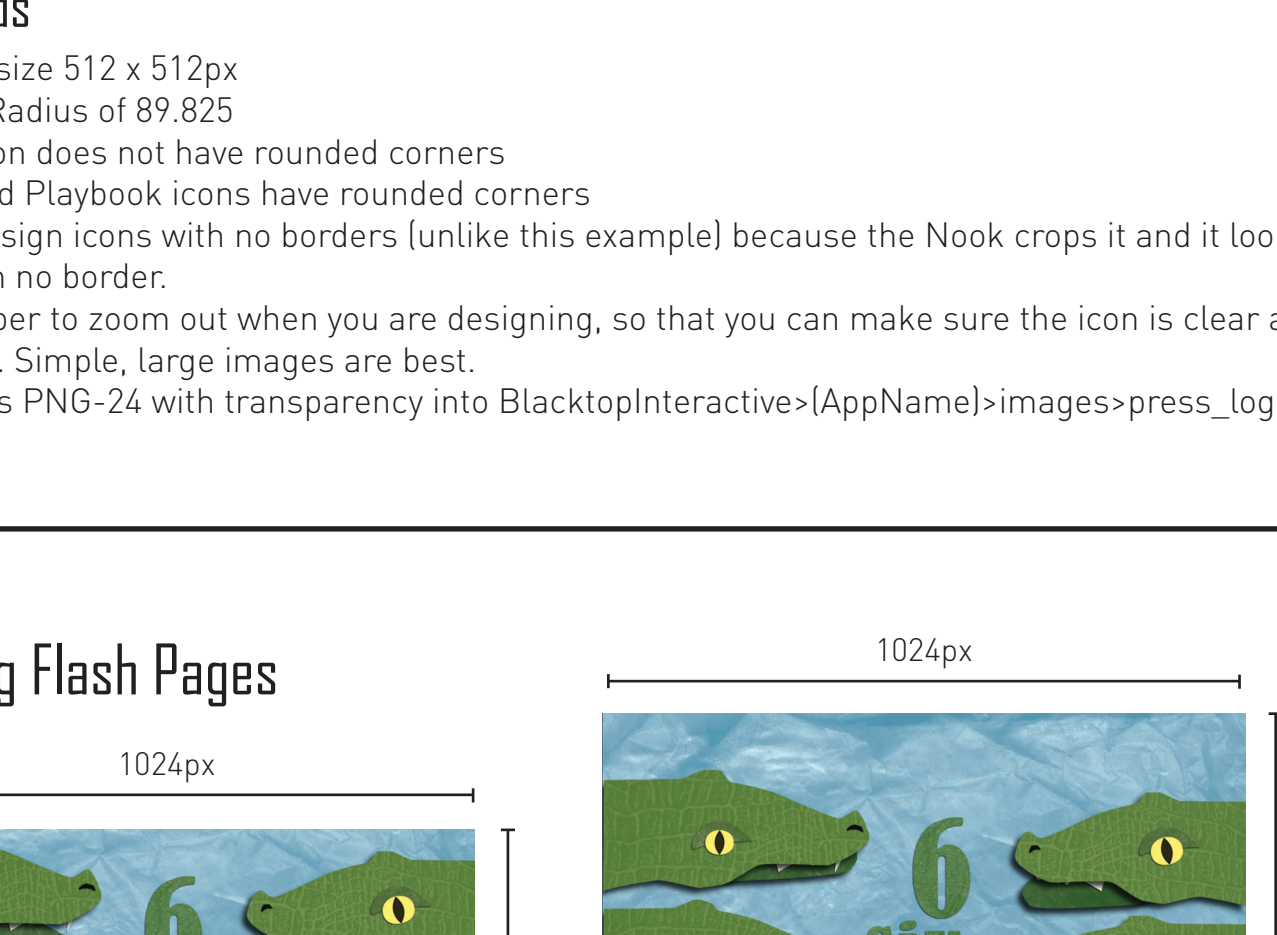


Blacktop Interactive Reference Guide

Getting Started - File Structure



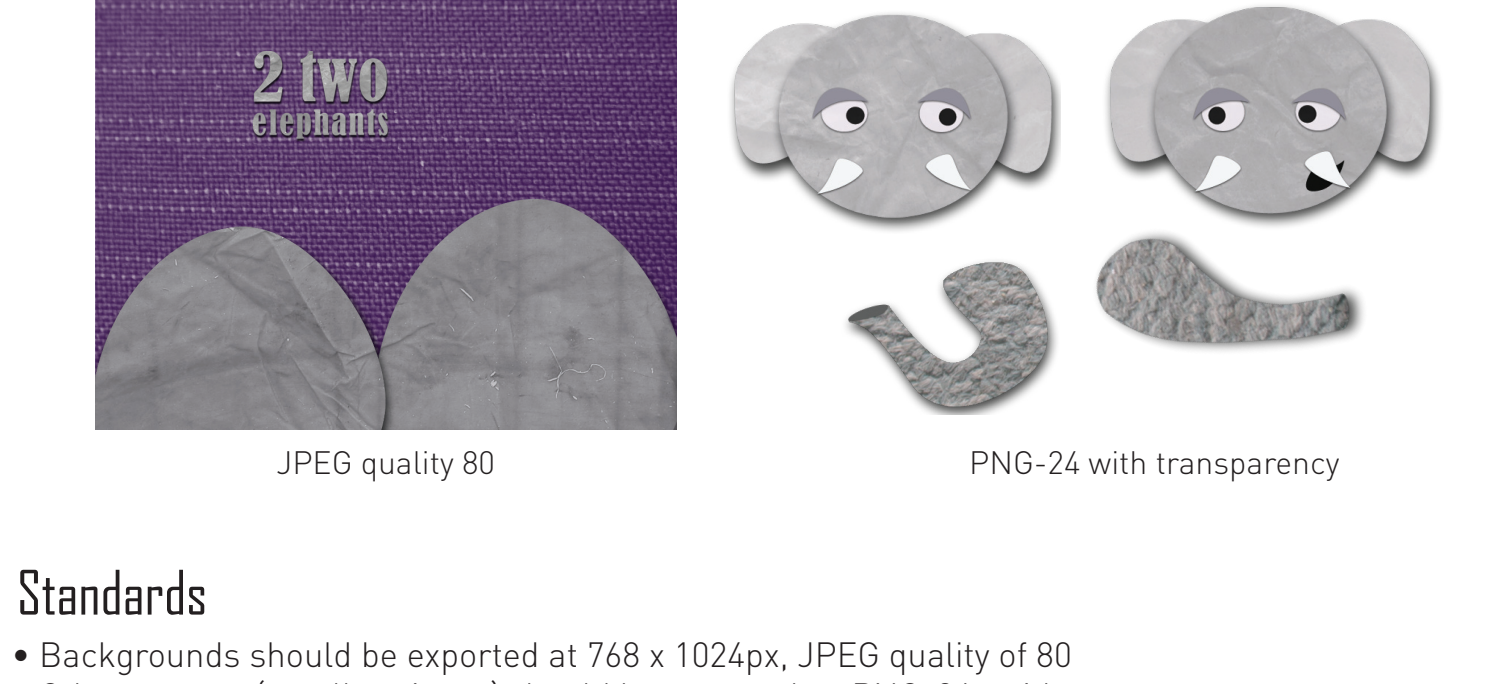
App Icons



Standards

- Largest size 512 x 512px
- Border Radius of 89.825
- Apple icon does not have rounded corners
- Nook and Playbook icons have rounded corners
- Try to design icons with no borders (unlike this example) because the Nook crops it and it looks better with no border.
- Remember to zoom out when you are designing, so that you can make sure the icon is clear at a small size. Simple, large images are best.
- Export as PNG-24 with transparency into BlacktopInteractive>[AppName]>images>press_logo

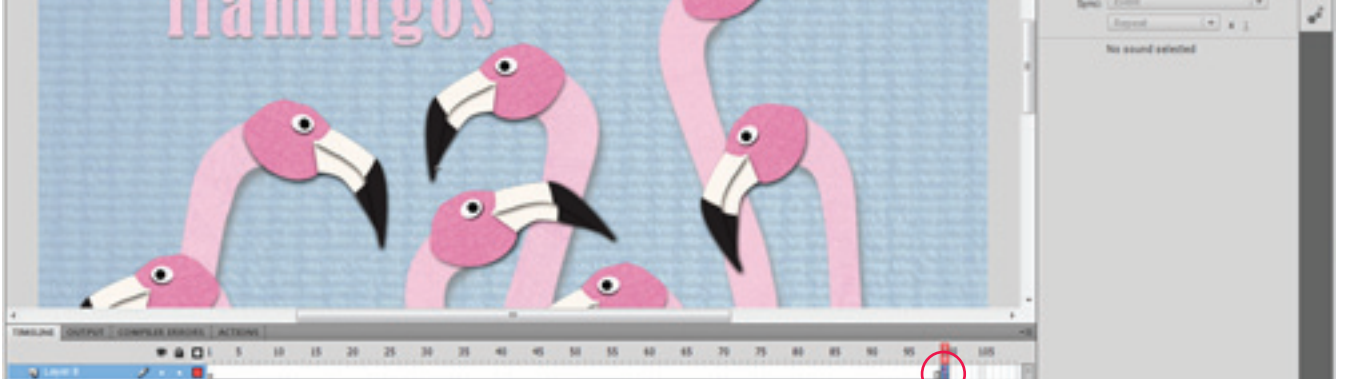
Creating Flash Pages



Standards

- Nook and Playbook screen size 600 x 1024px
- Apple screen size 768 x 1024px
- Create a page in Flash that is 768 x 1024px with a guide that is 600 x 1024px
- Place no essential content or hit areas outside of the 600 x 1024px guide

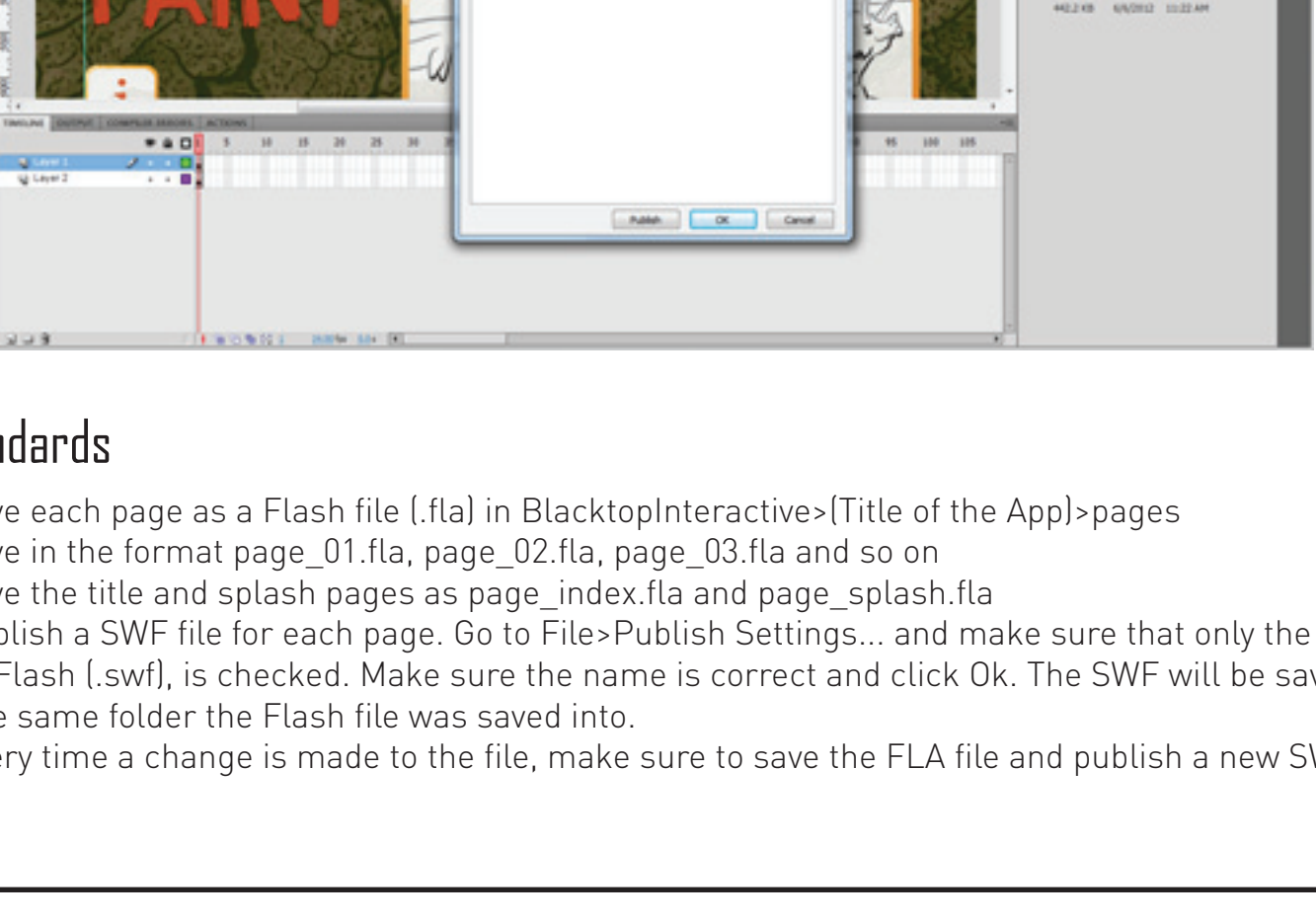
Bringing Content into Flash



Standards

- Backgrounds should be exported at 768 x 1024px, JPEG quality of 80
- Other content (smaller pieces) should be exported as PNG-24s with transparency
- Once the page pieces have been brought into Flash, find them in the Library. Right click each item and go to Properties. Make sure that the background image is set as a Photo(JPEG) and check the box to allow smoothing. Make sure that all other content is set as Lossless(PNG/Gif) and check the box to allow smoothing.
- All content except for text should allow smoothing.
- Convert the background image to a MovieClip titled PageBackground. Select the background and under Properties, give it the instance name pageBackground. This is integral because it allows the ActionScript to load the page as well as start and stop the page animations on page turn.
- As a general rule, title all MovieClips, Symbols and Buttons with capital letters and all instance names with lowercase to prevent glitches in the code.

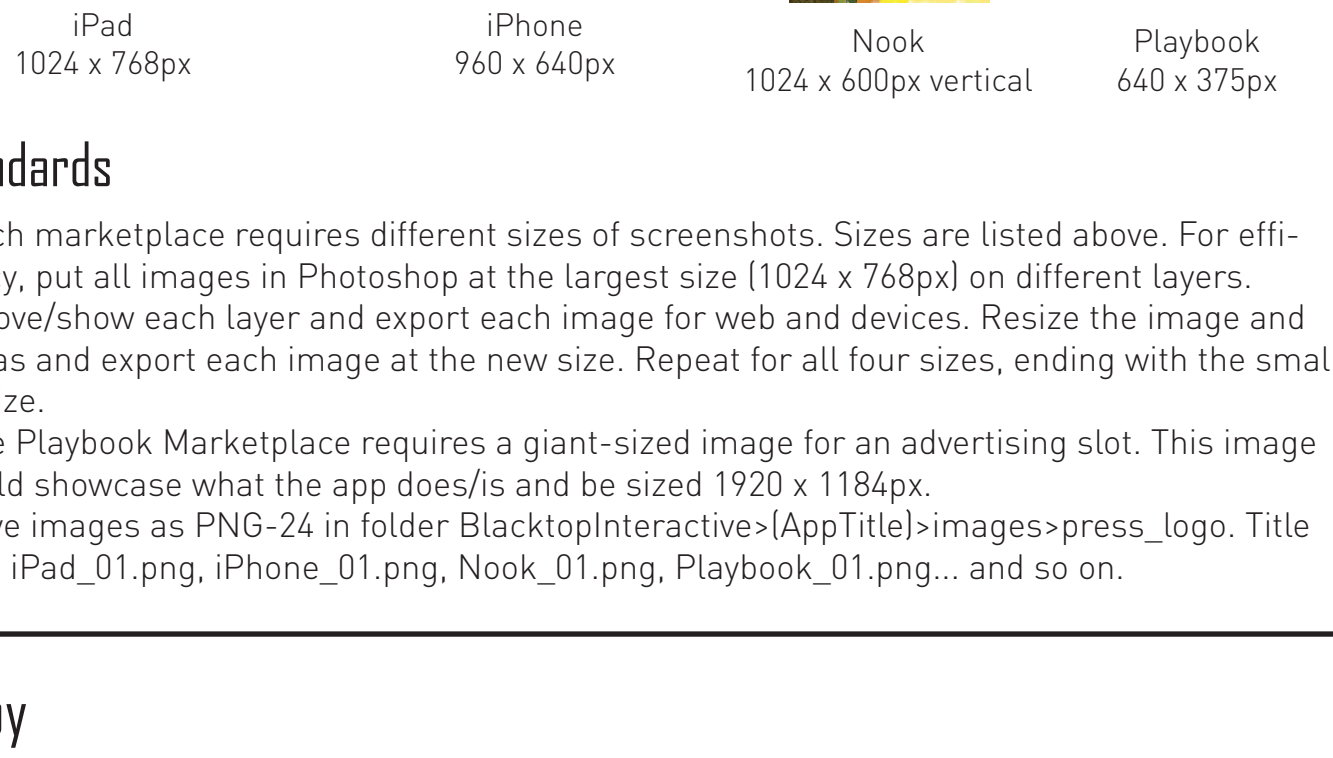
Animating in Flash



Standards

- Animations should be contained within a movie clip. All of the animations for this page are nested within a movie clip named "Animation."
- Animations are done in Flash, but ALL ActionScript must be written in Flash Builder
- Animations may be stopped with frame labels, little flags that appear when you name a frame.
- Try to keep labels and instance names consistent from page to page. For example, in this book all frame labels are named "animationStop," all backgrounds are named "pageBackground," and all animations are nested in a MovieClip named "Animation." This helps to minimize length of the code because it can be used for every page.
- Narration sound should not be imbedded in the animation; it will be cued up with code.
- Sounds that occur concurrently with an animation should be imbedded in their corresponding MovieClip. For example, bubble popping noises are imbedded within the bubble pop animation so that the noise and animation occur simultaneously.

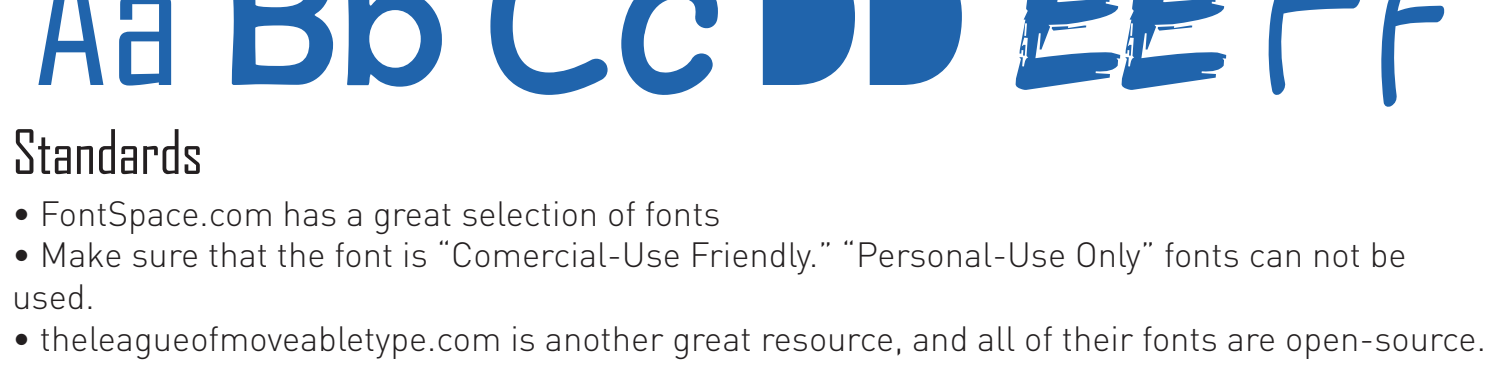
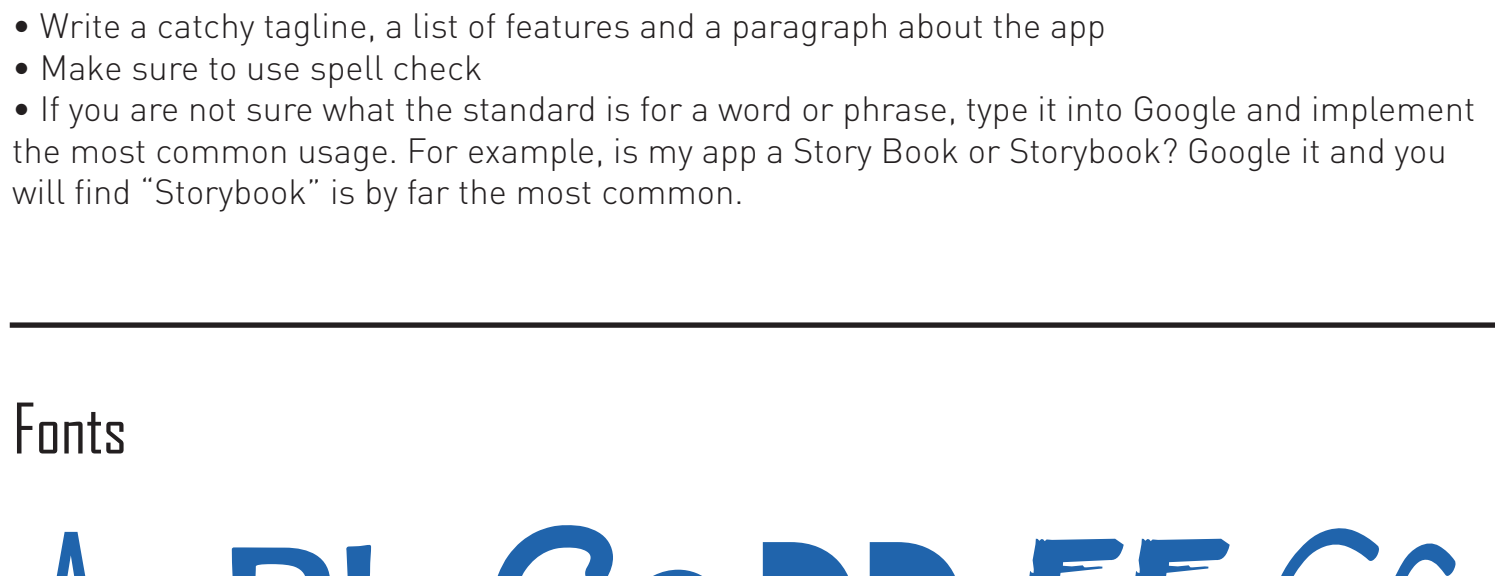
Saving and Publishing



Standards

- Save each page as a Flash file (.fla) in BlacktopInteractive>[Title of the App]>pages
- Save in the format page_01.fla, page_02.fla, page_03.fla and so on
- Save the title and splash pages as page_index.fla and page_splash.fla
- Publish a SWF file for each page. Go to File>Publish Settings... and make sure that only the top box, Flash (.swf), is checked. Make sure the name is correct and click Ok. The SWF will be saved in the same folder the Flash file was saved into.
- Every time a change is made to the file, make sure to save the FLA file and publish a new SWF

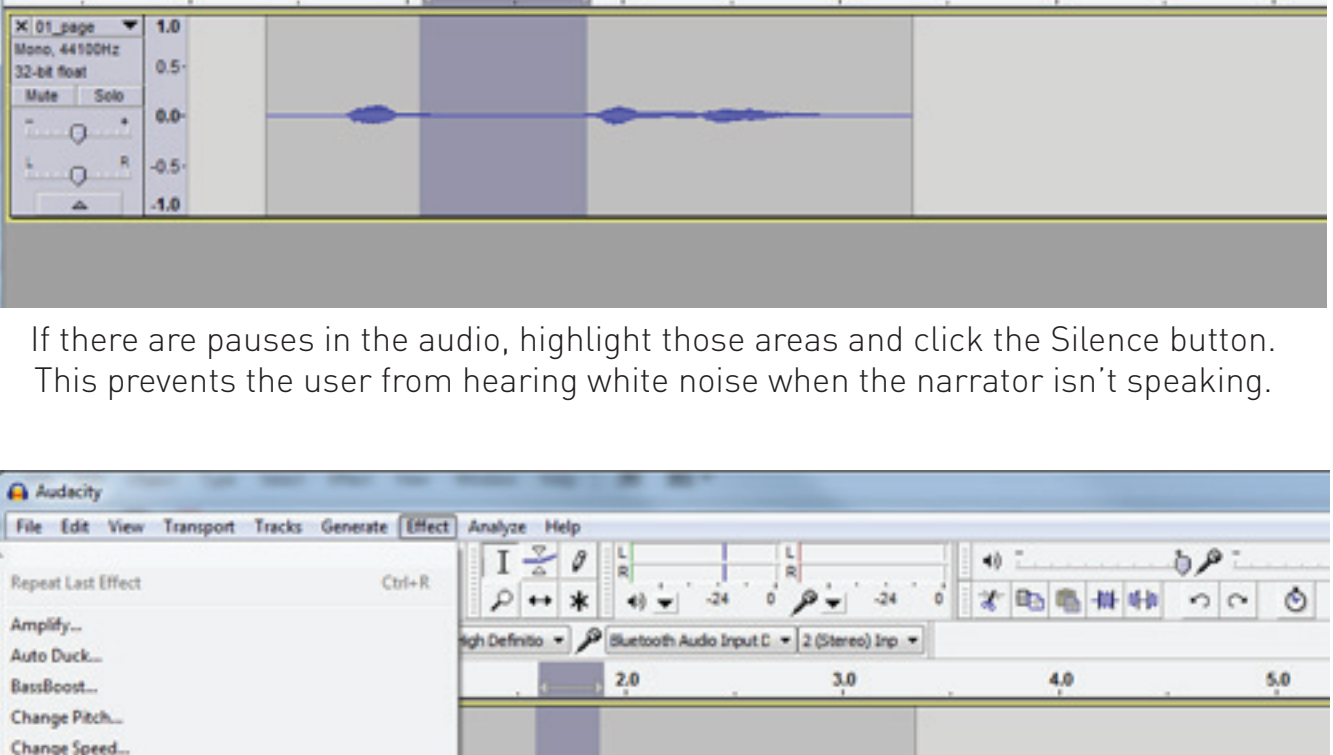
Marketplace Images



Standards

- Each marketplace requires different sizes of screenshots. Sizes are listed above. For efficiency, put all images in Photoshop at the largest size (1024 x 768px) on different layers. Remove/show each layer and export each image for web and devices. Resize the image and canvas and export each image at the new size. Repeat for all four sizes, ending with the smallest size.
- The Playbook Marketplace requires a giant-sized image for an advertising slot. This image should showcase what the app does/is and be sized 1920 x 1184px.
- Save images as PNG-24 in folder BlacktopInteractive>[App Title]>images>press_logo. Title them iPad_01.png, iPhone_01.png, Nook_01.png, Playbook_01.png... and so on.

Copy



Standards

- Look at similar apps in the marketplace to see what people have written to use as inspiration. Take note of good keywords they use like "interactive" or "creative" and use those words in your own sentences.
- Write a catchy tagline, a list of features and a paragraph about the app
- Make sure to use spell check
- If you are not sure what the standard is for a word or phrase, type it into Google and implement the most common usage. For example, is my app a Story Book or Storybook? Google it and you will find "Storybook" is by far the most common.

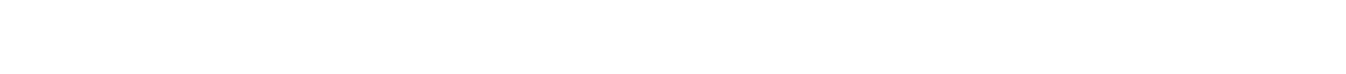
Fonts



Standards

- FontSpace.com has a great selection of fonts
- Make sure that the font is "Commercial-Use Friendly." "Personal-Use Only" fonts can not be used.
- theleagueofmoveabletype.com is another great resource, and all of their fonts are open-source.

Audio - Trimming and Polishing



Highlight desired audio length and click the trim button.

If there are pauses in the audio, highlight those areas and click the Silence button. This prevents the user from hearing white noise when the narrator isn't speaking.

Highlight the beginning of the clip and every moment after a gap in audio where you have used the Silent button and use Effect>Fade In. This gently eases in the audio and prevents a harsh or startling change in volume. Also use this technique at the ends of all audio but instead use Effect>Fade Out.

If there is a lot of white noise with your audio, try using a combination of Effect>NoiseRemoval, Effect>Levelize, the Envelope Tool or even re-record the audio.

Audio - Sound Effects

Standards

- <http://www.freesound.org> has a great library of sounds
- Make sure that the license for the sounds you download is "Creative Commons"
- Use Fade In, Fade Out, Trim, Silence and other tools to modify the clip to produce the sound you need

Audio - Recording and Saving

Standards

- Record audio using Audacity. If your computer doesn't have this program, you can download it for free at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>
- Record audio in a quiet space with the headset
- Everything will be recorded - if a plane flies by, a car revs its engine or your dog barks, stop and re-record.
- Try to position the microphone to get the smallest amount of noise from your breathing - do some test runs to make sure it sounds good.
- Record at a moderate level - too loud will pick up too much white noise, too soft will be too quiet to amplify.
- Save each file as a WAV file in BlacktopInteractive>[App Name]>audio>page_01.WAV
- Go to <http://media.io/> and convert each WAV file to a MP3 file at 256 kbit/s quality. Download and save to BlacktopInteractive>[App Name]>audio>page_01.MP3

Delete the WAV files and listen to the MP3 files in sequence to check the quality. Also check how they sound when played one after the other because one file may be louder or quieter than the rest.